

# MAOIST 'SPRING THUNDER'

The Naxalite Movement (1967 - 1972)



ARUN PROSAD MUKHERJEE

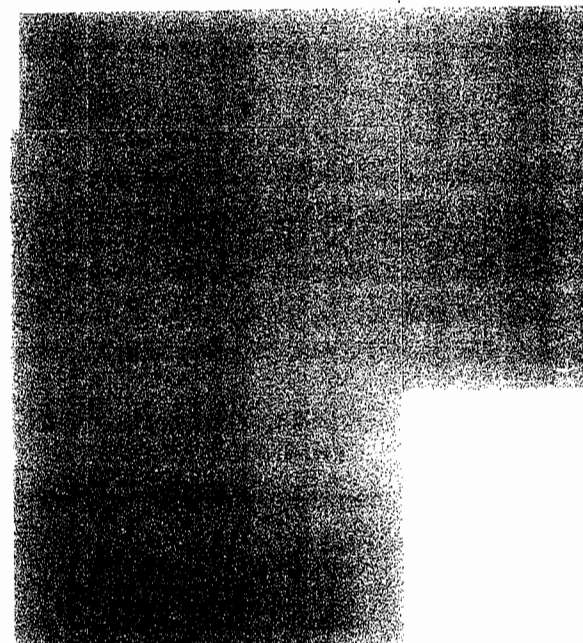


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The Naxalite Movement (1967 - 1972)

Arun Prosad Mukherjee



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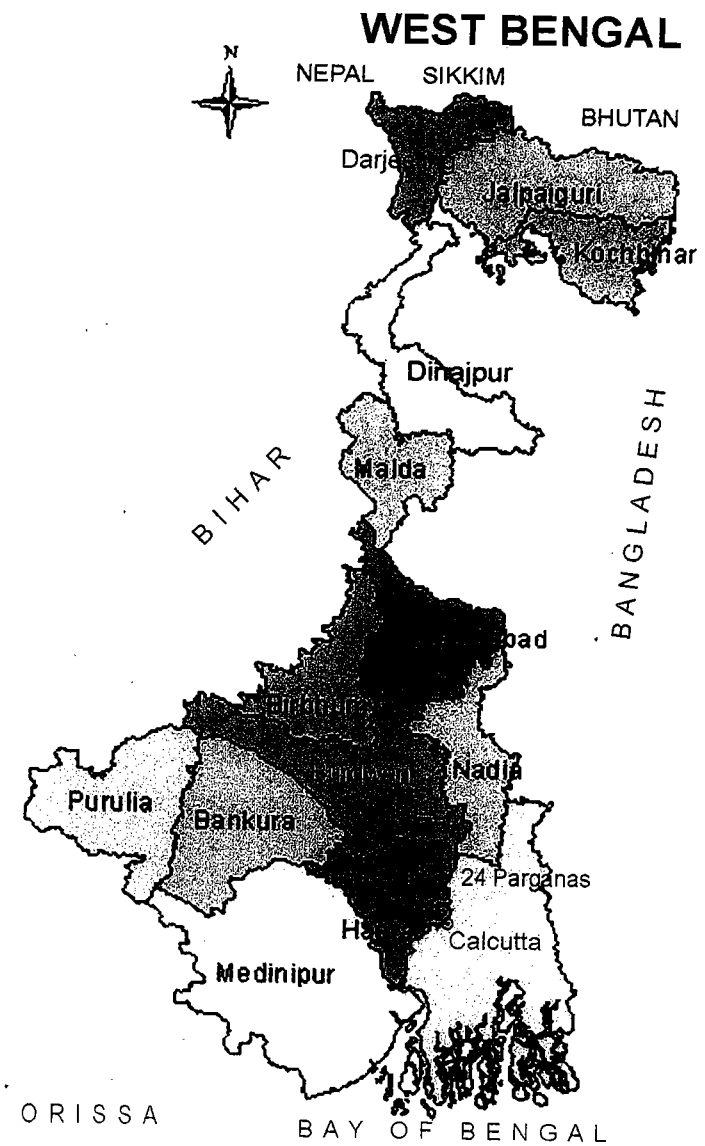


### Abbreviations used

Addl.SP	Additional Superintendent of Police
<i>Adhiars</i>	Share-croppers entitled to 50% share of the crops
AICCCR	All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries, formed at Calcutta on 13 November, 1967 with dissident CPI(M) representatives from different states
A.S.I.	Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police
<i>Bandar</i>	Human habitation or market place close to river banks
BDO	Block Development Officer
C.I.	Circle Inspector of Police
CM	Charu Majumdar, initiator of the Naxalbari movement and later principal leader of the CPI(ML)
COC	Central Organising Committee, later changed as the Central Committee (CC) of the CPI(ML)
COI(ML)	Communist Organisation of India (Marxist-Leninist)
Const.	Police Constable
CPC	Communist Party of China
CPI(ML)	Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
CPGB(ML)/	Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)
CPB(ML)	
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CP	Commissioner of Police [usually in a metropolitan city]
DC	Deputy Commissioner of Police
Dy.SP/DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police
D.I.G./Dy. I.G.	Deputy Inspector General of Police (in charge of supervision of police work in a group of 4-5 district, usually called a Range)
IGP	Inspector General of Police, the highest ranking police officer of the State
JLRO	Junior Land Reforms Officer

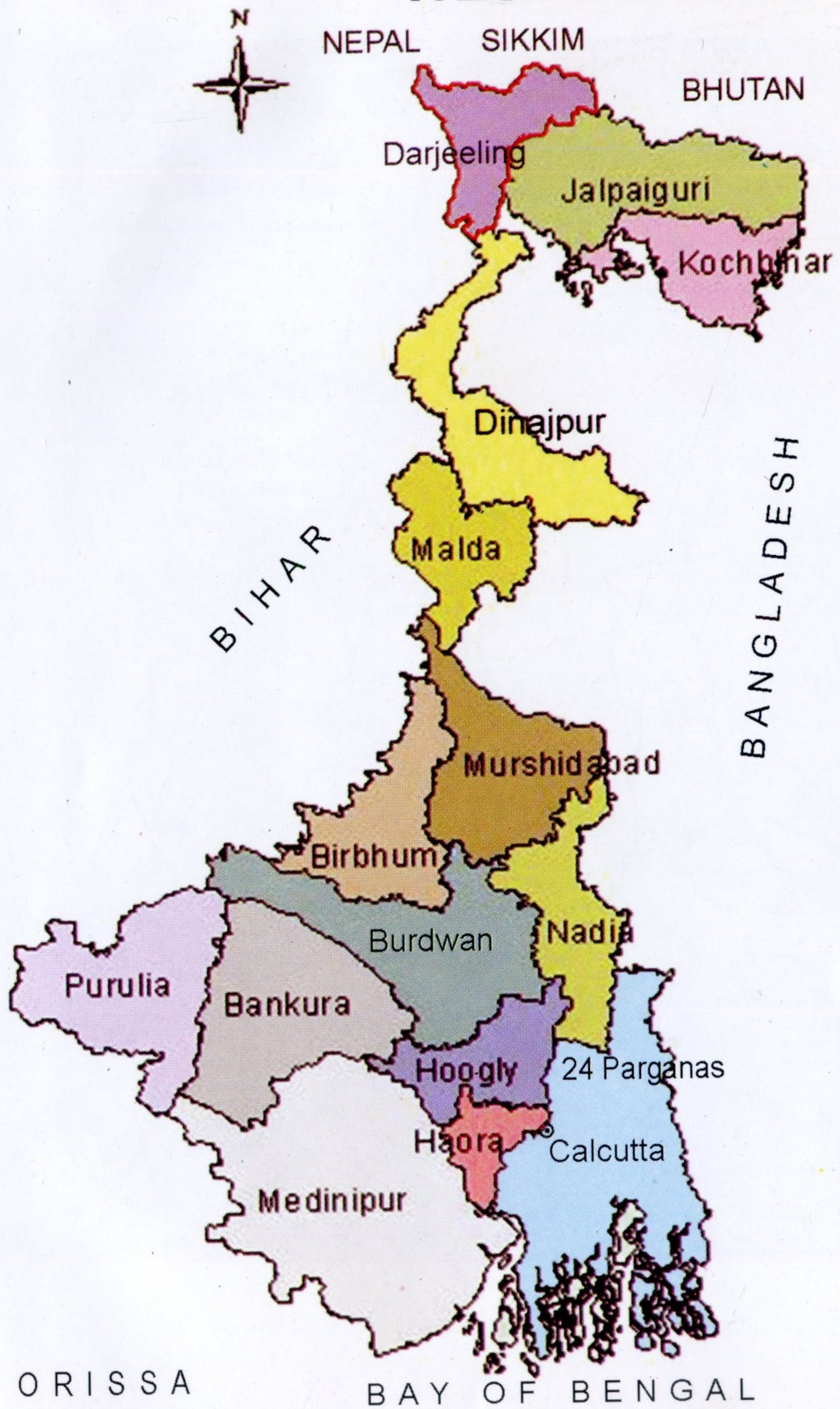
<i>Jotedar</i>	Landlord and owners of the land
NOKSS	Naxalbari O Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samity, formed in Kolkata around end 1968 to bolster the morale of the agitation, by which time the movement in Darjeeling District had collapsed completely
O.C./OC	Office-in-charge of a Police Station [also known as Station House Officer/SHO in some states]
P.S.	Police Station
SDO/S.D.O.	Sub-divisional Officer
S.I.	Sub-Inspector of Police
S.D.P.O.	Sub-divisional Police Officer
SLRO	Sub-divisional Land Reforms Officer
SRC	Sushital Ray Choudhury, a veteran communist who had substantial contribution in the formation of the AICCCR and CPI(ML). However, when he objected to some of the policies and tactical lines of the party as chalked out by Charu Majumdar, he was subjected to considerable indignities and subsequently died of heart attack, a sad and forlorn person.
R/T	Radio Telephone
WPBKS	West Bengal Provincial Krishak Sabha, the peasant wing of the CPI/CPI(M)



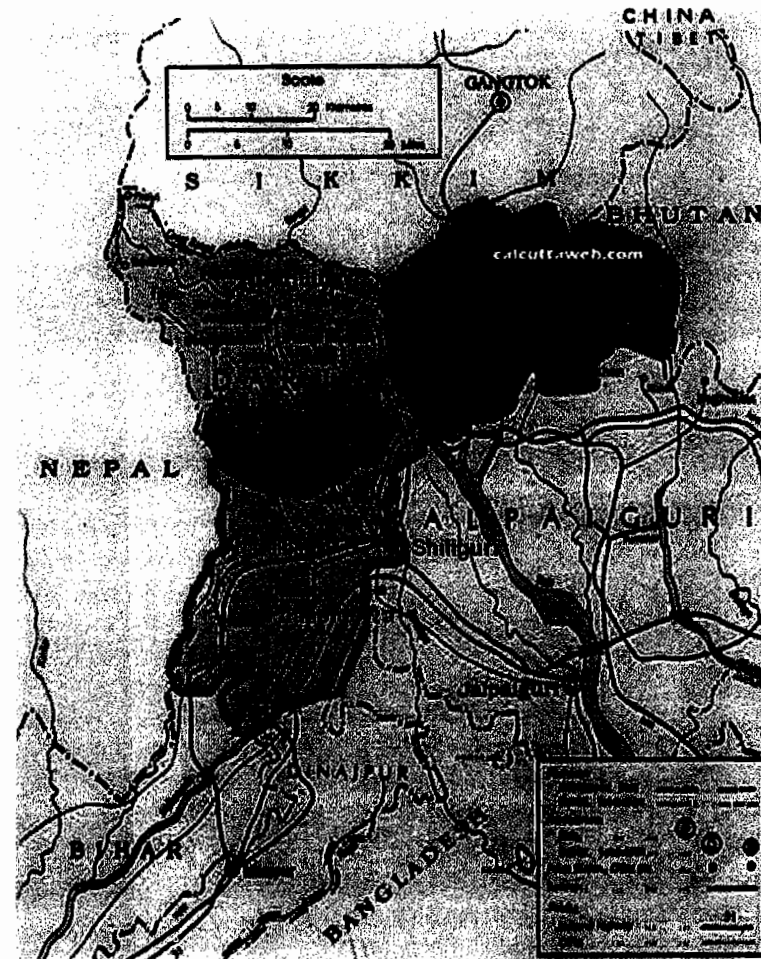




# WEST BENGAL









# DARJILING DISTRICT





## **‘Spring Thunder’ to ‘Prairie Fire’?**

Introductory Remarks by the author

When I went to Darjeeling as the District's Superintendent of Police in July 1965, one could never imagine that a rather obscure part of this district was destined to become eponymous with a new brand of radical politics in India, giving birth to a series of militant agitations and activities now known as the Naxalite movement or Naxalism. It fell to my lot to lead the district police (later supplemented by other police units) to the best of our capabilities for dealing with the ground realities of this new phenomenon.

There have been a good number of publications on the Naxalbari movement during the last 30 years. These are analyses of theoretical underpinnings, account of factional politics within it and some reminiscences of participants in the movement during 1967-72. Hence the discerning reader may well question the need for an addition to the literature and that too after a lapse of many years. I would humbly point out that this publication is rather unique in certain ways, for the pages that follow present a number of vignettes, each significant in its own way: (a) My analytical and contemporaneous account of the Naxalbari episode is placed first, entitled "Lessons of Naxalbari" covering the period March 1967 - August 1968 and written during August-September, 1968 while every detail was fresh in my memory. This was submitted to the West Bengal Government during 1969, seeking permission for its publication in due course. When the 2nd United Front Government was formed, its second time Land and Land Revenue Minister Shri Harekrishna Konar carefully scrutinised my manuscript to check the accuracy of the facts contained in the MS since he himself figured prominently in my account.<sup>1</sup> (b) For the first time a number of other important documents of the time relating to various events comprising the Naxalite movement as well as its dramatis personae are being brought to the public domain, together with (c) some photographs and extracts of contemporaneous documents which have intrinsic historical interest. These should also help in correcting many distorted accounts which came out later.

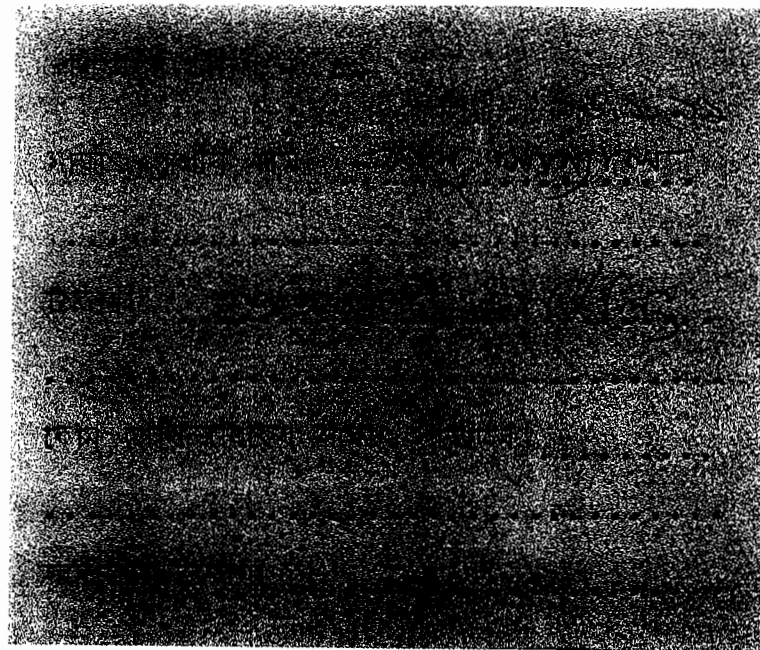


I realise that I should have presented the "Lessons of Naxalbari (1967-72)" much earlier. However, it would be apparent to any discerning reader that its contents have neither lost their topicality nor their relevance even now. On the contrary, every passing year bears testimony to the failure of the political and administrative systems to draw suitable lessons from history and apply them for a much better, more civilised and humane management of the crisis besetting not only the Naxalite affected regions but also the insurgency and terrorism affected States like Jammu & Kashmir and the North-East. As I have argued later, with empirical evidence, much of the continuing damage to our people and our polity can be prevented even now by resorting to alternative counter-measure models instead of relying on the ongoing traditional and ham-handed approaches. It is my hope that the present work will provide the blueprint of one such viable alternative model, tested in the field with very positive outcomes.

There are a number of reasons for the delay in publishing this first-hand account of the Naxalite movement based on contemporaneous reports and documents. The primary reason was my continuing preoccupation even after retirement from active service in January 1992. Much earlier, when I was in service in Kolkata and Delhi, the then Chief Minister Shri Jyoti Basu enquired more than once as to when my account of the movement could be expected to come out since I had the unique opportunity of witnessing from close quarters both chapters of the Naxalite episode, first as the Superintendent of Police of Darjeeling District where the initial outburst took place during 1967 and thereafter as the Deputy Commissioner of Police in the Kolkata Special Branch (1969 to early 1972).

My response to Shri Basu was plain enough: I had always considered it a social obligation to share our experiences, trials and tribulations during those tumultuous years as also the 'lessons' which we learnt in the process. But on professional and personal grounds, I preferred to do so after retirement from service as that would impart the requisite distance from the episodic years which, hopefully, would provide the needed objectivity for such a study. I did not, and still do not believe in the widespread urge of public servants these days for rushing to print soon after retirement, even before their imprint on the official papers had time to 'dry'.

There was an unexpected development when I was West Bengal's





পশ্চিমবঙ্গ নিদর্শন নং ৪৯

তারিখ : ২৬.১.২৯

সাক্ষাৎ প্রার্থীর নাম ... কেন্দ্র সাক্ষাৎ .....

ঠিকানা ... ২৭ তি. ধী. ৮৮, দক্ষিণ দিগু .....

কোন আধিকারিকের সাক্ষাৎ প্রয়োজন .....

সাক্ষাৎের উদ্দেশ্য .....



Director General of Police (September 1990 to 31 December 1991). On 16 January 1991, a visitor's slip was passed on to me (written in Bengali and in good hand) from 'Shri Kanu Sanyal of Hatighisa, Darjeeling'. (Incidentally, I discovered this slip recently inside one of my diaries). Obviously I called him in immediately, got tea for the two of us and enquired if I could be of any help. By then he had formed his own Naxalite party [(COI(ML))]. He mentioned that his party workers in Nadia district were being subjected to various kinds of harassment by the local cadres of a political party belonging to the ruling Left Front, duly aided and abetted by the local police. He also gave me a list of some such instances. I had no hesitation in assuring him forthwith that I would initiate all necessary remedial steps urgently and asked Shri Sanyal to let me know over phone during the next 7-10 days if such cases of mischief and harassment had been stopped, or else, I thought, I may have to administer a more bitter dose of medicine to all concerned, within police or outside it. He rang me up within about a week to confirm that the mischief had not only been stopped but the police there appeared to be in a helpful mood since then!

Before leaving my room, Shri Sanyal had enquired why I hadn't as yet written an 'authentic' account covering their movement from 1967 to 1972 which witnessed the rise and virtual collapse of its main thrust. I asked him, out of curiosity, why did he want me to add to the numerous writings by the participants in the movement and others. His answer was typical of the straightforward and honest Kanubabu that I had known during my Darjeeling days. What he mentioned, in effect, was like this : 'After we went underground during 1967-68 and later during 1969-72, most of us lost touch with the reality of the situation on the ground; unfortunately we learnt much later that what was being dished out by our top leaders and others including the party organs were either distorted or highly exaggerated accounts which suited the 'high command's dictates' and in the process the revolutionary potential suffered incalculable damage. If you write with your first-hand experience about those years, we can reasonably hope to get a fairly objective reconstruction of the movement and this could provide suitable lessons for everybody, howsoever unpleasant these may be.'

Surprisingly, similar requests were made to me and almost for identical reasons, by quite a few important Naxalite leaders like Souren Bose [Politburo & Central Committee Member of the CPI(ML)] and



Sadhan Sarkar (Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee) after their arrest during 1971-72.

Hence after my retirement in 1992, I started dusting out my old diaries and copies of some documents, by now yellowed and brittle with the passage of nearly 25-30 years. Some of these have been reproduced in this volume (in Parts- I and II), with only some minor modifications and corrections where called for, without in any way detracting from their original contents or tenor, howsoever subjective or imperfect these may appear to be in hindsight now, even to me! It is hoped that such records of those years may also convey the 'touch' and the 'feel' of that period, warts and all. In this perspective, I would invite the reader's attention to the following documents in particular, in addition to those mentioned earlier :

- (i) Note of SP, Darjeeling dt. 12 June 1967 submitted to the members of the Cabinet Committee (Part-I);
- (ii) excerpts from assessment reports of the DIG, Intelligence Branch, West Bengal and the DC, Special Branch, Calcutta covering aspects of the Naxalite movement during 1969-72 (Part-II);
- (iii) analysis of participants in Naxalite movement based on interrogation of arrested Naxalites, separately for the 1967-68 period (in Part-I) and the 1969-72 period (in Part II); and finally
- (iv) the criticisms by the Communist Party of China and other 'fraternal' parties (e.g. Marxist-Leninist Communist Parties of Great Britain and New Zealand in particular) in regard to the CPI(ML) policies, programmes and actions, especially on some of the writings of Charu Majumdar (in Part-II).

In addition, detailed Interrogation Reports containing the statements of eight leading Naxalite personalities have been incorporated here. Apart from the historical value of these interrogation reports, they also depict the developments of the movement as seen through the eyes of the leading figures. These also reveal the inner contradictions, mutual suspicions, attempts at self-exculpation and the pervading atmosphere of 'terror' within the party, even among leading members which prevented them or others from expressing their dissenting views for fear of liquidation by their own comrades.

Charu Majumdar's (CM) statement contains some surprisingly untrue assertions: (a) that he sent an 11-member delegation (Kanu Sanyal, Souren Bose, Kadam and his brother Khudan Mallick and seven others) to China in September 1967 for imparting "political

training and military training to them" and that (b) this delegation met Chairman Mao Tse-tung in Peking. No such team went to China, not to speak of meeting Mao! (If at all, some of them may have gone to Kathmandu to meet some official of the Chinese Embassy there). In fact, Kanu Sanyal himself has repudiated this assertion regarding his visit to China.

Souren Bose's visit to China during September-October 1970 was in a different context when CM was in a tight corner and needed some words of encouragement from the CPC leaders to bolster his precarious position. When Souren returned from China and immediately reported about the criticisms of the CPC and other fraternal parties, CM shut him out and wanted something in writing. Souren did so shortly thereafter in the presence of Saroj Dutta and Suniti Ghosh. CM asked all of them not to speak a word about this matter till an opportune moment arose, which never did.

Through Souren Bose, CM made an amazingly childish request to the CPC leaders, namely, to provide him with the equipments for setting up of a CPI(ML) radio station in India to counter the bourgeois media. True to form, Saroj Dutta had by then proclaimed that their "Radio Liberation" was functioning! When Souren met CM to report about his China visit, the first question that he asked was "what happened to the radio station matter?" Souren said that they (the Chinese leaders) laughed and brushed it aside, stating that it was not like a toy which could be carried clandestinely, at which CM wailed in desperation: "But they could have despatched these by ship to some place near the Madras coast!"<sup>2</sup>

While having a second look at the documents presented in this book, I realised that many of the measures which we introduced and practised during those critical years are perhaps even more relevant in today's scenario of senseless violence affecting various parts of our country, be it in the name of 'revolution' or ethnic and religion-based self-determination. We continue to witness, on the other hand, an equally insensitive and unimaginative politico-administrative system grossly misusing the police, para-military and armed forces. It is unfortunate that the latter, barring some honourable exceptions, continue to bludgeon their way through like a mechanised brigade, and thereby spawning many more terrorists, insurgents and 'revolutionaries' than we started with. I believe that most of our well-meaning citizens keep wondering when our political and professional leaders as well as the votaries of 'revolution' and



terrorism would realise the utter futility of the ongoing vicious cycle of terror and counter-terror, needlessly sacrificing in the process so many human lives on both sides of the spectrum.

Based on empirical and historical evidence and study, I would submit that one decisive way out of this phenomenon of spiralling violence would be for the professional leaders to painstakingly 'indoctrinate' our security forces on the lines on which Mao indoctrinated and created a new kind of force while he and all his leaders and forces were tucked away in the Yen-an region after their 'long march'. I know that the very name of Mao will be anathema to many but let us, for a change, have a fresh look at what he passionately and systematically inculcated during the critical Yen-an years, none of which has an iota of politics but are entirely ethical and practical precepts, e.g. :

### THREE MAIN RULES OF DISCIPLINE

- (1) Obey orders in all your actions.
- (2) Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses.
- (3) Turn in everything captured.

### EIGHT POINTS FOR ATTENTION

- (1) Speak politely.
- (2) Pay fairly for what you buy.
- (3) Return everything you borrow.
- (4) Pay for anything you damage.
- (5) Do not hit or swear at people.
- (6) Do not damage crops.
- (7) Do not take liberties with women.
- (8) Do not ill-treat captives.

It is a sad reflection on our professional leaders of police, para-military and Armed forces, again with honourable exceptions, that they have not tried hard and in a sustained manner to inculcate these basic principles at all levels under their respective commands. The only reason for such lack of attention to this critical aspect could be their inability to realise the vast difference this could make in the final outcome of their otherwise commendable efforts. It could indeed be their different kind of 'long march' with immense possibilities and a new kind of challenge to professionalism.

I must admit that during our Naxalbari days (1967-68) I was myself blissfully ignorant about the existence of the above Maoist

formulations. But a very determined and sustained effort was made by us to repeatedly emphasize certain guidelines and codes of conduct for our assorted police forces from districts, State Armed Police Battalions, Eastern Frontier Rifles and the Border Security Force.

What were these 'guidelines and codes of conduct'? Nothing very profound or original as would be evident. We devised these ourselves at the district police level since we, on the ground, sincerely believed that observance of these would be the strongest indicators of our humane and civilised approach which could not fail to touch the hearts of the common villagers who have an uncanny instinct for distinguishing between right and wrong, between the ethical and the brutal. In the final analysis, our assumption was fully vindicated by the response of these people, most of whom belonged to the category of the poor, the under-privileged and generally at the receiving end of our system - governmental, administrative or political, including those who claimed to be their 'saviours'.

We did not indulge in any lofty 'sermons' for our force or issue some tall orders. On the contrary, during our almost daily interactions with the police forces of all ranks at police stations and police camps, we used to have small group discussions on the following, explaining at the same time why we should or should not do certain things and how the observance of all these would shorten their agony as well as that of the local people.

Some samples of our unwritten but clearly understood 'Guidelines' and 'Codes of conduct' are indicated below :

- (1) Even though the people in general are demanding stern police action against the lawless and violent activities of the 'extremists', nobody will ever forgive any police atrocity. It is not enough for us to curb lawlessness but more important is the *manner* in which we do so.
- (2) Since every member of the force is believed to be endowed with self-respect, it was necessary for everyone to ensure that no action of even one individual member can invite public condemnation.
- (3) There must be no attitude of vindictiveness on the part of any member, who should remember that our operations are directed not against alien enemy nationals but against a section of our own countrymen who, unfortunately, have taken to the path of violence and lawlessness, and that they may have just and legitimate grievances.



- (4) Every individual officer or man participating in police operations must exercise utmost restraint in his conduct and utterances even in the midst of tense and trying situations.
- (5) Women, children and old or invalid persons, even in the 'strongholds' of the miscreants must be treated with utmost moderation and courtesy.
- (6) If any policeman purchased any item from the local people or shop (e.g. vegetables, meat, fish or anything else), he must make full payment like anybody else.'

Our force members of all ranks were told in clear terms that 'Any failure to observe these norms will be severely and promptly punished just as their observance of these would be duly appreciated.'

In this context, a few more supplementary steps taken by us deserve mention. Firstly, all police raids (almost one a day/night, especially during the critical July-August of 1967) had to be conducted under the direct supervision by senior officers (SP/Addl.SP/SDPO/Dy.SP) who were fully attuned to our guidelines. Secondly, no raid could take place without the presence of or prior approval of the SP himself. This was strictly followed, especially from 12 July, 1967 (i.e. the first large-scale police operation called "Operation Hatighisa") till about the middle of Aug. 1967, by which time the entire movement in this region had collapsed and the leading figures were either arrested or had left the district.

Thirdly, in view of the generally known public perception about police conduct relating to search, arrest and interrogation, another set of guidelines on these very vulnerable aspects of police activity in the area was prescribed. Thus it was laid down that :

- (a) Whenever a house was to be searched, no officer below the rank of a Sub-Inspector (SI) or Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) would enter a room and this had to be done in the presence of a senior member of the family, preferably the head of the house.
- (b) If any seizure was to be made, the seized articles were to be shown to the inmates of the house at the time of seizure and before preparation of the seizure list.
- (c) During the search, the household articles were not to be thrown around; every item was to be put back in the place from where it might have been removed for the purpose of the search. (The usual spectacle of literally 'ransacking' a house in the name of search was never allowed to happen, even in the mud huts of the poorest of the villagers.)

- (d) On completion of the search operation, the eldest member of the household was to be asked to check up and thereafter report to the seniormost officer present if all their belongings including cash and valuables were in order. Only after obtaining such a 'clearance' would the officer allow his party to move out of the spot.

Observance of all these self-imposed restrictions by us might have taken an additional 30 minutes or so, nothing compared to the usual ordeal of 4-5 hours' trek through mud and slush, mostly in total darkness. But the overall impression left behind with the people, especially with the members of the house subjected to search, was bound to be of a refreshingly 'different' kind of conduct on the part of the police party.

I still vividly remember one incident, out of many other such reactions during our July-August 1967 raids and searches. On this particular occasion, I sought the 'clearance' from the sole occupant of the mud hut - an old, withered widow who perhaps could just about manage to eke out a living. As she came out of her hut after 'inspection', she stated with tears in her eyes that her torch-light was missing, perhaps the most valuable item she possessed. The word was immediately passed around to our officers and men in the raiding party, with the warning that either her torch-light was to be traced within 15 minutes, or else each one of us (including myself) would have to pay to this old lady on the spot five rupees each (which would have amounted to more than four times the cost of a new torch-light of her specification). Within a couple of minutes, a constable came forward, with apparent embarrassment, and handed over the torch-light to me. I returned it to the old lady and apologised for the act of indiscretion on the part of one of us. And I still recall the face of this poverty-stricken old widow, which lit up as if she had got back her lost child! I don't think anything could be more rewarding for a policeman than such a spectacle.

I never thought that we were doing anything spectacular or extraordinary nor were we doing all this in a painstaking manner for months on end as a 'public relations activity'. As a matter of fact, our guidelines and their salutary impact on the villagers were hardly ever publicised by us. At the same time, we felt that nothing could be more rewarding than even the flicker of a smile on the face of the residents of the house or the village raided or searched by us, in place of the usual feeling of disgust and disdain left behind by a mindless raiding party.



Allied to this was our instructions regarding arrest and subsequent handling of such persons. A very large majority of the people taken into 'temporary' custody by us during raids were released on the spot after a preliminary screening; of the 'doubtful' ones, we either allowed them to be released on PR (personal) bond at the PS or we did not object to their being granted bail by the court the next day. Only a handful of persons suspected to be involved in the commission of a heinous offence were taken into police custody for further investigation. Torturing a person in police custody or otherwise was just not to be tolerated under any circumstances and the message was clearly understood by everybody. Even instances of minor misbehaviour were few.

Thus the usual 'fear' associated with visit to a police station was almost absent during those difficult months. In fact, a stage was reached from about the third week of July 1967 when groups of 'deserters' from the ranks of the extremists swamped our three police stations of Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa, and it was a tough job for our PS officers to feed them before asking them to 'go home' the same day, also telling them that they were not wanted in any of our cases. For quite some days during July, September 1967, these three PSs at times looked like 'relief camps', and the PS officers and men of all ranks accomplished this self-imposed task of theirs ungrudgingly, with dedication and enthusiasm. Which police leader would not feel genuinely proud of such spontaneous acts on the part of his officers and men in the midst of critical circumstances?

The result of our efforts was unexpectedly rewarding for us just as it was distressingly discomfiting for the extremists, which was so very apparent from public reactions during those months and even in the remote villages of Siliguri sub-division. As a matter of fact, this was admitted by some of their leading figures including Jangal Santhal, Mujibar Rahman and later by Souren Bose.

That these 'guidelines' were not mere platitudes but were sought to be seriously and sincerely practised by us all was borne out by the thousands of 'ordinary' villagers, tea garden labourers and poor peasants, within or outside the extremist fold, with whom we came in contact for several months. As a result, a stage was reached when these people developed greater trust and confidence in us than in their leaders. This was undoubtedly a decisive factor behind the apparently inexplicable phenomenon: Charu Majumdar's brand of

Naxalism could not flourish even in later years in his home turf of Naxalbari region. This could be possible primarily because we did not leave behind a trail of brutality, bitterness and hostility among the local population, quite often associated with large-scale police operations and that too over a period of some months.

## II

Let us now shift our focus to the 1969-72 period of Naxalite activities. Charu Majumdar was literally shattered by the turn of events in the Naxalbari region during 1967. His 'armed revolution' (someone called it a fantasy) disintegrated in less than six months following the commencement of his extremist and adventurist enterprise and that too in his home ground. This gasping old rebel was provided the much needed 'oxygen' by a group of CPI(M) dissidents in Calcutta, first through the formation of the 'Naxalbari O' Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti' (NOKSS), followed by the All-India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) during 1968-69. Charubabu hardly knew these CPI(M) dissidents even of West Bengal closely enough, not to speak of the leading dissidents of other States. Sushital Ray Chaudury and Saroj Dutta were two of the notable dissident stalwarts in West Bengal but both of them were largely engaged in the work of publication of the party mouthpiece. None of them had any firm and identifiable base because they were not known to have been leading party organisers in the field. Asit Sen, Parimal Dasgupta, Parimal Sengupta and a few others were among the field-level workers and organisers but their forte was in trade union and other mass movements, which was anathema to Charubabu.

However, all of them were in a state of confusion and disarray, especially since 1966-67 when the CPI(M) not only decided to take active part in the Assembly elections but, buoyed by their victory, decided to join the first United Front Government of West Bengal in March 1967. The dissidents in the CPI(M) were, therefore, desperately looking for a way out and thought that the 'path of Naxalbari' was the answer. Initial posturings by the Communist Party of China (CPC) on 3 July, 1967 that the Naxalbari upsurge was like a 'spring thunder over India' suddenly bolstered the sagging morale not only of Charubabu but of the other dissidents in Kolkata and elsewhere.



The CPC leaders, however, did not take long to realise that their reading of not only the Indian situation but also of the 'chief stoker' of the prairie fire, namely, Charu Majumdar, was grossly erroneous. But by then the shots had been fired by the CPI(M) ultras with the formation of the CPI(ML) on 22 April 1969. Soon thereafter, the mass-based leaders were either thrown out or they walked out when they realised that their utility vis-a-vis Charubabu was no longer there. Even Asit Sen who presided over the Kolkata Maidan public meeting of 1st May 1969 where the formation of the CPI(ML) was announced, was the first casualty, followed in quick succession by Parimal Dasgupta and many others who had provided the initial foothold for Charubabu in the Kolkata milieu, a totally alien territory for him.

However, Charu Majumdar acted quite fast, ably aided by Sushital Ray Choudhury and Saroj Dutta of the old guard and Prof. Suniti Ghosh of relatively recent vintage, to consolidate his position with the formation of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) and the creation of a new party called the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) with Charu Majumdar at the centre stage. His position was further strengthened in the Party Congress held in Kolkata (15-16 March 1970) where an unsuccessful attempt was made, with obvious blessings from him, to have him declared as the 'revolutionary authority' in India. But this did not prevent him from following his natural urge for a short-cut to Mao's 'protracted struggle'.

It is generally known that power corrupts. But it is quite unusual that the very 'thought' of power may also have a dangerously corrosive effect on certain persons. How else does one explain the fact that when his own edifice was showing palpable cracks, Charu Majumdar could 'assure' Pakistan's chief of its Eastern Command in East Pakistan (Lt.Gen. A.A.K.Niazi) that in case of their attack on India, the West Bengal Naxalites under his leadership would 'join hands' with them? This is what Niazi wrote to Gen. Hamid (chief of Pak Army) in June 1971, requesting permission to attack India 'in pursuit of Mukti Bahini', before India could launch its attack: "... We are in touch with Mr. Lam Danga (sic), leader of the Mezo (sic) freedom fighters, Mr. A.Z.Phizo, leader of the Naga freedom fighters in Assam (?) and Charu Mauzumdor (sic), leader of the Naxalites of West Bengal. They will join hands with us..."<sup>3</sup>

The rest of the Naxalite story is too well-known - open encouragement of desecration of statues of national leaders, attacks

on schools, colleges, libraries and laboratories in the cities and towns since May-June 1970 when the youths could not be 'suitably integrated with rural peasantry' nor could they be kept back and fully 'utilised' in the villages. Thus in West Bengal, 1257 such instances of vandalism took place, mostly during May-July 1970, of which 376 were in Kolkata alone; some instances of this have been incorporated in this publication. Simultaneously, CM kept on urging the young cadres to form 'secret and conspiratorial' groups for 'annihilation of class enemies' in a most brutal and senseless manner. Even Che Guevara or Carlos Marighella (proponent of the urban guerrilla operations) could not have done better.

One look at Mazumdar's booklet titled *A few words on guerrilla action*. (April 1970) will reveal the depth of depravity into which the youths were being consigned:

"The Guerrilla Band should be formed in complete secrecy .... The method of forming these bands is conspiratorial... **The conspiracy should be on personal and individual basis. The intellectual comrades should take the initiative in this matter ....** (who) should approach the poor peasants with required potentials and whisper 'Won't it be good to liquidate such and such jotedar'....For this .... we should start by liquidating local 'class enemies'.... The guerrilla band should be small, compact and mobile .... each band should be limited to the maximum of seven. Normally the qualifying test of a guerrilla band will be their capability in handling ordinary weapons in killing one or two persons in sudden raids .... **Hatred against a particular 'class enemy' should be fomented....** The guerrillas should move in from different directions pretending to be harmless people, meet at a pre-selected place, wait for the enemy and as soon as the opportunity arises jump on the enemy and liquidate him...." (emphasis added.)

Kolkata and its suburbs had the harrowing experience of witnessing the handiwork of many such murder maniacs created through the above booklet and many other writings in the CPI(ML) mouth-pieces *Deshabrati* (edited by Saroj Dutta) and *Liberation* (edited initially by Sushital Roy Choudhuri and later by Suniti Ghosh). *Deshabrati* in particular used to whip up the murder mania by presenting distorted and gory accounts of the 'heroic deeds' of such Action Squads ('guerrilla bands' in CM's words), thereby creating a dangerous competition among the action squads in regard to their 'success rate' (i.e. number of murders committed). A number of youths belonging to such squads confessed to police about this trend.



This emphasis on brutal killing had another damaging fallout, namely, 'propensity to induct criminal and anti-social elements into action squads to 'ensure better score'. There is no reason to think that the top CPI(ML) leaders were unaware of this trend. On the contrary, they prescribed a facile 'solution'. In a number of articles in the party organs and also through letters to field commanders, it was being suggested that 'greater emphasis should be laid to impart political education for such elements'. And what was the nature of the 'political education' being given? From interrogation of a large number of such elements after their arrest, it was learnt that all that they were required to do was to put their palm on a Bengali version of the red booklet titled "Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung" and say that from then onwards they would abide by the dictates of the 'Chairman' and the CPI(ML) leaders! Incidentally, most such elements were either illiterate or semi-literate, the usual specimens of the underworld lumpens of Kolkata and other urban pockets. It was no surprise, therefore, that a large number of such elements could be arrested by police since many of them were not totally unknown to police stations and the Detective Department (DD) officers, leading to further arrests with the assistance of such characters.

Who were the 'class enemies' thus annihilated? Mostly policemen to start with, followed by CPI(M) cadres and others. Such victims in Calcutta alone during 1970 were 17 policemen and 2 Home Guards + 9 CPI(M) cadres + 16 others / a total of 44. In 1971 the murdered persons included 16 policemen and 3 Home Guards + 34 CPI(M) cadres + 57 others / a total of 110. The number of people annihilated as class enemies in West Bengal till the end of 1975 was 287 in Kolkata, 73 in Burdwan district, 6 in Bankura, 8 in Purulia, 77 in Midnapore, 151 in Birbhum, 147 in 24-Parganas, 28 in Howrah, 27 in Hooghly, 91 in Nadia, 33 in Murshidabad, 9 in West Dinajpur, 26 in Darjeeling, 35 in Jalpaiguri and 6 in Cooch Behar.

The murdered 'class enemies' also included such eminent and respected personalities like Justice K.L.Roy of Calcutta High Court (for allegedly refusing to pay the substantially jacked up ransom amount) and Prof. Gopal Sen, Vice Chancellor of Jadavpur University (for objecting to the University hostels being utilised for sheltering known criminals and anti-socials.).

The above annihilation figures include Naxalites killed by Naxalites, the inevitable spiral of blood-thirst: 3 in 1971 and 1 in 1972 according

to police reports then. But later recovery of documents and interrogation of Naxalites including Asim Chatterjee, Souren Bose, Sadhan Sarkar, Shyamal Ghosh and even of Charu Majumdar besides many others revealed many more 'liquidations' of Naxalites by Naxalites, some of which were alleged to have been carried out at the behest of the top leaders. Some indication of this may be seen in Asim Chatterjee's letter to CM to which he received no reply from CM. In this letter and also in his statement to police after arrest, he alleged that one of his trusted comrades named 'Chandi' (real name was Sudhir Chandra Nag) was murdered in Dhanbad under 'suspicious circumstances' when Asim had fallen out with CM; Asim strongly suspected that CM had engineered this murder.<sup>4</sup>

In his last letter dt. 7.5.72 to Charu Majumdar, Suniti Ghosh @ Soumya, this old associate of CM, expressed grave apprehension about his own 'liquidation' as a result of dangerous inner-party feud and urged CM to stop this suicidal game. He also charged the leadership (by implication CM) for causing the annihilation of South Calcutta Regional Committee Secretary (Kamal Sanyal) and RC Member (Agni Roy) after falsely labelling them as 'police informers' and alleged that some rumours were being spread that he (Suniti) too was a 'police spy'. Sunitibabu further stated in this letter that "The 'tit-for-tat' struggle has started within the party itself; those who have killed the comrades, especially those who have had them killed, have put a noose round the neck of the party. As the days pass, the noose is sitting tight and unless you take early steps to remedy the situation, it will finish the party." Sunitibabu then reminded CM about the murder of Chandi (Asim Chatterjee's associate) of Dhanbad and the report of two members of the leading team of Bihar to the effect that Dilip (Dilip Banerjee, a close confidant of CM) had incited this murder and that "A programme of elimination of Asim's supporters in Nadia was reported to you (CM) by a leading comrade of Nadia. At that time Dilip was keeping contact with some Nadia comrades, and within a few days that boy (who had earlier reported to CM about the programme of annihilation of Asim's supporters in Nadia) himself became a martyr in 'police firing'.. Such brutal killings of comrades is unmistakably pointing to one thing: this sort of crime is the ultimate and irresistible result of a left-adventurist and left-opportunistic line."<sup>5</sup>

Along with that letter, Suniti Ghosh enclosed a copy of his letter to Dilip Banerjee in which he virtually charged the latter for his



responsibility in the killings of Kamal, Agni, Chandi and the Nadia comrade. He also accused Dilip of 'breaking all norms of party discipline by carrying on an organised slander campaign' against Kanu Sanyal and Suniti Ghosh, thereby laying the blames for all such 'misdeeds' and 'crimes' squarely at the door of CM. One can imagine the level of total isolation of CM and his resultant desperation in relying on Dilip as his hatchet man.

Two other documents recovered during CM's arrest speak of murder of party comrades Panchu and Ramen (both of Port Regional Committee?) in April 1972, after an initial attempt to portray these as killings by police, just as it was done in the case of Kamal and Agni. Even Souren Bose, one of CM's most trusted comrades for years, admitted that at least two comrades got murdered for refusing to follow CM's authority blindly.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, we may make special mention about a few ghastly incidents. Shri Gorachand Sanyal, an extremely dignified and ex-INA officer who was then an Inspector of Security Control of Calcutta Police had been living in the Baranagar area for decades. When Baranagar-Cossipore became the favourite killing-fields of the Naxalites, he was strongly advised by his senior officers to shift himself at least for some months to a 'safer' area. But he politely declined to do so on the ground that he was like a loving grandfather or uncle to most of the young boys and girls of the area, and as such there was no cause for concern about him. This tall, fair-complexioned and white-haired gentleman of nearly 55 years was brutally murdered by the Naxalites close to his house on 27 July 1971 and beheaded thereafter; the severed head was put on a *thali* and from the oozing blood, a young Naxalite girl decorated her own hands, feet and forehead in full public view!<sup>7</sup> I wonder if such young persons could develop into normal human beings in later life.

And this was not the solitary instance of such unimaginable brutality and subsequent display of the same. But I do recall the case of one Naxalite youth, a student of Presidency College, who developed serious mental aberrations after committing an act of brutal 'annihilation' because, around this time, these youths were also being told by their mentors that "no one is a true Communist, unless he has stained his hands in the blood of 'class enemies'".<sup>8</sup> Since it became difficult for his Naxalite brother and other comrades to 'manage' this young man in Kolkata, he was taken by them to a village in the district of Midnapore (or Purulia?), hoping that he would recover

there quickly. Instead of improving, his condition was reportedly getting worse. Later his Naxalite brother and other comrades decided to bring him back to Kolkata for treatment. In Special Branch at Kolkata, we got to know about this matter at this stage including the case of annihilation leading to such mental breakdown. We instructed our officers to make sure that not only the affected person but his brother also was not to be arrested which could only lead to further setback for these young men for all time to come.

Even before such extreme brutalities began to be perpetrated with disastrous impact on a number of honest and ideologically motivated youths (howsoever superficial or distorted their ideology might have been), some of us in the Special Branch of Kolkata Police had decided that we must seek to break new ground in dealing with the Naxalite youths, largely on the lines of our successful experiments in Naxalbari during 1967-68. Accordingly, we introduced some special and 'unconventional' measures which were sincerely followed by us in the Special Branch from late 1969 to early 1972. These deserve mention not only because of their impact during the 1970s and thereafter but because such steps are of considerable significance even in today's situation in various States of our country :

(1) Interaction with parents of known Naxalites (arrested or not) : We found that in most cases the parents were not aware about the involvement of their wards in acts of Naxalite violence. As soon as we came to know of such Naxalites, especially students (school/college/university), we sought to collect his/her parent's name and address. Thereafter, the DC, Special Branch used to write a personal letter to the father to the following effect: "We have been receiving some information about the involvement of your son/daughter (name mentioned) in unlawful Naxalite activities, about which you and your wife may or may not be aware. We would like to discuss with you this matter, so that we may evolve a course of action which may be in the long-term interest of you and your ward. With this objective in view, I am inviting you for a discussion with us in our office. In case you are interested, please contact Shri .... DC, SB/Calcutta over phone (a direct tel. no. mentioned) to fix up mutually convenient date and time for such discussion. It would be appreciated if you come along with your wife." (The presence of the mother of the Naxalite youth was very important because the father being away for his work could not know much about the movements of the ward, which generally the mother did. Apart from this, it was



considered necessary that there should be scope for subsequent discussion between the husband and the wife as to the best possible course for their ward.)

In addition, a special advertisement was also inserted in most major newspapers (Bengali and English) of Kolkata on the above lines, giving out a direct tel. no. to be contacted for the purpose.

The initial reaction or response was as could be expected: some of the parents thought that there must be a 'catch' in this initiative of ours and as such they were not forthcoming; some even thought that this was perhaps a 'pressure' tactic to make them hand over their wards to us. Both these were farthest from our thoughts. Fortunately, some parents decided to give it a try and contacted us. During such exclusive discussions, held separately and not in groups of parents, we used to explain our objective, just as was mentioned in the letter and it was made clear that we did not have any 'hidden agenda', that we would share with them whatever information we had about their ward (which need not be taken by them as the most authentic one and the last word on the subject) and expected them to tell us frankly what they would like us to do and they themselves would like to do as follow-up. We generally asked them not to chastise their ward nor were they to tell him/her that they got such information after visiting the SB office, since this could only make the ward unnecessarily hostile towards them. After the initial interaction, we used to tell the parents to ponder over the whole matter and contact us again, if they so desired, for further discussion about possible courses of mutually-agreed steps vis-à-vis their ward.

After a couple of weeks, our bonafide and credentials were duly established and thereafter the number of parents contacting us and coming over for discussions kept on mounting. Many parents did not wait for any communication from us but contacted us on their own, seeking our advice about their wards. Of the many cases dealt with by us in the above manner, I may mention only two by way of illustration, the full details of which cannot be disclosed for obvious reasons. I know quite a few of them are very well settled in life in India and abroad and we have continued to wish them well.

DDK was an outstanding student in a mofussil school, joined the Presidency College in Calcutta for higher studies and was a boarder of its Hindu Hostel. He got involved in the usual Naxalite activities and after a couple of months was arrested by the Special Branch of Calcutta (SB) in December, 1970. During interrogation, it appeared

that he was somewhat repentant for his activities though he honestly believed in Maoist ideology. He blurted out once during talks with me that he had ruined his parents who sold some land and other valuables for ensuring his studies in Calcutta. What struck me most was his transparent honesty. It transpired that his father was a Class-III railway employee of very modest means. After getting his father's full name and address, I sent a special messenger to his father with a letter of mine, informing him about the arrest of his son and requesting him to come to Calcutta within the next 2-3 days for some discussion about his son's involvement in Naxalite activities. DDK's worried father came the very next morning. The father and son met in my room, both holding back their tears. After a short while, we sent them to an adjacent room so that they could talk among themselves in privacy. When they came back to my room, DDK stated calmly that he deserved to be punished for whatever he had done and that after undergoing imprisonment as may be ordered by the court, he would like to go back to his village to till whatever little land they were left with so that he may compensate for the loss caused to the family by him. I asked the father to go back home the same evening and be fully assured that no harm will be caused to their son by us and that we would try our best to help DDK so that he could continue his studies in Kolkata or elsewhere, if he so desired.

The very next day, I prepared a detailed report about the case concerning DDK, our impression about the boy and his family, making out a special case for his release on bail and also discharge from the case later. We made out a strong case, treating the DDK case as an illustration, that keeping such young and idealist persons (though obviously misguided and misled by others) in jail for a long period (either as under-trial prisoners or even as convicted ones), would be counter-productive in the long run and on all counts - from the point of view of the person concerned, his family members and also for the government and the society. We also cited cogent reasons as to why we held such a view, especially in regard to Naxalites who appeared to us during our interactions with them and after analysing their socio-economic, educational and other background that such persons were not likely to revert to the path of violent activity. I personally took the papers to the Commissioner of Police (Shri R.K.Gupta, IP, JP) who fortunately agreed to my proposal but suggested that I should get it cleared from the Government. I went from Lalbazar to the Writers' Buildings, met the Home Secretary



(Shri B.R.Gupta, IAS) and the Chief Secretary (Shri N.C.Sengupta, ICS) and they too agreed with my line of argument and the course of suggested action.

This was the beginning of an unusual and unorthodox experimental process through which a number of such cases were dealt with for the next year and a half, till the virulence of the Naxalite violence abated by about early 1972. I still recall at least 60 to 80 such cases in which we could secure unconditional release of the involved youths by applying the above yardstick. I may mention here that our judgment or decision was not based on the financial or other clout of the family or any other consideration except that the Naxalite concerned deserved to be given a chance to lead a normal life and develop himself as a healthy citizen. In all such cases, we duly kept our superior officers and the government informed.

It has been a matter of satisfaction to us that most such released persons did not belie our judgment. I know that many of them got established in life as respectable and responsible citizens here or abroad. I must also make it abundantly clear that we never tried to enlist the 'co-operation' of any of these youths as our 'agents' or 'informers' (both of which I considered to be demeaning) or even to 'pump out' any information from these persons (while in police custody or out on bail) through any pressure tactics, not to speak of resorting to any illegal or brutal methods. Even obtaining any 'good conduct bond' from them or their parents was also something, which we never even contemplated.

The only 'request' which I usually made to them was to the following effect: 'You should consider yourself a truly free person from today so far as the police is concerned and we will not do anything to keep you under any watch. In case you feel that this was not being followed by us, I would request you to give me a ring (my direct telephone no. was given) so that we can take care of any such breach of our promise by any policeman, whether of the Special Branch or of any other police unit of Calcutta or elsewhere. In return, I have only one request to make: if at any stage you decide to go back to the path of violence, I would expect you to send me a letter or drop a postcard to my address by name to simply say that 'you have decided to go back to the fold' and we will not hold any special grudge against you for doing so.' The underlying object of ours in stating the above was to understand if our judgment was flawed and make suitable corrections in our assessments.' It came as no surprise

to us that not even one telephone call or letter came to us to indicate that the person concerned was going back to his earlier path. And this fully justified our course of action and our trust in those young persons.

Let me cite here another 'bad' case dealt with by us in the Special Branch of Calcutta Police in the above manner:

It relates to the leading member (Convenor) of a very active 'action squad' which operated mostly in the Beliaghata-Maniktala areas of Kolkata. After one of their failed 'actions', this group was given a chase by the local police along with some members of the public. But they could not be apprehended as they entered into a sprawling house which was known to be the residence of a Minister of State in the Govt. of India. The police party which tried to enter the house was taken to task by the inmates of this 'VIP residence'. On coming to know of this unmerited discomfiture of the local police, I spoke to the Divisional Deputy Commissioner to say that his officers need not feel bad for being treated thus and that the SB would take suitable follow-up action. Meanwhile the DC was advised not to have this matter pursued by his officers for the time being. We did not take any overt action for some days so that the inmates of the house as well as the action squad members could feel confident about their security in this 'VIP shelter'. We had, however, organised discreet surveillance over that house and its surrounding areas. We did not have to wait for too long. A surprise raid could be organised by a plainclothes team of SB when the 'honourable' Minister was in residence! Most of the squad members including its leader could be apprehended and the inmates were told firmly that any future attempt at using this house as a shelter for persons wanted in criminal cases would land some of the inmates too in jail.

During interrogation, the team leader turned out to be the son of a respected and well-known literary personality of West Bengal. In accordance with our usual practice, we sent word to the father for a discussion with us. The crest-fallen father came and we treated him with due courtesy which we had been extending to other parents as well. We had to make more than our usual efforts, however, since it was indeed a bad case but we succeeded eventually in getting this bright young man released.

This took place in 1971. Nearly 20 years later, when I was the chief of the State Police, I unexpectedly received a very warm letter dt. 21.3.1991 from the father of this young person, a portion of



which read thus: ".... I vividly recall that afternoon meeting in your room. I had gone prepared for stern rebuke but instead you treated us with unexpected kindness. I am writing to you after so many years, just to say 'thank you' and to express our gratitude and also to inform you that our son is alive and well-placed in .... organisation...." What better reward can one expect than such spontaneous expression of appreciation of our 'non-traditional' measures during a period of pervasive madness!

(2) Torture/ Third Degree treatment of persons in custody of SB was totally 'prohibited'. I had presumed that such brutal methods are and should be alien to the Special Branch culture; as it was normally concerned with political and communal intelligence, internal security matters and counter-espionage. However, in the wake of the Naxalite violence in and around Calcutta, the additional task of dealing with the Naxalites devolved on the SB also in addition to other units of Kolkata Police. But in the early stage of handling of the Naxalites, three cases came to my notice in which a few SB officers were alleged to have resorted to some amount of Third Degree though it was one of my recurring themes during discussions with our officers that everyone in SB must adhere to a code of civilised and gentlemanly conduct at all times during raids, searches, arrest and interrogation of arrested persons. After coming to know of these aberrations, three steps were taken: (i) the 3 or 4 officers who were considered to be prone to such malpractice were promptly thrown out of SB; (ii) all the officers and men of SB were assembled one day and they were told in no uncertain terms that brutal and inhuman methods in dealing with the Naxalites will just not be tolerated and any future recurrence of such methods by any SB officer will be severely punished. There was, however, no such occasion for taking any punitive action against any of our officers, the large majority of these officers having been possessed of a much greater sense of decency and propriety compared to the general run of policemen. (iii) In order to prepare ourselves for a long haul, I started holding more rigorous study classes with our officers in small groups to bring home to them the 'guidelines and codes of conduct' which were successfully practised by all ranks in Darjeeling District during the Naxalbari upsurge of 1967-68, mentioning to them the overall impact of these on the villagers including many belonging to the extremist camp.

(3) To ensure this and to prevent the usual tendency to resort

শ্রী ব্রজেন দাসের পুত্রস্বর্গীয়  
প্রতিশ্রুতি

১৯৬৮-৬৯-৭০-৭১-৭২-৭৩-৭৪-৭৫-৭৬-৭৭-৭৮-৭৯-৮০-৮১-৮২-৮৩-৮৪-৮৫-৮৬-৮৭-৮৮-৮৯-৯০-৯১-৯২-৯৩-৯৪-৯৫-৯৬-৯৭-৯৮-৯৯-২০০০-২০০১-২০০২-২০০৩-২০০৪-২০০৫-২০০৬-২০০৭-২০০৮-২০০৯-২০১০-২০১১-২০১২-২০১৩-২০১৪-২০১৫-২০১৬-২০১৭-২০১৮-২০১৯-২০২০-২০২১-২০২২-২০২৩-২০২৪-২০২৫-২০২৬-২০২৭-২০২৮-২০২৯-২০৩০-২০৩১-২০৩২-২০৩৩-২০৩৪-২০৩৫-২০৩৬-২০৩৭-২০৩৮-২০৩৯-২০৪০-২০৪১-২০৪২-২০৪৩-২০৪৪-২০৪৫-২০৪৬-২০৪৭-২০৪৮-২০৪৯-২০৫০-২০৫১-২০৫২-২০৫৩-২০৫৪-২০৫৫-২০৫৬-২০৫৭-২০৫৮-২০৫৯-২০৬০-২০৬১-২০৬২-২০৬৩-২০৬৪-২০৬৫-২০৬৬-২০৬৭-২০৬৮-২০৬৯-২০৭০-২০৭১-২০৭২-২০৭৩-২০৭৪-২০৭৫-২০৭৬-২০৭৭-২০৭৮-২০৭৯-২০৮০-২০৮১-২০৮২-২০৮৩-২০৮৪-২০৮৫-২০৮৬-২০৮৭-২০৮৮-২০৮৯-২০৯০-২০৯১-২০৯২-২০৯৩-২০৯৪-২০৯৫-২০৯৬-২০৯৭-২০৯৮-২০৯৯-২১০০-২১০১-২১০২-২১০৩-২১০৪-২১০৫-২১০৬-২১০৭-২১০৮-২১০৯-২১১০-২১১১-২১১২-২১১৩-২১১৪-২১১৫-২১১৬-২১১৭-২১১৮-২১১৯-২১২০-২১২১-২১২২-২১২৩-২১২৪-২১২৫-২১২৬-২১২৭-২১২৮-২১২৯-২১৩০-২১৩১-২১৩২-২১৩৩-২১৩৪-২১৩৫-২১৩৬-২১৩৭-২১৩৮-২১৩৯-২১৪০-২১৪১-২১৪২-২১৪৩-২১৪৪-২১৪৫-২১৪৬-২১৪৭-২১৪৮-২১৪৯-২১৫০-২১৫১-২১৫২-২১৫৩-২১৫৪-২১৫৫-২১৫৬-২১৫৭-২১৫৮-২১৫৯-২১৬০-২১৬১-২১৬২-২১৬৩-২১৬৪-২১৬৫-২১৬৬-২১৬৭-২১৬৮-২১৬৯-২১৭০-২১৭১-২১৭২-২১৭৩-২১৭৪-২১৭৫-২১৭৬-২১৭৭-২১৭৮-২১৭৯-২১৮০-২১৮১-২১৮২-২১৮৩-২১৮৪-২১৮৫-২১৮৬-২১৮৭-২১৮৮-২১৮৯-২১৯০-২১৯১-২১৯২-২১৯৩-২১৯৪-২১৯৫-২১৯৬-২১৯৭-২১৯৮-২১৯৯-২২০০-২২০১-২২০২-২২০৩-২২০৪-২২০৫-২২০৬-২২০৭-২২০৮-২২০৯-২২১০-২২১১-২২১২-২২১৩-২২১৪-২২১৫-২২১৬-২২১৭-২২১৮-২২১৯-২২২০-২২২১-২২২২-২২২৩-২২২৪-২২২৫-২২২৬-২২২৭-২২২৮-২২২৯-২২৩০-২২৩১-২২৩২-২২৩৩-২২৩৪-২২৩৫-২২৩৬-২২৩৭-২২৩৮-২২৩৯-২২৪০-২২৪১-২২৪২-২২৪৩-২২৪৪-২২৪৫-২২৪৬-২২৪৭-২২৪৮-২২৪৯-২২৫০-২২৫১-২২৫২-২২৫৩-২২৫৪-২২৫৫-২২৫৬-২২৫৭-২২৫৮-২২৫৯-২২৬০-২২৬১-২২৬২-২২৬৩-২২৬৪-২২৬৫-২২৬৬-২২৬৭-২২৬৮-২২৬৯-২২৭০-২২৭১-২২৭২-২২৭৩-২২৭৪-২২৭৫-২২৭৬-২২৭৭-২২৭৮-২২৭৯-২২৮০-২২৮১-২২৮২-২২৮৩-২২৮৪-২২৮৫-২২৮৬-২২৮৭-২২৮৮-২২৮৯-২২৯০-২২৯১-২২৯২-২২৯৩-২২৯৪-২২৯৫-২২৯৬-২২৯৭-২২৯৮-২২৯৯-২৩০০-২৩০১-২৩০২-২৩০৩-২৩০৪-২৩০৫-২৩০৬-২৩০৭-২৩০৮-২৩০৯-২৩১০-২৩১১-২৩১২-২৩১৩-২৩১৪-২৩১৫-২৩১৬-২৩১৭-২৩১৮-২৩১৯-২৩২০-২৩২১-২৩২২-২৩২৩-২৩২৪-২৩২৫-২৩২৬-২৩২৭-২৩২৮-২৩২৯-২৩৩০-২৩৩১-২৩৩২-২৩৩৩-২৩৩৪-২৩৩৫-২৩৩৬-২৩৩৭-২৩৩৮-২৩৩৯-২৩৪০-২৩৪১-২৩৪২-২৩৪৩-২৩৪৪-২৩৪৫-২৩৪৬-২৩৪৭-২৩৪৮-২৩৪৯-২৩৫০-২৩৫১-২৩৫২-২৩৫৩-২৩৫৪-২৩৫৫-২৩৫৬-২৩৫৭-২৩৫৮-২৩৫৯-২৩৬০-২৩৬১-২৩৬২-২৩৬৩-২৩৬৪-২৩৬৫-২৩৬৬-২৩৬৭-২৩৬৮-২৩৬৯-২৩৭০-২৩৭১-২৩৭২-২৩৭৩-২৩৭৪-২৩৭৫-২৩৭৬-২৩৭৭-২৩৭৮-২৩৭৯-২৩৮০-২৩৮১-২৩৮২-২৩৮৩-২৩৮৪-২৩৮৫-২৩৮৬-২৩৮৭-২৩৮৮-২৩৮৯-২৩৯০-২৩৯১-২৩৯২-২৩৯৩-২৩৯৪-২৩৯৫-২৩৯৬-২৩৯৭-২৩৯৮-২৩৯৯-২৪০০-২৪০১-২৪০২-২৪০৩-২৪০৪-২৪০৫-২৪০৬-২৪০৭-২৪০৮-২৪০৯-২৪১০-২৪১১-২৪১২-২৪১৩-২৪১৪-২৪১৫-২৪১৬-২৪১৭-২৪১৮-২৪১৯-২৪২০-২৪২১-২৪২২-২৪২৩-২৪২৪-২৪২৫-২৪২৬-২৪২৭-২৪২৮-২৪২৯-২৪৩০-২৪৩১-২৪৩২-২৪৩৩-২৪৩৪-২৪৩৫-২৪৩৬-২৪৩৭-২৪৩৮-২৪৩৯-২৪৪০-২৪৪১-২৪৪২-২৪৪৩-২৪৪৪-২৪৪৫-২৪৪৬-২৪৪৭-২৪৪৮-২৪৪৯-২৪৫০-২৪৫১-২৪৫২-২৪৫৩-২৪৫৪-২৪৫৫-২৪৫৬-২৪৫৭-২৪৫৮-২৪৫৯-২৪৬০-২৪৬১-২৪৬২-২৪৬৩-২৪৬৪-২৪৬৫-২৪৬৬-২৪৬৭-২৪৬৮-২৪৬৯-২৪৭০-২৪৭১-২৪৭২-২৪৭৩-২৪৭৪-২৪৭৫-২৪৭৬-২৪৭৭-২৪৭৮-২৪৭৯-২৪৮০-২৪৮১-২৪৮২-২৪৮৩-২৪৮৪-২৪৮৫-২৪৮৬-২৪৮৭-২৪৮৮-২৪৮৯-২৪৯০-২৪৯১-২৪৯২-২৪৯৩-২৪৯৪-২৪৯৫-২৪৯৬-২৪৯৭-২৪৯৮-২৪৯৯-২৫০০-২৫০১-২৫০২-২৫০৩-২৫০৪-২৫০৫-২৫০৬-২৫০৭-২৫০৮-২৫০৯-২৫১০-২৫১১-২৫১২-২৫১৩-২৫১৪-২৫১৫-২৫১৬-২৫১৭-২৫১৮-২৫১৯-২৫২০-২৫২১-২৫২২-২৫২৩-২৫২৪-২৫২৫-২৫২৬-২৫২৭-২৫২৮-২৫২৯-২৫৩০-২৫৩১-২৫৩২-২৫৩৩-২৫৩৪-২৫৩৫-২৫৩৬-২৫৩৭-২৫৩৮-২৫৩৯-২৫৪০-২৫৪১-২৫৪২-২৫৪৩-২৫৪৪-২৫৪৫-২৫৪৬-২৫৪৭-২৫৪৮-২৫৪৯-২৫৫০-২৫৫১-২৫৫২-২৫৫৩-২৫৫৪-২৫৫৫-২৫৫৬-২৫৫৭-২৫৫৮-২৫৫৯-২৫৬০-২৫৬১-২৫৬২-২৫৬৩-২৫৬৪-২৫৬৫-২৫৬৬-২৫৬৭-২৫৬৮-২৫৬৯-২৫৭০-২৫৭১-২৫৭২-২৫৭৩-২৫৭৪-২৫৭৫-২৫৭৬-২৫৭৭-২৫৭৮-২৫৭৯-২৫৮০-২৫৮১-২৫৮২-২৫৮৩-২৫৮৪-২৫৮৫-২৫৮৬-২৫৮৭-২৫৮৮-২৫৮৯-২৫৯০-২৫৯১-২৫৯২-২৫৯৩-২৫৯৪-২৫৯৫-২৫৯৬-২৫৯৭-২৫৯৮-২৫৯৯-২৬০০-২৬০১-২৬০২-২৬০৩-২৬০৪-২৬০৫-২৬০৬-২৬০৭-২৬০৮-২৬০৯-২৬১০-২৬১১-২৬১২-২৬১৩-২৬১৪-২৬১৫-২৬১৬-২৬১৭-২৬১৮-২৬১৯-২৬২০-২৬২১-২৬২২-২৬২৩-২৬২৪-২৬২৫-২৬২৬-২৬২৭-২৬২৮-২৬২৯-২৬৩০-২৬৩১-২৬৩২-২৬৩৩-২৬৩৪-২৬৩৫-২৬৩৬-২৬৩৭-২৬৩৮-২৬৩৯-২৬৪০-২৬৪১-২৬৪২-২৬৪৩-২৬৪৪-২৬৪৫-২৬৪৬-২৬৪৭-২৬৪৮-২৬৪৯-২৬৫০-২৬৫১-২৬৫২-২৬৫৩-২৬৫৪-২৬৫৫-২৬৫৬-২৬৫৭-২৬৫৮-২৬৫৯-২৬৬০-২৬৬১-২৬৬২-২৬৬৩-২৬৬৪-২৬৬৫-২৬৬৬-২৬৬৭-২৬৬৮-২৬৬৯-২৬৭০-২৬৭১-২৬৭২-২৬৭৩-২৬৭৪-২৬৭৫-২৬৭৬-২৬৭৭-২৬৭৮-২৬৭৯-২৬৮০-২৬৮১-২৬৮২-২৬৮৩-২৬৮৪-২৬৮৫-২৬৮৬-২৬৮৭-২৬৮৮-২৬৮৯-২৬৯০-২৬৯১-২৬৯২-২৬৯৩-২৬৯৪-২৬৯৫-২৬৯৬-২৬৯৭-২৬৯৮-২৬৯৯-২৭০০-২৭০১-২৭০২-২৭০৩-২৭০৪-২৭০৫-২৭০৬-২৭০৭-২৭০৮-২৭০৯-২৭১০-২৭১১-২৭১২-২৭১৩-২৭১৪-২৭১৫-২৭১৬-২৭১৭-২৭১৮-২৭১৯-২৭২০-২৭২১-২৭২২-২৭২৩-২৭২৪-২৭২৫-২৭২৬-২৭২৭-২৭২৮-২৭২৯-২৭৩০-২৭৩১-২৭৩২-২৭৩৩-২৭৩৪-২৭৩৫-২৭৩৬-২৭৩৭-২৭৩৮-২৭৩৯-২৭৪০-২৭৪১-২৭৪২-২৭৪৩-২৭৪৪-২৭৪৫-২৭৪৬-২৭৪৭-২৭৪৮-২৭৪৯-২৭৫০-২৭৫১-২৭৫২-২৭৫৩-২৭৫৪-২৭৫৫-২৭৫৬-২৭৫৭-২৭৫৮-২৭৫৯-২৭৬০-২৭৬১-২৭৬২-২৭৬৩-২৭৬৪-২৭৬৫-২৭৬৬-২৭৬৭-২৭৬৮-২৭৬৯-২৭৭০-২৭৭১-২৭৭২-২৭৭৩-২৭৭৪-২৭৭৫-২৭৭৬-২৭৭৭-২৭৭৮-২৭৭৯-২৭৮০-২৭৮১-২৭৮২-২৭৮৩-২৭৮৪-২৭৮৫-২৭৮৬-২৭৮৭-২৭৮৮-২৭৮৯-২৭৯০-২৭৯১-২৭৯২-২৭৯৩-২৭৯৪-২৭৯৫-২৭৯৬-২৭৯৭-২৭৯৮-২৭৯৯-২৮০০-২৮০১-২৮০২-২৮০৩-২৮০৪-২৮০৫-২৮০৬-২৮০৭-২৮০৮-২৮০৯-২৮১০-২৮১১-২৮১২-২৮১৩-২৮১৪-২৮১৫-২৮১৬-২৮১৭-২৮১৮-২৮১৯-২৮২০-২৮২১-২৮২২-২৮২৩-২৮২৪-২৮২৫-২৮২৬-২৮২৭-২৮২৮-২৮২৯-২৮৩০-২৮৩১-২৮৩২-২৮৩৩-২৮৩৪-২৮৩৫-২৮৩৬-২৮৩৭-২৮৩৮-২৮৩৯-২৮৪০-২৮৪১-২৮৪২-২৮৪৩-২৮৪৪-২৮৪৫-২৮৪৬-২৮৪৭-২৮৪৮-২৮৪৯-২৮৫০-২৮৫১-২৮৫২-২৮৫৩-২৮৫৪-২৮৫৫-২৮৫৬-২৮৫৭-২৮৫৮-২৮৫৯-২৮৬০-২৮৬১-২৮৬২-২৮৬৩-২৮৬৪-২৮৬৫-২৮৬৬-২৮৬৭-২৮৬৮-২৮৬৯-২৮৭০-২৮৭১-২৮৭২-২৮৭৩-২৮৭৪-২৮৭৫-২৮৭৬-২৮৭৭-২৮৭৮-২৮৭৯-২৮৮০-২৮৮১-২৮৮২-২৮৮৩-২৮৮৪-২৮৮৫-২৮৮৬-২৮৮৭-২৮৮৮-২৮৮৯-২৮৯০-২৮৯১-২৮৯২-২৮৯৩-২৮৯৪-২৮৯৫-২৮৯৬-২৮৯৭-২৮৯৮-২৮৯৯-২৯০০-২৯০১-২৯০২-২৯০৩-২৯০৪-২৯০৫-২৯০৬-২৯০৭-২৯০৮-২৯০৯-২৯১০-২৯১১-২৯১২-২৯১৩-২৯১৪-২৯১৫-২৯১৬-২৯১৭-২৯১৮-২৯১৯-২৯২০-২৯২১-২৯২২-২৯২৩-২৯২৪-২৯২৫-২৯২৬-২৯২৭-২৯২৮-২৯২৯-২৯৩০-২৯৩১-২৯৩২-২৯৩৩-২৯৩৪-২৯৩৫-২৯৩৬-২৯৩৭-২৯৩৮-২৯৩৯-২৯৪০-২৯৪১-২৯৪২-২৯৪৩-২৯৪৪-২৯৪৫-২৯৪৬-২৯৪৭-২৯৪৮-২৯৪৯-২৯৫০-২৯৫১-২৯৫২-২৯৫৩-২৯৫৪-২৯৫৫-২৯৫৬-২৯৫৭-২৯৫৮-২৯৫৯-২৯৬০-২৯৬১-২৯৬২-২৯৬৩-২৯৬৪-২৯৬৫-২৯৬৬-২৯৬৭-২৯৬৮-২৯৬৯-২৯৭০-২৯৭১-২৯৭২-২৯৭৩-২৯৭৪-২৯৭৫-২৯৭৬-২৯৭৭-২৯৭৮-২৯৭৯-২৯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to short-cuts, it was felt that our key SB officers should be given a fair grounding in Marxism-Leninism but especially about the "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" and the writings of Lin-Piao. Intensive study classes used to be held for this purpose so as to enable them to understand the motivations and thought-processes of the ideologically motivated youths. (It was during my own study of Mao around this period that I chanced upon Mao's "Three Main Rules of Discipline" and "Eight Points for Attention") This enabled our key officers in improving the quality and methodology of interrogation of arrested Naxalites without the slightest temptation of resorting to improper methods. Most of the reports of interrogation even of important Naxalites will bear testimony to this.

(4) In order to facilitate the process and to bring about uniformity in the pattern of their questioning, a carefully prepared Interrogation Brief was given to our officers. A sample of the basic points of this Interrogation Brief is reproduced in this book as also a few of the Interrogation Reports by SB. Eventually, the other units of Calcutta Police and the West Bengal Police adopted our Brief for future interrogations. It will be seen that our Brief sought to elicit information not only about the activities of the Naxalite concerned but also about his socio-economic profile, his level of study and understanding of the teachings of Mao, all of which were periodically analysed for devising appropriate counter-measures, apart from having a better understanding of the Naxalites' personality traits relevant for our purpose.

(5) Another methodology adopted by us was to advise the parents to keep away their wards for some months at least from West Bengal and/or Calcutta areas which were the hot-beds of known murder-squads. This was done in cases where the Naxalite himself wanted to dissociate from violent activities but could not do so for fear of being the target of physical harm by his comrades. We did the same thing when parents or the Naxalites themselves approached us for advice. In many cases such Naxalites did not even figure in our list of persons wanted in cases of violence. The very fact of such persons approaching the SB on their own and not other police units was an unmistakable sign that they felt that the SB officers could be trusted for not doing or advising anything which could be harmful for them.

It goes without saying that our persistence with the above special measures were not to the liking of some senior officers. One such officer<sup>9</sup> told me that I and my SB officers were 'wasting time in



indulging in endless discussions with many Naxalites whereas so and so ( he mentioned two of my colleagues in Calcutta Police) and their officers were doing a great job by paying back the Naxalites in their own coin'. I realised what this superior officer was wanting us to do and, quite indignantly told him that he was wasting his time and energy by talking thus to me and that he was at liberty to approach the Government for getting me replaced by another DC, SB who would be prepared to follow his prescription!

I must mention here most regrettably that such attitude on the part of some senior officers led to the debasement of many policemen, apart from encouraging the existing 'bad eggs' within the police. From the middle of June 1972 till about early 1983, I had to be outside West Bengal on deputation elsewhere. Hence, much later, when I heard about the tales of the atrocities perpetrated against Archana Guha Neogi, Mahadeb Mukherjee, Jaya Mitra, Azizul Haque and many others, I could only hang my head in shame. My only consolation was that, to the best of my knowledge and information, none of the officers of the Special Branch was involved in any of these atrocities. At the same time, I felt outraged that many senior officers failed despicably to prevent the worst kind of indignities meted out to these and other persons by policemen under their command. And this brought to my mind the utterances of one of my senior officers during 1970-71 when I was the DC, SB in Calcutta and realised that such persons within the fold of police leadership had been largely responsible for brutalisation of a section of policemen whereas it was their primary professional and legal duty to prevent this, and to punish the perpetrators of such inhuman, illegal and unprofessional conduct. Equally shocking to me was the later revelations in the press interview of the then SP of 24-Parganas district, regarding the Baranagar massacre of Naxalites (12-13 August, 1971). His plea was that he had no information about the 'happenings' in Baranagar on 12 Aug. 1971 (the first day of the massacre which continued for several hours) and as such did not go there on 12th. He further stated that he learnt about the killings only on 13th afternoon and visited the area thereafter but received no support either from the local Police Station staff or the local people including the friends and relations of the slain Naxalites, because 'the former were not at all sympathetic to the Naxalites' and the latter (i.e. relatives and friends of the killed Naxalites) 'were keeping themselves aloof'!<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, I should not fail to note that a large majority of

policemen of all ranks could keep their cool and their dignity intact even in the face of brutal murders of their colleagues by the Naxalites. So far as the officers and men of the Special Branch were concerned, I take pride even today in having as my colleagues in the SB some of the outstanding policemen like Asoke Khasnavis, Ram Chakraborty, Nirode Mukherjee (Inspectors), Tarapada Roy (Sub-Inspector) and many others - with a truly rare blend of professionalism and humanism which many of our senior colleagues failed to display.

Before closing this section, I would like to mention one notable incident, having a close bearing on what has been stated earlier. It relates to a leading Naxalite figure (Prof. Nisith Bhattacharya) who was in charge of quite a few active 'action squads', one of which brutally murdered the first police officer within Kolkata (Sub-Inspector Amitabha Singha Roy of SB) on 3 June 1970 at Akhil Mistry Lane of Muchipara (?) PS. Nisith was arrested by SB on 11 June 1970. After the permissible period of police custody, he was remanded to jail custody and was lodged in Calcutta's Presidency Jail where many other Naxalite prisoners were kept under courts' orders. (His Interrogation Report finds place in this publication.) On 4 February, 1971 evening, we received information that a number of Naxalite prisoners lodged in the Presidency Jail had escaped after killing one of the Jail Warders and injuring some others of the jail staff.<sup>11</sup> Shortly thereafter some of us from SB reached the Jail and we were taken inside by the Jail Super. Meanwhile the Commissioner of Police and 2-3 other Deputy Commissioners of Calcutta Police with some of their officers also reached the spot. It was quite dark inside and we were told that the electricity connection was cut off by the Naxalite prisoners to facilitate their escape. Torch lights and other powerful lights were brought later but meanwhile some of our vehicles could be brought in with their headlights on so that there could be some visibility.

It was learnt during initial questioning of the jail staff that after killing one jail staff and seriously injuring several others, some of the prisoners managed to escape by scaling the wall with the help of some 'contraption' while some other prisoners could be caught in the act. What was not stated was that in retaliation to the killing and serious injury to the jail staff ('up-countrymen' in local parlance), they had also severely assaulted those who got caught in course of the attempted escape. On the ash-heap in a dark corner, one of our SB officers (who had earlier been in the team which interrogated



Nisith), could locate the 'body' of one of the prisoners and called me there. He was bleeding and badly bruised but I found that his pulse could be felt and as such the person could not be dead. With the help of a torch-light brought by then, the SB officer mentioned that it was Nisith Bhattacharya. We arranged for his prompt removal to hospital along with the other injured prisoners and jail staff. Next morning, when an SB officer was sent to meet the attending doctor to enquire about Nisith's condition, he was told that even half an hour's delay in sending the person to hospital would have meant sure death due to bleeding and other complications. Nisith's survival was entirely due to his timely shifting to hospital and also adequate medical care thereafter, which was ensured by our officers.

### III

Looking back to those tumultuous years (1967-72) in the two dreadful decades, I would like to make a few final observations as one who had not only seen things from close quarters but had occasion to deal with the Naxalite eruptions at both epicentres - Naxalbari-Khoribari-Phansidewa as also Kolkata and its environs. In the first place, we can divide the entire Naxalite episode of those years (1967-72) into two broad phases, each having quite distinctive characteristics.

I would prefer to call the first one covering 1967-68 as the 'purist phase' despite Charubabu's continued but futile goadings for more blood-letting, as if the incidents of 24th (murder of Inspector Sonam Wangdi) and 25th May, 1967 (police firing under magisterial order leading to loss of ten lives at Prasadujote) were not enough. The principal characters of the Naxalbari days (Kanu Sanyal, Jangal Santhal, Kadam and Khudan Mallik, Kamakshya Banerjee, Babulal Biswakarmakar et al) were very substantially integrated with the local peasantry much before the beginning of the movement from 3 March 1967. Even during the movement, at least from March till mid-August 1967, they lived with the villagers and their workers in the field and not in safe shelters and at a safe distance, which was a common phenomenon during the 1970-72 phase. Secondly, their active followers (numbering approximately five hundred) as also the passive supporters (another about 4-5 hundred) had genuine and legitimate economic grievances of long standing, principally related to land including tea garden land.<sup>12</sup>

All this could have been a good starting point for the local organisers and the field level workers. If it was carried out with maturity, foresight and some amount of patience, essential for the success of any 'protracted struggle', the movement could spell real trouble for the administration and the government. It could also prepare a solid base from which to launch, in the subsequent stage, a more determined and meaningful agrarian movement of lasting value. When I met Charubabu in his house in Siliguri on 16 July 1967, accompanied by Souren Bose, I tried to make him realise the desirability, practicability and potential of such a course of phased struggle but came away with the sad feeling that he was not likely to act rationally, with any long-term perspective. Unfortunately for the local peasantry, and fortunately for the administration and the government, the whole movement here got derailed when Charu Majumdar, from behind the scene and from the safe distance of his Siliguri home and true to his natural instinct for a quick-fix solution, goaded his followers into an utterly adventurist path of violence, labelling this movement as one for 'seizure of political power', a hollow hyperbole for the peasantry anywhere in the world.

The downward slide thereafter, from mid-May 1967, gathered momentum after the first large-scale and organised police action ('Operation Hatighisa' of 12 July 1967, followed by 'Operation Buraganj' of 13 July 1967). No amount of desperate efforts on the part of Charubabu could stem the rot by telling the leaders in the field (through a series of letters) that the position could be salvaged only by drawing more blood of the class enemies including the police. The game was over by the end of July 1967, at least so far as the Naxalbari region was concerned. Rejection of this path by the local peasantry and the villagers was so pervasive that the movement could not be revived there for the next nearly 40 years.

After the 1967 debacle, Charu Majumdar could not have had a very healthy opinion about the 'revolutionary potential' of the peasantry in this region, which, surprisingly, he discovered among the city-bred 'intellectuals' and 'coffee-house revolutionaries' of Kolkata. In this discovery, he was aided by some disillusioned and dissident CPI(M) leaders in Kolkata who were fed some half-truths and untruths about the Naxalbari movement by Charubabu, principally through his emissary to Kolkata i.e. Souren Bose.

Lest my judgment be dubbed as 'subjective and biased', let me quote from two sources with impeccable Naxalite credentials: Dilip



Bagchi was a dedicated and active Naxalite even during his North Bengal University days and got to know Charubabu quite well. In later years, he too came to the viewpoint expressed above. Dilip Bagchi wrote: "While we were together in Siliguri Special Jail (1967-68?), comrade Jangal Santhal told me that highly exaggerated tales about our movement are being dished out. The claims of successes are in most cases farcical half-truths. If subsequent struggles are sought to be launched on the basis of all these, we may have to court disaster."<sup>13</sup> Even a 'non-intellectual' tribal gentleman like Jangal Santhal and that too during the heyday of the 'revolutionary fever', could sense the possible outcome of a revolutionary fervour being sought to be artificially generated among the idealist and honest youths with utter disregard for truth. The Kolkata-based intellectual veterans regrettably just did not take any serious notice of such anguished warning signals from Jangal Santhal and many others either due to their ignorance about the Naxalbari reality or they were perhaps too impatient to relaunch themselves politically on the pretext of Naxalbari.

Another distinguishing feature of the first phase of the Naxalite movement was the almost total absence of criminal and anti-social elements within the ranks of the extremists. However, during the second phase (1969-72), which may be called the 'mixed idealism-debasement phase' despite a much greater involvement of honest and dedicated youths, we witnessed liberal induction of criminal and lumpen elements, especially from mid-1970 with CM's increasing emphasis on annihilation programme as a panacea for all the ills.

This inevitably led to an unhealthy competition among the city-based 'action squads' ('guerrilla bands', in CM terminology) about the number of 'hits' (brutal, cold-blooded murders) by each squad. Obviously an ideologically motivated honest youth was no match for such 'actions' compared to the squads which had 'liberally' inducted known criminals for this kind of 'job'. These latter elements were taken in with great relish. They were also being wine, dined and sheltered in some of the prestigious students' hostels and were hailed as 'effective revolutionaries'. The Superintendent of the hallowed Eden Hindu Hostel of Presidency College of Kolkata escaped being seriously assaulted on pain of his silence and Prof. Gopal Sen, Vice Chancellor of Jadavpur University was brutally murdered by his students within the University campus for objecting to such criminal elements being put up and entertained in the University hostels.

Since the beginning of this debasing process which started from mid-1970, I tried to warn quite a few important Naxalites (being in police or judicial custody after arrest) and their close sympathisers outside that this growing trend towards lumpenisation may as well be the beginning of the end of their 'dream' because of the inexorable logic of Gresham's Law of bad money driving out the good money. Thus, it did not take long for the better elements to be overshadowed by the baser ones - the criminal, anti-social and other elements among the cadres (and even some leaders) with strong streaks of criminal proclivity.

Those were the days of madness and insanity when truth and rationality became the first casualty. All manner of false and distorted reports of 'annihilation' in different parts of West Bengal were being projected in *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* from June-July 1970 so that the 'competition' for more killings could be sustained among the action squads. In this context, we may refer to *Deshabrati*'s 11-18 June 1970 issue ('Annihilation exceeds 100 in West Bengal'; 'Another five class enemies and 5 CRPs killed'); 25 June-2 July 1970 issue ('Rapid strides of revolutionary actions in Kolkata'; 'Revolutionary actions begin in Behala'); 2.9.70 issue ('Revolutionary action by peasant guerrillas in Jalpaiguri'); 7.11.70 issue ('Liquidation of class enemies and police is moving forward in urban areas') and in similar vein in many other subsequent issues. Much later, however, many Naxalites themselves started writing to CM, Saroj Dutta (Editor, *Deshabrati*) and Suniti Ghosh (Editor, *Liberation*) about such distortions but all such voices of dissent were suppressed, as was revealed later from many seized documents.

After reading the reminiscences of many Naxalites of the second phase, I am constrained to remark that most of these otherwise honest and idealist persons perhaps seldom tried to have an unblinkered look at the reality of the Naxalbari movement, based on which they sought to build the edifice of a 'protracted struggle' on the lines of Maoist formulations in West Bengal and elsewhere. Apart from so many others, the two prominent figures of the first phase of the Naxalite movement, namely, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal, did not take long to realise the suicidal potential of the annihilation programme. In addition, three of the closest confidants of Charu Majumdar during the second phase of the movement - Souren Bose, Prof. Suniti Ghosh and Asim Chatterjee - expressed their serious misgivings and differences with CM's politics of annihilation at



different stages, though belatedly and after having been instrumental in bringing home the tragic outcome to thousands in West Bengal alone.

The period from 1970 to 1972 was indeed a 'dark age' in the history of Bengal and one fervently hopes that such brutality and all-round insanity should never ever recur in the name of 'revolution' or on the pretext of its suppression. But one particularly inexorable lesson of history which perhaps many of us are yet to grasp fully is this: revolution in its true sense means elevating a human being to a higher plane of existence, and brutality in any form can never be the medium for this desired transformation in any human being. Equally important should be the lesson that State-sponsored counter-terrorism through brutal measures can never be a panacea, for it tends to leave behind a legacy of distrust, hatred and violence which erode the foundation of a civilised society.

#### IV

In recent years one comes across a lot of media reports about the activities of some Naxalite groups. Two of the major Naxalite factions, i.e. the Peoples War Group (PWG) and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) have come together in October, 2004 to form the Communist Party of India (Maoist). The PWG had a strong presence in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, whereas the MCC's predominant role was in undivided Bihar, i.e. present Bihar and Jharkhand States. Of late, certain pockets or districts of a few other States also are facing the onslaught of the Maoists, especially in the tribal belt of Bastar region of Chhattisgarh (e.g. Dantewada district) and its adjoining Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, besides small portions of three districts of West Bengal (West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia) bordering Jharkhand.

Those acquainted with the failed 'spring thunder' of the 1967-72 period should take note of some of the special features of the recent spurt of violent outbursts by the left extremists. In the first place, their field of operation has largely been the remote tribal belts unlike Charu Majumdar's urban and semi-urban areas in West Bengal. Secondly, substantial involvement of the local population (tribal and others) is another significant departure from the past. No clear picture has emerged as yet about the actual class composition of the leaders of the movement in different States nor about the extent of their

exposure and experience relating to the kind of struggle which they have launched. However, at least this much is clear that they are mostly not composed of romantic, middle class 'babus', as was the case generally during Charu Majumdar's quixotic misadventure of the 1969-72 period, especially in West Bengal. This may be considered as the third important departure from the past. In the fourth place, the sophisticated fire-power and organisational mobility and maneuverability of the Maoists have been demonstrated in several of their 'actions' in the recent past, including the attack on the Jehanabad Jail of Bihar in a massive show of strength.

The knee-jerk responses of the Central and State governments have been on predictable lines: periodic confabulations with Chief Ministers / Chief Secretaries/ Home Secretaries/ State Police and Central Police Chiefs as well as the Intelligence Chiefs, with homilies about strengthening and modernisation of police and its weaponry etc. etc. thrown in. Haven't the people heard about such 'strategies' in the past on far too many occasions? For a change, the people are also informed about the governments' pious intentions of socio-economic development in the 'backward' districts, again, with some vague promises of land reforms.

Can any sensible person deny the fact that the tribal and other people inhabiting the affected regions of these States for generations have continued to be subjected to the worst kind of exploitation almost by everybody, starting with the government down to the contractors, petty politicians and public functionaries charged with the responsibility of rapid social and economic development of these neglected regions and their people? Has any government in any of these States punished the delinquent public servants including the concerned ministers for not doing their job for which they are paid out of public funds? The people also keep wondering why no deterrent actions have been taken against the contractors and middlemen for persistently denying even the lawfully prescribed minimum wages to the inhabitants which the Maoists have largely succeeded in enforcing?

One would also like to know why even the basic minimum of land reform and distribution of vested and benami lands to the thousands of landless peasants in these areas have not even been attempted seriously? On top of all this, instances of physical torture and even murder of these poorest of the poor inhabitants have continued unabated. I had occasion to visit on two different occasions



during 1996-97 (in the company of the then Union Home Minister late Indrajit Gupta as his Advisor) two villages in Bihar (Bathanitola and Lakshmanpur-Bathe) in which most of the low-caste and poor inhabitants - men, women and children - were massacred by the 'senas' of the landlords of those areas. It was truly shocking to us, as it should be to any sensitive person. But the local masters (political as well as administrative) did not appear to be unduly perturbed. And rightly so, because such incidents were and continued to be an annual phenomenon! We would also do well to remember that such atrocities are not confined to Bihar alone.

To a greater or lesser degree the situation is no better in most of the Naxalite-affected areas. One should be able to imagine a scenario in which these poor, oppressed, helpless inhabitants in some remote corners suddenly come across a band of people who start taking up their cause and fight for redressal of their long-standing grievances. Wouldn't the hapless inhabitants develop some affinity with such people and start looking up to them as their 'protectors' and 'saviours'? In the process, some blood-letting takes place on both sides - the traditional oppressors and such 'saviours', paving the way for the inevitable appearance of the repressive State machineries including the police. If the police assumes its traditional role of suppressing the 'ultra menace' without simultaneously forcing the hands of the government to initiate urgent steps to eradicate the persistent socio-economic evils affecting the lives of the tribal people and other equally deprived sections of the local inhabitants, they would, unwittingly allow perpetuation of the malaise. This would invariably call for a more repressive role for the police in times to come. And it suits most vested interests to harp on police excesses and thereby allow the root cause to recede to the background. In such situations the police has an undoubtedly unenviable and difficult role, quite often not appreciated by others from a safe distance. The police has to perform its lawful role but that should not justify a reign of counter-terror, the victims of which are generally the innocent or marginally involved villagers.

It is a matter of record that during 1967 the police did take a firm stand in Darjeeling district that they will not allow the guns to be fired from the shoulders of the policemen unless urgent steps were taken to remedy the long-standing and legitimate grievances of the poor peasantry, including the poor tea garden workers, through implementation of land reforms.<sup>14</sup> Our exertions did not go in vain

and perhaps for the first time in India five Land Reforms Committees were set up under Govt. Resolution of 21.6.1967 - one for Siliguri sub-division and one each for its four police stations. We must admit that such prompt response and action thereon was possible largely due to the efforts of the Land & Land Revenue Minister late Harekrishna Konar and the Irrigation Minister late Biswanath Mukherjee, both of whom were for decades at the forefront of Krishak Sabha movements in West Bengal.<sup>15</sup>

At this stage, I would humbly submit that the administrative and police leaders in the ultra affected areas can play a fairly decisive role to bring about the long-overdue land reforms measures. This, by itself, will go a long way in taking the wind out of the sails of the extremist movement in addition to providing the deprived and exploited segments of the peasantry the needed succour. Secondly, police operations in such areas will have to be not only restrained but the traditional methods and practices of combing operations, search and arrest must be organised with a different mindset. I know it is easier said than done but I also know that determined and far-sighted police leaders can and should act as change agents for a wholly deserving professional and social cause of long-term value. The alternative is quite obvious: an unending quagmire in which not only the extremists and terrorists but also the administration and the country will be enmeshed and it will be a no-win situation for all.

The phenomenal success of the Maoists in Nepal is an important development which must be attracting the attention of their Indian counterparts as also of the concerned governments at the Centre and in some of the States. There are indications that, after having established their predominance in the countryside in Nepal, especially its north-western areas which remained for long largely unadministered, the Nepal Maoists may now decide to shift their attention to the urban belt around Kathmandu. Apart from other factors, the three special features which may have paved the way for the Maoist success story in Nepal deserve attention. Firstly, the total absence of any democratic space, the autocratic monarchy having destroyed even the vestiges of any viable political system, helped the Maoists in Nepal to fill the vacuum quite effectively. Secondly, the blind reliance by the autocratic king on the Royal Nepal Army for suppression of the Maoist movement, which predictably created among the general mass of people greater hatred and distrust of the monarchy. Finally, the extremely weak political structure and



popular distrust about the political leadership undoubtedly helped in Maoist consolidation not only in the remote north-western parts of Nepal but also in and around the Kathmandu valley. The role to be played in the coming days at least by two of the top leaders of Nepal Maoists, namely, Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda and his deputy Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, would need careful analysis by all concerned. So far they seem to have played their cards quite adroitly.

The Naxalite 'spring thunder' of the 1960s and 1970s did not last long, thanks to their adventurist and anarchist deviations as pointed out by the Chinese leaders. But in recent years the signs of a 'forest-fire' (prairie fire?) are unmistakable. No government worth its name can be a passive spectator in a grave situation of this kind. But by no means the State can arrogate to itself the power of riding roughshod over the legitimate rights of the poor and the oppressed for a decent, civilised and honourable living. In the ultimate analysis, popular awakening and their resistance against anarchist violence by Maoists or by any other organised groups cannot be faulted. Perhaps the restrained and properly calibrated actions of the civil society may prove to be the only answer in the long term. In the name of popular resistance, however, the reckless use of the tribals like cannon-fodder as appears to be the case with the Salwa Judum of Chhattisgarh, will run the grave risk of being counter-productive.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. A formal permission was issued in March 1970. This Govt. Order, Shri Konar's note on the Govt. file as well as the then Inspector General of Police's observations on the MS have also been reproduced in Part-I of this publication.
2. Please see Souren Bose's book in Bengali on Charu Majumdar titled *Charu Majumdarer Katha*, 1989, p.161
3. Lt. Gen. A.A.K. Niazi, "Betrayal of Pakistan", 1998, p.66. The above quotation, however, betrays Niazi's ignorance even about the well-known names of the leaders of the Indian insurgent or extremist groups.
4. *Left extremist movement in Bengal*, A.K.Samanta, 1984, p.327
5. A four-page Bengali letter dt. 7.5.1972 written to Charu Majumdar by Soumya (Suniti Ghosh) which was recovered by police at the time of CM's arrest in Kolkata on 16.7.1972. This letter was perhaps delivered to CM a few days later because it contained copy of Sunitibabu's letter dt. 10.5.72 to Dilip (Banerjee?), CM's closest confidant then.

6. Souren Bose's book on Charu Majumdar, op.cit., p. 176.
7. This refers to Baranagar PS case no.34 dt 27.7.1971 u/ss 302 / 334 / 379 IPC and newspaper reports of 28-30 July 1971.
8. Charu Majumdar, *A few words on guerrilla action*, April 1970.
9. Contrary to public perception, he was not Shri Ranjit Gupta, the Commissioner of Police but another senior officer of Calcutta Police.
10. Interview report of the then SP, 24-Parganas in the Bengali daily *Aajkaal* dt. 5 May, 2001.
11. 8 Naxalite under-trial-prisoners escaped and 5 were caught by the jail staff while they attempted to escape after assaulting some jail warders.
12. Charu Majumdar had been feeding the people outside the Naxalbari region with highly exaggerated and distorted accounts. It would be well known by now that the much touted 'Terai Report of Kanu Sanyal (Nov.1968)' was actually written by Charubabu himself and Kanu Sanyal did not relish the distortions as these eroded his credibility with the local people. This Report claimed that the membership of their Kisan Sabha 'jumped to nearly 40 thousand' as against 5 thousand previously, an absurd claim. It could be around 2 thousand even at the height of their movement during May-June to early July 1967, and dwindled to less than a hundred by the end of August 1967. It is also known that Kanu Sanyal later sought to retrieve his credibility by coming out with a revised version in April 1973 about the Terai (i.e. Naxalbari) movement called "More about Naxalbari".
13. Dilip Bagchi, 'Nawdah theke Naxalbari: pichhane phirey dekha' (Nawdah to Naxalbari: looking back), in *Sei Dashak* (That Decade), edited by Pulakesh Mandal and Jaya Mitra, 1994, p.45.
14. As illustrative of this stand, I would draw the attention of the readers especially to (i) report of SP, Darjeeling dt. 11.5.67 to the IGP regarding the Sannyasisthan tea garden trouble and (ii) Note of SP, Darjeeling of June 1967, to the members of the visiting Cabinet Committee.
15. The Govt. Resolution on this is reproduced in Part-I. It also needs to be mentioned here that after the promulgation of President's Rule in Nov.1967, the above Govt. Res. did not survive for long and the State had to wait for another nearly 10 years for more decisive land reforms measures including legal protection afforded to the share-croppers, popularly known as 'Operation Barga'. In this Operation, a very dynamic role was played by the then Land Reforms Commissioner Shri Debabrata Bandopadhyay, IAS, duly supported by the then Land & Land Reforms Minister late Benoy Chaudhury.



PART-I  
THE NAXALBARI MOVEMENT (1967-68)  
(SOME BASIC DOCUMENTS)



## CHAPTER 1

### The Gathering Storm

**S.P.'s Note to the Cabinet Committee (June 1967) on the current disturbances in Naxalbari-Khoribari-Phansidewa P. S. elakas of Siliguri Sub-Division (Darjeeling District)**

[*Explanatory note:* On 10th. or 11th June, 1967 information was received from the Writers' Buildings, Calcutta by Divisional Commissioner/DIG, Jalpaiguri Range/ Deputy Commissioner and SP, Darjeeling that in accordance with a decision of the Cabinet, a 6-member Cabinet Committee would come to Siliguri on 12th. June, 1967, that we should meet the Cabinet Committee and brief them about the local situation. It was also conveyed to us that this Committee had been authorised by the Cabinet to study the situation and issue appropriate directions to the local authorities including police for dealing with the problems. Accordingly it was decided at the local level that the DC will prepare a Note detailing the land-related issues and problems whereas the SP will prepare a Note outlining the incidents till then and also give their suggestions for the consideration of the Committee. Hence this Note by the SP had to be prepared almost overnight with as much details as possible and also containing the SP's suggestions for dealing with the problems. Copies of this Note were handed over to all the six members of the Cabinet Committee on their arrival on 12 June 1967 and copies were sent separately by special messenger to the Chief Secretary and the Inspector General of Police, West Bengal.]

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### Part I: The Locale

(a) The local jurisdictions of Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa Police Stations are the scenes of the current series of lawlessness. These three P.Ss form the extreme southern tip of Darjeeling District. The total area covered by these three P.Ss. will be about 274 square miles, with a population of about one lakh and fifty thousand, out of which about fifty thousand are labourers engaged in the 32 tea-gardens located within this area.

(b) The topography of this area is an admixture of jungles, bushes and tea-gardens on a fairly flat landscape. Cultivation is practically confined to paddy and jute, and the yield is of an average type. This area has borders with Nepal, East Pakistan and Bihar (Purnea District).

### Part II: Evils of land tenure system in this area and the composition of the organisers of the current disturbances

(a) Legacy of non-regulated status of the area: unsatisfactory settlement operation – ill-defined nature of land in many cases – frequent change of course of the hill rivers in the Terai region – alluvian and dilluvian lands add to the problem – *Khas* or vested lands either continued to be no-man's land or became the land of one who could grab them.

(b) Area ceded from Bihar after the States' Reorganisation: some confusion arising out of the Bihar tenancy laws – no attempt at explaining their implications amongst the peasants and other villagers.

(c) Continuance of the 'Zamindari' system in the tea-estates leading to two types of sufferers: (i) wide prevalence of the system of casual labour, and (ii) system of *thika* land of tea-gardens. Misuse of these two systems in many cases, resulting in a class of frequently dismissed labourers and periodically displaced *thika* tenants.

(d) The organisers of the current disturbances : It would be naive to jump to the conclusion, on the basis of the foregoing circumstances, that the organisers of the current disturbances have been solely, or even largely drawn from the above categories of sufferers. There is no doubt, at the same time, that there is a sprinkling of them in the ranks of the organisers. Apart from this, the organisers of the current series of disturbances are :

- (i) a handful of Bengali plainsmen, who portray the tragic indigestion of big ideas creeping into smaller beings, with resultant adventurism of a pernicious nature, drawing into its whirlpool
- (ii) some simple-natured tribals and Rajbanshis, most of whom have their hearths and homes in these areas, but who have been either allured or coerced into such adventurist forays.

### Part III: Can the disturbances be called a 'democratic peasant movement'?

Attempts are being made from certain quarters to designate such acts of lawlessness as a 'democratic revolutionary peasant movement.' This was the initial stand of some prominent CPI(M) party functionaries. I state some facts and circumstances below from which the reader will be at liberty to draw his own conclusions:  
 (a) From the very outset, the miscreants have been moving about in large groups, armed with bows, arrows, tangis, etc. and carrying party flags. When the popular U.F. Ministry was formed, with categorical assurances from very responsible quarters of the Government that legitimate grievances of the peasants will be quickly remedied, it beats one's imagination as to what could have impelled this group to take recourse to this determined path of violence in the name of democratic peasant movement.

(b) Considerable number of the victims of intimidation, assault, mischief and criminal trespass, perpetrated by these champions of peasant movement, are either *adhiars* or small land-holders, some of them holding even smaller plots of land than many of these champions of the cause of distressed peasants.

(c) Can one reconcile any of the following incidents of lawlessness with the ideals of any peasant movement? :



(i) on 12.4.67, when a meeting of Maniram Anchal Parishad (P.S. Naxalbari) was in progress, about 200 persons armed with bows, arrows etc. and carrying the flags of a certain political party, surrounded the office and demanded immediate resignation of the Anchal Pradhan, alleging that the Pradhan indulged in corrupt practices including harassment of some of the workers of the demonstrators' party. Realising the violent attitude of the demonstrators and with a view to avoiding immediate clash, the Anchal Parishad was forced to adopt a resolution to the effect that the Anchal Pradhan will be resigning his post soon.

(ii) One bigha of land of one person was forcibly occupied, 5 bighas and 10 kathas of land respectively of two other persons were forcibly ploughed and the standing jute plants damaged in the process. All these happened in Buraganj (P.S. Khoribari) on 11.5.67 when a similar group of persons with similar tactics committed the above acts in the name of peasant movement. These incidents refer to Khoribari P.S. case Nos. 7, 8 and 9 dated 12.5.67; the latter two cases have recently been submitted in charge sheets.

(iii) On 19.5.67 the house of one Dhir Singh of Baramaniramjote (P.S. Naxalbari) was surrounded by about 50 persons armed with bows, arrows, etc. and they tied the inmates of the house with rope, assaulted and humiliated them and looted paddy, rice, cash etc. This refers to Naxalbari P.S. case No. 21 dated 19.5.67

(iv) On 24.5.67, a police party consisting of one Inspector and 4 Sub-Inspectors (all unarmed), was brutally attacked by a band of the same miscreants resulting in the death of Inspector Shri Sonam Wangdi and severe injuries to the Sub-Inspectors. Details of this incident are noted subsequently.

(v) On 25.5.67 about 20 such persons, armed with bows, arrows, etc. entered into the house of one Purna Bahadur Chettri of Chowpukhria (P.S. Phansidewa), assaulted the inmates and took away cash, rice, etc. This refers to Phansidewa P. S. case No. 16(5)67.

(vi) On 29.5.67, a similar group of miscreants, numbering about 80, forcibly occupied the land of one Islamuddin Md. of Bhatagoch (P.S. Phansidewa) and took away his cattle, vide Phansidewa P.S. case No. 19 dated 30.5.67.

(vii) On 31.5.67 one Sachidananda Bharati of Rashiklal Jote is reported to have been abducted by some of these miscreants and his fate is as yet unknown. This refers to Khoribari P. S. case No. 41(5)67.<sup>1</sup>

(viii) On 1.6.67, a group of similar miscreants robbed one Basiruddin Ahmed (of Goabari, P. S. Phansidewa) of his paddy which was being carted by him for depositing the same to F.C.I. as part of his levy. This refers to Phansidewa P. S. case No. 1 dated 2.6.67.

(ix) On 6.6.67, a very big gang of the same group of miscreants raided the house of one Harihar Singh of Koiri Jote (P.S. Khoribari) and looted cash, clothes, gold, paddy etc. This refers to Khoribari P. S. case No. 6 dated 7.6.67. This was not the end of the tale of sorrow of this old man. When a police party was proceeding to his village on 8.6.67 to afford some protection to him and also to investigate into the affairs, a violent mob from the surrounding areas, led by the same band of miscreants, confronted the police party which would have certainly culminated in considerable bloodshed if the police party persisted in giving them chase.

(x) On 8.6.67, the house of the same Harihar Singh was subjected to further pillage, for his relations having informed the police of the happenings of 6.6.67. Thus, on 8.6.67 Harihar Singh was subjected to assault and humiliation and the miscreants looted ornaments, jute, paddy, rice, 22 heads of cattle and 126 live cartridges. This refers to Khoribari P.S. Case No. 8 dated 9.6.67.

(xi) Systematic raids on the houses of gun licensees for looting their guns. This has happened on 10.6.67.

The above is only a cross-section of the numerous incidents reported to us. One can well imagine the predicament of some of the unfortunate victims who have been prevented from reporting their tale of sorrow to us or to others.

#### **Part IV: How we sought to deal with this problem**

(a) Long-term measures: We realised at the very outset that the unsatisfactory land settlement measures and the undefined character of land in many cases were being utilised as a handle to spearhead this agitation. We, as police officers, could not enter into the veracity of such propositions in every individual case affecting law and order. We could not close our eyes to it either and thereby allow the situation to assume an explosive proportion. Thus, verbally on 3.5.67 and in writing on 11.5.67, this aspect of the problem was brought to the notice of all concerned, suggesting that "it is of utmost urgency that a machinery be set up immediately (with the D.C./A.D.C., Settlement Officers and Land Reforms Officers as its components) to proceed with prompt investigation of all such land dispute cases. The



constituents of the United Front Committee in the district may be asked to collect and supply lists of such disputed cases to this Committee for immediate investigation."

(b) Short-term measures:

(i) Contacting the local constituents of the U.F. Committee, seeking their intervention to dissuade the people from taking law into their own hands. Series of meeting and consultations have been held on the above lines, including some in the affected rural areas.

(ii) Promptly taking up cases under appropriate sections of the law on receipt of information about violations of the same and ensure their prompt investigation up to 10.6.67, over 80 instances of gross violation of the law were reported to the police and their investigations have been taken up as promptly as one can, inspite of our hourly preoccupations with the lawless elements. About 150 persons have already been arrested and 13 of the cases have been submitted in charge sheets against 173 persons.

(iii) O.Cs of the concerned P.Ss. were directed to approach the appropriate Magistrates for proceedings u/s 107/117 or 109(a) Cr. P. C. for binding down persons who have been found to indulge systematically in acts of lawlessness causing breaches of the peace, etc. So far 8 proceedings have been filed u/s 107 Cr. P. C. against 60 persons.

(iv) Leaflets, under the signature of the S.D.O., Siliguri, were widely distributed from 15.5.67, giving stern warning to all persons taking, or trying to take, law into their own hands. This, alas, had hardly any effect on the hard-core of the miscreants.

(v) Ultimately, to prevent the menace of armed demonstrations from culminating into clashes and casualties, orders u/s 144 Cr.P.C. were promulgated by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate on 23.5.67, covering the jurisdictions of Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa P.Ss.

#### **Part V: Some non-conventional efforts on our part at solution of the problem**

It would appear from above that we are seeking to tackle this problem of lawlessness not by the set pattern of police actions alone, but also by probing into the feasibility of various non-conventional methods. We have been doing all these with the sincere hope of a lasting, peaceful and just solution. In spite of the mounting pressure of public opinion on us to afford the legally prescribed safeguards and securities to the population of the disturbed area, we never gave in to the

temptation of a short-cut by resorting to the use of arms. On the contrary, all these months we have been unfailing in our resolve to make the fullest possible use of the good offices of the local U.F. constituents and others. Our request to Shri Harekrishna Konar (Land and Land Revenue Minister) to exercise his good offices in this regard was but a logical extension of the above effort. We greatly appreciated the readiness, sincerity and unimaginable tenacity with which Shri Konar responded to our call during his visits to this district between 15.5.67 and 18.5.67. I give below some extracts from my recorded despatches on Shri Konar's efforts:

(a) "On 15.5.67 evening, I called on Shri Konar at Darjeeling for a discussion on the above incidents (of lawlessness in Siliguri Sub-Division) and apprised him of all the .... incidents of the above nature .... Shri Konar readily agreed that the CPI(M) workers involved in such incidents are really transgressing the limits of law.... The Deputy Commissioner was also present during the above discussions.... It was decided that I will take Shri Konar to Naxalbari and certain other areas on 17.5.67 morning when he will visit the affected areas and also meet as many of the CPI(M) workers as possible." (My despatch to the IGP dated 16.5.67)

(b) "Shri Harekrishna Konar (Minister-in-charge, Land and Land Revenue Department, Govt. of West Bengal) desired to meet the Dy. Insp. Genl. of Police, Jalpaiguri Range at Sukna Forest Dak Bungalow on 16.5.67 for discussion on certain urgent matters. I was asked by the D.I.G., J.R. to be present at the time of this discussion. Accordingly, the D.I.G., J.R. and myself met Shri Konar at Sukna on 16.5.67 evening when discussions took place, amongst other things, regarding the unlawful activities of a section of the CPI(M) in Siliguri Sub-Division. Shri Konar reiterated his disapproval of such activities and appreciated the stand of the District Police in dealing with this situation without resorting to precipitate actions. He further assured us that he would spare no pains during his stay here to resolve this problem.

"2. On 17.5.67, I accompanied Shri Konar to Naxalbari where he met about 50 persons and listened to their grievances against the activities of a section of CPI(M) workers. After hearing them, he stated that most of these disputes have arisen because of the unsatisfactory Settlement operation in the area and also due to the undefined nature of land in many cases. He assured the people that he would look into it and arrange for early solution of this basic



problem which ultimately aggravates the law and order situation. He further stated that he would do his best to ensure that his party workers do not resort to demonstrations with bows, arrows, etc. Shri Konar's meeting at Naxalbari lasted from 11.00 hours till 14.00 hours which was also attended by the Addl. Dy. Commissioner, the S.D.O. and the S.D.P.O., Siliguri.

"3. After addressing a public meeting at Siliguri from 20.00 to 22.00 hours, Shri Konar attended a conference with the U.F. leaders of Siliguri from 22.30 hours to 23.30 hours. As desired by Shri Konar, the D.I.G., J. R., myself, the S.D.O. and the S.D.P.O., Siliguri were also present in this Conference. Here also, the Minister-in-charge spoke about the unhappy state of affairs obtaining in some areas of Siliguri Sub-Division as a result of armed demonstrations etc. by certain section of CPI(M) workers. He informed the Conference that he has arranged a meeting with Shri Kanu Sanyal, one of the principal organisers of such demonstrations, in course of which he will seek to impress upon them the undesirability of such activities which are causing resentment among the people and also embarrassment for the United Front. Shri Konar asked me to see him at Sukna on the following morning when he will communicate to me the result of his discussion with Shri Kanu Sanyal.

"4. On 18.5.67, I called on Shri Konar at the Sukna Forest Bungalow at about 09.15 hours. Shri Konar informed me that his discussions with Shri Kanu Sanyal lasted from about 00.15 hours till about 02.30 hours on the previous night in course of which he explained our viewpoints to Kanu Sanyal as also his own feelings about the undesirability of such activities which will benefit none. He also indicated that he has asked Kanu Sanyal to come to Sukna this morning for a face-to-face discussion with the S. P. Shortly thereafter, Kanu Sanyal accompanied by Shri Souren Bose arrived there. Shri Konar again explained his views regarding such activities and then asked me to put forward my viewpoints to Kanu Sanyal. I suggested their immediate acceptance of the following 3 courses of action for solving the present tangle:

(i) demonstrations or any other concerted group action by the CPI(M) workers must not be held with bows, arrows and similar other weapons. If they have any complaint regarding any land, the same should be brought to the immediate notice of the B.D.O. or the S.D.O. who will naturally seek to investigate into such cases as expeditiously as possible;

(ii) we will have to arrest all persons whose complicity has transpired in connection with various cases of lawlessness in Siliguri Sub-Division. Since we do not want any clash in the process of effecting the arrests, it will be desirable if Kanu Sanyal ensures that there is no resistance from his party workers at the time of such arrests;

(iii) in their proposed attempt at forcible dehoarding of food-grains in the near future, they should not take law into their own hands and do anything which may amount to looting of food-grains. On the other hand, their effort at dehoarding will be welcome if they contact the nearest police or any other responsible Government officer and arrange for unearthing of hidden stocks by such officials in their presence.

"5. Fortunately all the above suggestions were accepted by Kanu Sanyal and it was decided that I will go down to Siliguri on 20.5.67 for arranging follow-up actions on the above lines. In the meantime, on a suggestion from Shri Konar, the U.F. leaders of Siliguri have been requested to visit Hatighisa and other affected areas to communicate the above decision to the people concerned and also to appeal to them to maintain an atmosphere of peace and security." (My despatch dated 19.5.67)

(c) "In order to ensure follow-up actions as indicated in paras 4 and 5 of my memo. under reference, I came down to Siliguri on 20.5.67 and contacted Shri Souren Bose and wanted to know about the reactions of Kanu Sanyal, Jangal Santhal and their other followers. Shri Bose stated that he has not received any communication from any of them. In the meantime we were receiving information about menacing congregations of the miscreants in different parts of Siliguri Sub-Division. It was, however, decided to wait till the next day to start our systematic rounding up of the miscreants. On 21.5.67, the Dy. Insp. Genl. of Police, Jalpaiguri Range, came to Siliguri and discussed the entire situation with me when the Addl. Dy. Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officer were also present. Souren Bose also came to us and it was ascertained from him that he has not received any intimation from Kanu Sanyal etc. regarding implementation of the three conditions for a peaceful solution of the situation as indicated in para 4 of my memo. under reference. Souren Bose again pleaded his helplessness in the matter and felt that he had nothing more to say as to what course of action the police should take under the circumstances."

(My despatch to the IGP dated 28.5.67)



**Part VI : Controversy regarding – (a) 'lists of wanted persons' and (b) opening of 'Police Camps'**

Lot of dust has been kicked up and some sort of smoke-screen has been attempted from certain quarters on the above two issues. I will simply state facts below which will show the futility of any such attempt:

(a) 20.5.67 was set as the dead-line for the acceptance or rejection of the above three-point peace formula enunciated by me. It would appear from 5(c) above that we spared no pains to secure its compliance. We extended it to 21.5.67, still hoping that good sense will prevail upon at least a section of the miscreants. I even went to the extent of making a last and direct attempt at contacting some of the principal agitators by visiting, and waiting in vain, in some of their strong-holds in Hatighisa (P.S. Naxalbari) and Buraganj (P.S. Khoribari) on 22.5.67. I did this even against the ominous background of very reliable information about their series of group meetings between 18.5.67 and 21.5.67 when they repeated their resolve to 'defy the reactionaries and revisionists of the U.F. Govt.' and to 'draw the blood of any policeman who sought to arrest anybody engaged in this militant struggle of the peasantry'. In my despatch dated 30.5.67, I noted:

"It was decided that Kanu Sanyal will go round the villages, ensure acceptance of this condition (i.e. surrender without resistance) by his followers and communicate to me such acceptance on 20.5.67 at Siliguri either personally or through Shri Souren Bose, whereupon I will let them know the names of persons wanted in different cases, so that they may be collected by us without resistance. Unfortunately for all, even after contacting Shri Souren Bose at Siliguri on 20.5.67 and again on 21.5.67, no such assurance of their willingness to accept the above condition was conveyed to me. I even tried to contact either Kanu or Jangal Santhal personally at Hatighisa on 22.5.67 but none of them could be located anywhere in the area. Under the circumstances it is a travesty of fact to say that no list of the wanted persons was submitted by me."

(b) It would be clear from above the defiant attitude of the miscreants and their utter disregard for the formula accepted by one of their leaders (Kanu Sanyal) in the presence of a responsible local leader of their party (Shri Souren Bose) and the Hon'ble Land and Land Revenue Minister. Apart from this, the miscreants had

considerably stepped up their activity during this period. Thus, out of a total of about 60 cases between 3.3.67 and 22.5.67, as many as 22 were committed between 18.5.67 and 22.5.67 only. The patience and sense of toleration of the people in the affected areas also were well nigh exhausted at the continued depredations of this band of miscreants, correspondingly seeking the immediate presence of law enforcement agents in the interior elakas. Thus, to (i) prevent further acts of organised lawlessness and to (ii) make it easier for some of the not-too-hardened miscreants to surrender without much fuss, it was decided, after prolonged and serious discussions with all concerned, to set up two police camps in the affected areas with effect from 23.5.67. It is under such compelling circumstances, and not to spoil the 'atmosphere' (alas! no such atmosphere was ever created inspite of our sincere efforts), that two Police Camps at Buraganj (P.S. Khoribari) and Hatighisa (P.S. Naxalbari) respectively were partially equipped with wireless sets and some men on the night of 22.5.67 for their proper functioning with effect from 23.5.67. The setting up of these two Camps produced instantaneous effect in restoring the long-deserved sense of security in the affected areas. Unfortunately, however, two tragic happenings of 24.5.67 and 25.5.67, details of which I indicate below, retarded the scope of their effective functioning.

**Part VII : Incident of 24.5.67 (murder of Inspector Sonam Wangdi and severe assault on four Sub-Inspectors)**

"On receipt of an information that some of the ring-leaders concerned in the series of lawless activities during the past few months are organising people in Barajharuote, P. S. Naxalbari, to commit further mischief, O.C. Naxalbari P.S. (S. I. S. N. Mukherjee) with one Inspector (S.A.P.), three S. Is., 5 N. C. Os., 31 Consts. (including 15 armed constables) and two Gas from Bijaynagar Camp came near Barajharuote for effecting the arrest of the wanted miscreants when they were confronted by a mob of about 300 persons armed with bows, arrows, spears, lathis etc. with the womenfolk forming the vanguard. Apprehending a serious clash, the O.C. sent a message through somebody to Naxalbari P.S. (at a distance of about two miles) for immediate re-inforcement. This reinforcement arrived shortly thereafter led by Inspector Shri Sonam Wangdi with one S. I., one N.C.O. and 9 constables (lathis). On seeing this reinforcement, the male miscreants retreated to a distance, leaving the womenfolk



in the same place. Thereafter, Inspector Shri Wangdi with the O.C. and two Sub-Inspectors (all unarmed) advanced towards the womenfolk and asked them to disperse in view of the orders u/s 144 Cr. P. C. They, however, kept the main police party at a distance and out of sight of the mob as also of themselves under the charge of the S. A.P. Inspector, thinking that their presence might provoke the mob into violence. As the officers along with Inspector Shri Wangdi were talking to the womenfolk, the menfolk suddenly rushed towards them and started shooting arrows. Inspector Shri Wangdi received three or four arrow-shots and fell down unconscious. The O.C. Naxalbari P. S. also received two arrow-shots and fell down. In the meantime they were completely surrounded by the mob who started beating them up with lathis, etc. One of the S. Is. (N. P. Chowdhury) fortunately had the presence of mind to blow his whistle which attracted the attention of the main police party and they came running towards these injured officers. On seeing the main police party, the miscreants ran away. Thereafter the injured officers were carried to Siliguri Hospital for immediate treatment. Inspector Shri Wangdi never regained his consciousness and finally expired at Siliguri Hospital at about 21.45 hours the same night. O.C. Naxalbari P.S. and B. Bhattacharyya S.I. refused to be admitted in the Siliguri Hospital, though both of them sustained severe injuries. On the death of Shri Wangdi we have not only lost a police officer of the highest integrity and discipline but a true gentleman of the rare variety."

(My despatch dt. 28.5.67)

Our D. I. B. (District Intelligence Branch) Photographer was detailed by me in Siliguri Sub-Division with effect from 22.5.67 for taking photographs of recent incidents of lawlessness in Siliguri Sub-Division. On 24.5.67 the photographer accompanied Inspector Shri Wangdi to the scene of occurrence and took some shots at Barajharujote immediately before the Police party led by the Inspector was attacked by the miscreants. These photographs clearly show :

- (i) that all our officers were unarmed,
- (ii) that even some women and children were armed with bows and arrows,
- (iii) that the miscreants carried party flags,
- (iv) the degree of preparedness of the miscreants and their tactic of putting women and children at the front of the mob, a tactic which they followed on 25.5.67 also when the police party headed by the S.D.O. was attacked and was forced to open fire in self-defence under order of the S.D.O.





**Part VIII : Incident of 25.5.67 (attack on police party headed by S.D.O. and consequent police firing).**

I quote below from my wireless message dated 26.5.67 on the above incident:

“Reference Police firing at Prasadujote, P.S. Khoribari on 25.5.67(.) On 25.5.67 morning one Police Party led by Inspector D. B. Allay was confronted by a hostile crowd of about one thousand men and women armed with bows, arrows, etc. when some of the wanted persons were sought to be arrested. On hearing this I took out one Police party and the S.D.O., Siliguri took out another party to confront the mob from two different directions. There was no encounter with the mob by my party. The party led by S.D.O. was confronted by the mobs from two directions, each mob consisting of about 300 men and women armed with bows, arrows, etc. In both cases women were kept in the front, a tactic which was adopted by the miscreants on 24.5.67 when the Police Officers including Inspector Shri Wangdi were severely attacked. S.D.O. administered repeated warnings to the mobs and also reminded them of the prohibitory order u/s 144 Cr. P.C. banning movement of persons with bows, arrows, etc. These had no effect. On the contrary the mobs from both directions started advancing towards the Police party and shooting arrows. S.D.O. then ordered firing of five warning shots which also did not deter the rioters. He then ordered firing of 5 rounds at the hostile mob. This too had very little effect. Another five rounds of firing were ordered. In the meantime the mob from the other direction continued to press forward and eight rounds of firing towards this mob were ordered by him. At this stage the mobs started dispersing and no firing was resorted to thereafter. S.D.O. and his party then hurriedly picked up the casualties and brought them to Naxalbari P.S. when it was noticed that three were dead (two women and one child) and seven with injuries of varying nature. The injured were given some first aid at Naxalbari. Soon after this the M.O. of the local Health Centre reported that one person (female) has been brought to him with injuries. She was also picked up after first aid and all of them sent to Siliguri Hospital for further treatment, post-mortem etc. Three of the injured persons died either on way to hospital or at the hospital. Thus total available figures of casualties on 25.5.67 evening was six dead (five females and one child) and five injured. Late last night another injured female succumbed to her



injuries in Siliguri Hospital. This morning (26.5.67) information was received at Naxalbari P. S. that three more dead bodies were lying in a jute field near yesterday's place of firing. These three bodies (one male, one female and one child) were recovered and sent to Kurseong Hospital for post-mortem as Siliguri Hospital was over-worked. Two policemen received injuries as a result of shooting of arrows by miscreants. Over this incident, Khoribari P. S. case No. 31 dated 25.5.67, u/s 147/148/149/332/342/323/307 I.P.C. has been started and 6(six) persons arrested so far."

### Part IX : Popular reactions

Three things have shocked us including the responsible members of the public irrespective of their party affiliations: (i) total disregard for law by a microscopic section of the local community and their utter recklessness in defying the norms of civilised living as reflected in their persistent defiance of responsible public opinion. They have even defied, with impunity so far, the dictates of their political mentors; (ii) absolutely unprovoked brutal attack on a handful of unarmed Police officers on 24.5.67 resulting in the tragic death of an Inspector and serious injuries to two Sub-Inspectors; (iii) tragic loss of ten precious lives on 25.5.67 when the attacked police party headed by the S.D.O. had to open fire.

This sense of shock has been amply reflected in the newspaper reports during all these days and also in a large number of leaflets issued on this subject by various social and political organisations, including the local United Front Committee.

### Part X : Developments since 25.5.67

(a) Realising that the public opinion is solidly behind the police even after the police firing of 25.5.67 (somewhat puzzling to the top echelons of the miscreants!), the miscreants have considerably stepped up their offensive with the sole object of drawing out the police in some armed encounter. Their activities of the current week in the shape of raids on houses for the purposes of looting of goods and of guns only point to this desperate condition of the miscreants. Thus, on 10.6.67 they organised a series of raids in houses and also in a Forest Beat Office in search of guns.

(b) Kanu had been telling his compatriots all these days that 'police has been ordered by the Govt. not to use fire-arms' and as such they could afford to do whatever they liked. When the police did open fire in self-defence on 25.5.67, Kanu had to boost the sagging

morale of his followers by saying that they, too, will receive fire-arms from certain quarters. But when such fire-arms were not forthcoming from the 'Promised Lands', he had to resort to looting to satisfy his hungry band. He is, thus leading them from one calamity to another in his desperate bid to keep the band together, without realising that this vaunted 'peasant movement' has been exposed to the people in all its nakedness.

(c) The miscreants held a meeting on 9.6.67 at Gedlajote (P.S. Naxalbari) when they decided to loot the houses of all persons who are helping the police against them, and also kill them, if necessary.

(d) On 10.6.67 the miscreants chased one Nagen Ray Choudhury on Najirjote (P.S. Khoribari) to the house of one Soni Rai, looted the properties of the latter and severely assaulted the former, took away his gun and also dragged him along with them. Information has been received on 11.6.67 that the headless dead body of Nagen Ray Choudhury has been noticed in the vicinity of the area.

(e) On 10.6.67 the miscreants, armed with one DBBL gun and one SBBL gun and also with bows, arrows, etc. committed a dacoity in the house of one Kundla Singh of Birshinghjote (P.S. Naxalbari) and looted his properties including one D.B.B.L. gun and some cartridges. This refers to Naxalbari P.S. case NO. 6 dated 11.6.67 u/s 395/397 I.P.C.

(f) On 10.6.67 the miscreants, armed with guns, bows, arrows etc. and carrying party flags of CPI(M) raided the houses of two gun-licensees at Ketugaburjote (P.S. Naxalbari); in one case they failed to get any gun but the result of their raid on the other house is yet unknown. This refers to Naxalbari P.S. case No. 4 dated 10.6.67 u/s 143/144/147/148/149/447/448/380 IPC.

(g) On 10.6.67 the miscreants, similarly armed, raided the Forest Beat Office at Kalabari (P.S. Naxalbari) but failed to get the gun as the same was removed by the office earlier. This refers to Naxalbari P.S. case No. 5 dated 10.6.67 u/s 143/144/448/426 IPC.

It will be apparent from above that the miscreants have become absolutely desperate after coming to know about the proposed on-the-spot study of the situation by the Cabinet Committee which is scheduled to reach Siliguri on 12.6.67. The intensity of criminal activities of the miscreants from 9.6.67 point to their desire to draw out the police in armed encounter which may give them a further lease of life by diverting public opinion on to the instances of police firing.



### Part XI : Suggested remedial measures

(a) As a long-term measure, the land problems as enunciated by me in Part II must be sorted out as an emergency measure with immediate effect. I insist on this to the point of repetition, because it will be noticed that most of the incidents of rioting and many of the incidents of murder in rural areas are directly connected with land matters.

(b) As short-term measure, we will continue to follow the lines of action indicated in Part IV. But, in view of the desperate nature of violent activities of the miscreants during the last few days, it is of utmost importance that these activities of this group of desperate persons be effectively curbed. Given solid backing by the people and the popular Govt., we are confident to be equal to this difficult but urgent task. If we have failed to bring the erring group into senses inspite of our repeated attempts through various methods of persuasion, we no longer want to fail the thousands of suffering humanities in those haunted villages in their legitimate aspirations for lasting peace.

### Part XII: Epilogue

The visit of the Cabinet Committee to the disturbed areas only shows that Government is seized of the gravity and intricacy of the problem. We welcome the Committee to see for itself the real nature of things, which we grasped correctly and kept the Government informed of all developments. Because we did realise the gravity of the situation, we refrained from taking stern action at the initial stages for two main reasons: (i) we knew from the beginning that this group was itching for armed encounters with the police, so that they could divert the public attention from their real activities to incidents of police firing; (ii) we wanted to expose to the full the inner motives of this group and then invite popular wrath against them. We and the people have so far succeeded in both these objectives, though we have paid a very heavy price for this in lives and in untold misery and anxiety. The people are now demanding positive action after this long period of suffering. Indeed, the time for action has arrived.

**Note by the Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling District to the Cabinet Committee on the present disturbances in Siliguri Subdivision - Relevant statistics regarding population, Land, etc.**

1. It has been contended by some political leaders that the present disturbed conditions in certain parts of Siliguri Sub-division have their origins in economic and social grievances of landless peasants and share-croppers. It has been further held that the problems are not one of law and order but are economic and social problems. The problems have, according to them, arisen out of (a) incorrect survey and settlement operation as a result of which big land-owners have escaped the provisions of land ceiling by malafide transactions and thus have deprived landless peasants from getting land; (b) malafide and illegal occupation by Jotedars of khas land and vested land and regularisation of such forcible occupation by formal settlement and (c) illegal and mass-scale eviction of share-croppers.

2. The result of all these grievances are that there has been a spontaneous uprising of the peasants and the object of this agitation is to redress the errors mentioned above. It has been said that some "excesses" have been committed by the peasants in the course of their agitation but fundamentally the agitation is a result of social upsurge to redress definite errors made by the Jotedars and the previous Government.

The growth of population of Siliguri Sub-division is given below thana-wise :

Year	Siliguri P.S.	Khoribari	Phansidewa	Naxalbari	Total
1871	21,489	13,828	12,668	—	47,985
1881	28,321	18,224	16,696	—	63,241
1891	32,690	21,035	19,272	—	72,997
1901	31,556	20,306	18,604	—	70,446
1911	32,353	20,319	19,074	—	72,246
1921	33,939	21,839	20,009	—	75,787
1931	35,968	23,145	21,145	—	80,258
1941	42,363	24,216	23,435	—	90,014
1951	68,280(a)	24,876	23,319	—	1,16,375
1961	92,849(b)	25,926	58,661(c)	42,270(d)	2,19,706(e)

- (a) Out of this, 32,480 was the population of Siliguri Municipal area. Hence the population in the rural area was only 35,800.
- (b) Out of this, 65,360 was the population of Siliguri Municipal area. Hence the population in the rural area was only 27,489 - the decrease from the 1951 figures was due to transfer of 72 mouzas to Naxalbari P.S.
- (c) The more than two-fold increase in the population of Phansidewa P.S. between 1951 and 1961 was due to the addition of the ceded areas from Bihar.



- (d) The new P.S. of Naxalbari was created in early 1960 by taking 33 mouzas out of old Khoribari P.S. and 72 mouzas out of old Siliguri P.S. and then merging 105 mouzas altogether.
- (e) The almost two-fold increase in population over the 1951 figures is due to: (i) more than doubling of the urban population within Siliguri Municipal area and the adjoining areas extending upto Bagdogra, (ii) addition of the people of the ceded areas and (iii) influx of displaced persons from East Pakistan.

It will be observed that the population has grown rapidly in the Municipal area of Siliguri Town. Elsewhere the growth of population has been slow compared with the rest of the State. Therefore, it is not correct to say that the pressure on land is more acute in the disturbed areas than elsewhere. The price of land was absurdly low in the disturbed areas upto 1947-48. A large number of displaced persons from East Pakistan easily found rehabilitation in those areas. It is not being suggested that there is no "land hunger" in these areas. The point is that "land hunger" is not as acute as it is elsewhere. It is common knowledge that the price of land is low compared to price obtaining elsewhere in the State.

3. As anywhere else the Jotedars as a class secured unfair advantages during the survey and settlement operations. It might be relevant to note that no disturbances or forcible occupation of land occurred in the ceded areas where survey and settlement operations are still under way. The bulk of the disturbed areas are within a radius of 5 miles of Naxalbari P.S. Two statements of vested lands of tea-gardens and other vested lands upto May 31, 1967 are enclosed. Vested tea-garden lands need not be considered as the total area of such lands is insignificant. It will be seen from the second statement that about 19089.20 acres are vested in the State. Out of this, according to available reports, 10875.25 acres are fit for agricultural settlement. Out of this, 991.17 acres of agricultural land have been handed over to the army for defence purpose. Therefore, about 9715 acres were available for settlement. By the end of 1375 B.S. a total area of 6097 acres were settled with 3474 persons. Recently, another 474 acres were settled with 384 persons in accordance with the recent directions of the Government. Some of the areas have not been settled as they involve part-vested plots which have either not been demarcated or in respect of which demarcation has been recently completed. Further settlements were made impossible on account of the disturbed conditions. It will be seen that about 2500 acres have not been formally settled or licensed out.

It has been suggested that these settlements have been made with persons who are neither landless nor small land-holders but with big land-owners. It has not been possible to enquire into each and every case of forcible occupation of land or attempts at forcible occupation, looting of paddy and other acts of intimidation. Inquiries have been held in 49 cases and not in a single case the lands were found to be vested lands. Only in one case the disputed land was found to be vested and settled by the Junior Land Reforms Officer. No concrete evidence or representations have been given as to which lands have been improperly settled or which have been retained by Jotedars by malafide transactions. It is on record that Jotedars have not been singled out. In fact a large number of small land-holders have been the target of intimidation. In these circumstances it is not logical to conclude that the present agitation is directed against big Jotedars only.

4. A careful enquiry has been made regarding the persons who have taken part in forcible occupation of land and other acts of criminal intimidation. Shri Panchanan Sarkar, an important leader of the Kishan Sabha - owns 40 bighas of land. Shri Tudua - a second grade leader of the Sabha - owns 5 bighas of land and cultivates another 37 bighas as bargadar. No doubt he has benami bargadars himself. The following table gives the details of land owned or cultivated as bargadars of some other persons who are leaders of the Kishan Sabha and who have been arrested in various cases:

Sl. No.	Name of person	Land owned (bighas)	Land cultivated as bargadars (bighas)	Total land possessed (in bighas)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Sri Balo Uraon	12	5	17
2.	Jukra Uraon	5	15	20
3.	Ropna Uraon	15	7	22
4.	Papalu Uraon	5	15	20
5.	Belo Uraon	3	12	15
6.	Somra Uraon	7	15	22
7.	Pilu Uraon	7	7	14
8.	Lukha Uraon	20	Nil	20
9.	Soma Uraon	12	Nil	12
10.	Suklal Uraon	Nil	15	15
11.	Dharani Barman	Nil	14	14

(continued)



(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
12. Machlu Uraon	11	25	36	
13. Gural Singh	12	Nil	12	
14. Babulal Uraon	11 1/2	Nil	111/2	
15. Chandu Uraon	8 1/2	Nil	8 1/2	
16. Tewpa Nayek	15	Nil	15	
17. Mathura Uraon	Nil	15	15	
18. Krishna Bahadur	12	Nil	12	
19. Lata Kishen	25	Nil	25	
20. Rajpati Nayek	10	Nil	10	

The above table gives the idea about 20 persons out of the 69 persons now in jail custody in connection with the various cases of forcible occupation of others' lands. Out of the remaining persons, 7 persons own about 7/8 bighas each and 12 persons cultivate in barga about 11/12 bighas each. Of the rest, 14 are not cultivators - some are tea-garden labourers, some are small businessmen. Only 7 are agricultural labourers with little or no land of their own.

It will be pertinent to ask why it is relevant to enquire into the social and economic status of the leaders of the agitation. The relevance of this enquiry will appear in the concluding paragraph of this note.

5. A few comments on the allegation regarding illegal and mass-scale eviction of bargadars is given. The following statement of bhagchas cases of Siliguri Sub-division is given below:

Year	Cases by owners against bargadars			Cases by bargadars against owners		
	Total filed	Total disposed of	Results	Total filed	Total disposed of	Result
1964-65	51	46	Eviction ordered in 6 cases	2	2	Eviction stopped in both
1965-66	44	34	Eviction ordered in 4 cases	Nil	Nil	
1966-67	63	17	Eviction ordered in 1 case	Nil	Nil	

(continued)

Year	Cases by owners against bargadars			Cases by bargadars against owners		
	Total filed	Total disposed of	Results	Total filed	Total disposed of	Result
1967-68 (up to 31.5.67)	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
Total	160	97	11	2	2	2

The Junior Land Reforms Officer, Naxalbari who is at Naxalbari since February 1965 has categorically stated that during his stay at Naxalbari for the last 2 1/2 years no representation has been made to him by any individual, representatives of political parties or representatives of peasants' organisations alleging illegal and forcible eviction of any bargadar. The Junior Land Reforms Officer, Siliguri, who is at Siliguri since January 1964 has made a similar statement. The experience of the Sub-divisional Land Reforms Officer, Siliguri is also the same.

The four local newsweeklies never published any information regarding forcible eviction of bargadars before the recent incidents started. "Tarai Darpan" of March 31, i.e. about a month after the incidents started, published some information that forcible eviction is apprehended in five cases in Khoribari P.S. area. The enquiry is being held up because of uncertain law and order situation. No eviction of any of these 5 cases has, however, taken place. In these circumstances the allegation regarding mass-scale eviction of bargadars remains not proved.

6. The statement regarding vested lands of tea-gardens has already been referred to. The Government decision regarding resumption of surplus lands of tea-gardens of the Sub-division is awaited. If any lands are available they would have to be settled with surplus and unemployed labour of the particular tea-garden from which lands are being resumed and will thus not help the landless peasants.

7. The object of this note is not to prove that there are no economic and social grievances. But it can be well established that the people who are agitating or leading the "revolt" are not all land hungry peasants. Nor are the people against whom the agitation is directed are what is known in common parlance privileged persons. The bone of contention is not always lands which have been improperly distributed or illegally retained. It is acknowledged that agrarian conditions in these areas are no different from anywhere else in the



State. It could be said that considering the total agricultural (excluding tea and forests) area in the Sub-division is about 60,000 acres, the area which vested in the State amounts to 13871 acres. Reference has been made earlier to a comparatively less acute pressure on land than elsewhere in the State. The logical conclusion should be that the usual conditions which cause peasant unrest do not obtain here in as much measure as it obtains elsewhere in the State. Perhaps the object of the Kishan Sabha is a radical change of the agrarian set up of the areas. The laws of the land as they stand today will not allow their objects to be achieved. It is best left to the visiting Ministers to find a solution as to how the radical views can be accepted in a manner compatible with the existing law of the land.

(M. Bhattacharyya)

Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling District

**Explanatory note: SP, Darjeeling's report dated 11 May, 1967 to the Inspector General of Police, West Bengal on the incidents at Sannyasisthan Tea Estate (P.S. Phansidewa)**

In response to a series of telegrams from some tea garden managements, and the Chief Minister's orders thereon asking for 'firm actions against the trouble-makers'. In this report, one of the earliest in the series, the SP tried to analyse the root cause of the trouble, namely, improper, malafide and negligent land management, a long-standing malady which needed to be remedied first on an urgent basis before the police was called upon to put down these troubles 'firmly', i.e. ruthlessly, in the traditional fashion.

Paras 7 and 8 of this report are very relevant and quite obviously this was not liked by some in the government and the bureaucracy who commented that the SP was 'sticking out his neck unnecessarily.' They failed to appreciate that such a principled stand was long overdue and needed to be taken with the courage of conviction for a just cause. Subsequent events proved the correctness of the SP's analysis and even the government eventually came round to his point of view in the matter of dealing with the problem. One immediate fall-out was the Government Resolution of 21 June, 1967, setting up four Land Reforms Committees for Siliguri sub-division, perhaps the first of its kind in India. The Govt. Res. is included in this publication as a document of historical value.

Government of West Bengal  
Office of the Superintendent of Police,  
District Intelligence Branch, Darjeeling

No. 6136/23-67

Dated the 11th May 1967

From: Shri A. P. Mukherjee, I.P.S.  
Superintendent of Police,  
D.I.B. Darjeeling

To: Shri U. Mukharji, J. P., I.P.  
Inspector-General of Police, West Bengal  
Writers' Buildings, Calcutta

Subject: Incident at Sannyasisthan T. E., P.S. Phansidewa

Reference: My Signal No. 2202-E dated 11-5-67.

1. There are about 43 hutments on a plot of land adjacent to Sannyasisthan T.E., P.S. Phansidewa. Of these hutments, nine were put up in 1966 and six during the current year. About 20 persons with their family members have been residing in some of these hutments for about 30 years now. Most of these persons were labourers of this T.E. who were discharged about 3/4 years back. They, however, continued to reside in their old hutments. These persons claimed the land to be a vested one, whereas the Management asserts it to be a part of the Tea Estate.
2. In the recent past the Management inducted some casual labourers into this area and had put them up in some of these hutments on the disputed land. The old labourers resented this action of the Management, asking it to take away these new labourers from these hutments and settle them on tea garden lands. Obviously the Management construed it to be a device for adverse possession on the part of the old labourers, whereas the latter took it up as a challenge to evict them from the land where they had been residing for a number of years. The cause of the old labourers was taken up by the neighbouring CPI (M) workers who in a body along with these old labourers (total numbering about 200 armed with bows, arrows etc. and carrying CPI (M) flag) surrounded the entire disputed land on 9-5-67 at about 13.15 hours. They asked the newly inducted labourers to vacate those hutments which were being occupied by them and the latter did so. The demonstrators also pulled down the thatched roofs of two of the hutments constructed recently



but lying vacant. None of the new labourers, or anybody else for that matter, was assaulted in the process.

3. On receipt of the above information from the Management of the garden, the Officer-in-Charge, Bagdogra I/C (Police Unit nearest to the T.E.) with D.I.O., Bagdogra visited the place of occurrence and asked the old labourers not to take law into their own hands. The Officer-in-Charge also received a written complaint from the Estate Manager of the T.E. which was subsequently forwarded to Phansidewa P.S. for recording a case under appropriate sections of the law. Thus Phansidewa P.S. Case No. 4 dated 10-5-67 under sections 147/148/149/447/426 I.P.C. was started and investigation has been taken up.
4. The S.D.O., S.D.P.O. and C.I., Siliguri also visited the area on 10-5-67 and asked both parties not to do anything which may lead to any breaches of the peace. A Police picket consisting of 2 S.Is, 1 A.S.I. and 10 Constables has been posted near the bungalow of the Manager of Sannyasisthan T. E. and a stand by force of 1 S.I., 2 NCOs. and 11 Constables has been kept at Bagdogra I/C to prevent any breaches of the peace.
5. Some of the Bangla Congress leaders of Siliguri and Naxalbari visited the place of occurrence on 10-5-67 and met me at Siliguri Control Room the same afternoon where I happened to be present after seeing off the Governor. These gentlemen also felt that there may be some genuine dispute regarding the real nature of the land and said that the induction of new labourers into the area might have been a genuine cause of agitation amongst the old labourers. They also opined that the Police should not take any precipitate action now, till satisfactory settlement about the nature of the land in question.
6. The Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling is now in Calcutta for attending a conference there and he is expected to be back here on the 14th instant. I discussed the entire situation with the S.D.O., Siliguri on 10-5-67 and apprised him of the actions taken by us so far.
7. I may mention in this connection that most of the incidents affecting law and order situation in this district during the past few months have all arisen over disputed lands. As I mentioned to you in course of my discussion on 3-5-67, considerable portions of the lands covering Phansidewa, Naxalbari and Khoribari are either areas ceded from Bihar at the time of States'

Re-organisation or lands insufficiently covered by Settlement operations. In both cases, the Settlement Records are alleged to be either incomplete or faulty. Taking a long-term view of the law and order situation, it is of utmost urgency that a machinery be set up immediately (with the D.C./A.D.C., Settlement Officers and Land Reforms Officers as its components) to proceed with prompt investigation of all such land dispute cases. The constituents of the United Front Committee in the District may be asked to collect and supply lists of such disputed cases to this Committee for immediate investigation. I am taking up this matter with the Deputy Commissioner. You may, however, like to take up the matter with the appropriate Department of the Government since it has a close bearing on the law and order situation.

8. As a short-term measure, we are seeking to deal with such incidents of breaches of the peace arising out of land disputes in the following manner:
  - (a) contacting the local constituents of the U.F. Committee, seeking their intervention to dissuade the people from taking law into their own hands for redressing their grievances;
  - (b) taking up cases under appropriate sections of the law and ensuring their prompt investigation. Charge Sheets will be submitted in suitable cases whenever the requisite degree of evidence is available;
  - (c) I admit our failure to arrest any of the accused persons in a number of cases of similar nature, the results for which should be stated candidly. Most of the wanted persons are affiliated to the CPI(M) who are well-organised in a number of villages and suitably armed with bows and arrows. They never move about except in groups and being armed. As such any attempt at arresting them in course of investigation would lead to inevitable clashes, resulting in blood-shed. Under the circumstances, we propose to complete investigation of all such cases as quickly as possible and submit charge-sheets wherever the requisite evidence is forthcoming. Thereafter, the Court will issue appropriate legal process which will be executed by us;
  - (d) As regards processions of persons carrying bows, arrows etc., here also the persons concerned are under the fold of the CPI(M) and mostly 'Adibashis' (Santhals, Uraons, Mundas etc.). These persons are in the habit of moving about with bows, arrows



etc. even when they go about their normal avocations. However, when a group of such persons move out in a procession and are similarly armed, this naturally poses a threat to peace. It must be mentioned here that such processions by such groups are in vogue in this area since about March 1966, if not earlier still, and that there has been no incident so far of their having used such weapons against any person. This may be due to the fact that they have not so far come across any resistance from any quarters. If such groups of demonstrators (strength varying from 150-350) are to be disarmed or dispersed, we will have to take recourse to an order under section 144 Cr.PC and enforce the ban imposed thereunder effectively. This, in clear terms, would surely lead to armed intervention by the Police, culminating in considerable casualties, possibly to both sides. I concede that this menace of organised demonstration with bows, arrows etc. has assumed an unhappy proportion. The only thing which is holding back the above course of ultimate action is a genuine dilemma as to whether we will bring about a greater calamity to contain a lesser evil in trying to forcibly disperse such assemblies. I would be grateful if you could kindly place the above alternatives before the Chief Minister and obtain a clear order for me as to whether we would be justified in resorting to the extreme course of action including firing to enforce an order under Sec. 144 Cr. P.C. banning procession and demonstration by persons carrying bows, arrows etc.

9. Finally, I have been given to understand that Shri Hare Krishna Konar (Minister, Land and Land Revenue Department, Government of West Bengal) is visiting Darjeeling between 15.5.67 and 17.5.67 in course of which he will seek to solve this problem of armed demonstration by CPI (M) workers. I feel, and the D. C. agrees with me, that we should await results of this intervention before embarking on the extreme course of action outlined above.

Sd/- A. P. Mukherjee, 11.5.67

Superintendent of Police, D.I.B., Darjeeling.

Office of the Superintendent of Police, D.I.B., Darjeeling

Memo N. 6136/1(4)

Dated, the 11th May 1967

Copy to:

1. Shri I. B. Surita, MC., IAS  
Commissioner, Jalpaiguri Division, Siliguri
2. Shri S. C. De Chowdhury, I.P.S.  
Dy. Insp. Genl. of Police,  
Jalpaiguri Range, Jalpaiguri
3. Shri B. C. Bagchi, I.P.S.  
Dy. Insp. Genl. of Police,  
Intelligence Branch, West Bengal, Calcutta  
for favour of information.
4. Shri M. Bhattacharyya, I.A.S.  
Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling  
for information and necessary action. His attention is invited to paragraph 7 of the foregoing letter. He may kindly consider the early setting up of a machinery for prompt investigation into all such cases of land disputes having a close bearing on the law and order situation in Naxalbari, Phansidewa and Khoribari areas.

Sd/- A. P. Mukherjee, 11.5.67

Superintendent of Police

D.I.B. Darjeeling

[Formation of Land Reforms Committees (5), first of its kind in India]

#### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL LAND AND LAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT

#### Resolution

No. 10578-L.Ref.

Dated, Calcutta  
the 21st June, 1967

Whereas it is necessary to adopt, in the Siliguri sub-division of the Darjeeling District, special measures in consultation with the representatives of the people, for the full implementation of Land Reform measures as provided for by the law and for the expeditious redress of the legitimate grievances of the various sections of the agricultural population of the area, the Governor is pleased to constitute a sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee for the Siliguri



sub-division of the Darjeeling District and a Thana Land Reforms Committee for each of the four Police Stations in the Siliguri sub-division, viz. the Siliguri Police Station, the Phansidewa Police Station, the Naxalbari Police Station and the Khoribari Police Station.

2. The sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee for the Siliguri sub-division will consist of:

- (1) Additional Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling. — Chairman.
  - (2) Sub-divisional Officer, Siliguri - Vice Chairman.
  - (3) Special Officer, Tribal Welfare, Darjeeling.
  - (4) Assistant Settlement Officer & Charge Officer, Darjeeling.
  - (5) A representative from each of the following Political parties:
    - (a) The All India Gorkha League.
    - (b) The Bangla Congress.
    - (c) The Communist Party of India.
    - (d) The Communist Party of India (Marxist)
    - (e) The Forward Bloc
    - (f) The Indian National Congress
    - (g) The Revolutionary Socialist Party
    - (h) The Samyukta Socialist Party
  - (6) Special Officer, Land Reforms, Jalpaiguri -Darjeeling. — Secretary
  - (7) Sub-divisional Land Reforms Officer, Siliguri. — Assistant Secretary.
3. Each of the four Thana Land Reforms Committee will consist of the following:
- (1) Special Officer, Land Reforms, Jalpaiguri-Darjeeling. — Chairman.
  - (2) Block Development Officer — Vice Chairman.
  - (3) Sub-divisional Land Reforms Officer, Siliguri.
  - (4) One representative from each of the following Political parties:
    - (a) The All India Gorkha League.
    - (b) The Bangla Congress.
    - (c) The Communist Party of India.
    - (d) The Communist Party of India (Marxist)
    - (e) The Forward Bloc
    - (f) The Indian National Congress
    - (g) The Revolutionary Socialist Party
    - (h) The Samyukta Socialist Party
  - (5) Junior Land Reforms Officer — Secretary
4. The Commissioner, Jalpaiguri Division and the Deputy

Commissioner, Darjeeling, will have the discretion of being present and guiding the deliberations of any meeting of the sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee. The Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling, the Additional Deputy Commissioner, and the sub-divisional Officer, Siliguri, will similarly have the discretion of being present at any meeting of a Thana Land Reforms Committee and guiding its deliberations.

5. The Chairman of each of the Committees, or the Vice-Chairman of the Committee acting on behalf of the Chairman, may invite any other person, official or non-official, to be present at a particular meeting of the Committee and to participate in the deliberations on a particular subject or subjects.
6. The Secretary of the Committee, with the prior approval of the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman, may ask any person, official or non-official, to attend a particular meeting of the Committee to give the Committee such factual information as the Committee may require.
7. The functions of the Thana Land Reforms Committee will be to advise the local Administration on the implementation of Land Reforms measures, particularly as regards the following matters:
  - (1) prima-facie cases of malafide transfers of lands between the 5th May, 1953 and the date of vesting, requiring enquiries and action under section 5A of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act;
  - (2) matters relating to lands which have vested in Government under the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act, namely :
    - (a) taking of possession by Government of such vested lands including Government share of part-vested lands,
    - (b) vested lands under trespass or unauthorised occupation— cases needing action for the eviction of trespassers and the recovery of possession — cases needing regularisation by the recognition of present occupiers and grant of license to them,
    - (c) problems arising out of malafide transfers or transactions in respect of vested lands after the date of vesting — action required for enforcing the title of Government and recovering possession of such lands — penalties to be imposed by way of forfeiture of compensation or otherwise — relief to be given by way of restoration of possession of allotment of alternative lands to bargadars or Adhiars who may have been displaced by reason of such malafide transactions,



- (d) survey of vested lands reported to be not suitable for agriculture with a view to their classification into categories such as follows and utilisation accordingly :
  - (i) suitable for agriculture and allotment for agricultural purposes,
  - (ii) suitable for agriculture after preparation or execution of a feasibility study on behalf of the Chairman, may invite any other person, official or non-official, to be present at a particular meeting of the Committee and to participate in the deliberations on a particular subject or subjects, cases needing action for the eviction of trespassers and the recovery of possession—cases needing regularisation by the recognition of present occupiers and grant of license to them,
- (e) problems arising out of malafide transfers or transactions in respect of vested lands after the date of vesting — action required for enforcing the title of Government and recovering possession of such lands — penalties to be imposed by way of forfeiture of compensation or otherwise — relief to be given by way of restoration of possession of allotment of alternative lands to bargadars or Adhiars who may have been displaced by reason of such malafide transactions,
- (f) survey of vested lands reported to be not suitable for agriculture with a view to their classification into categories such as follows and utilisation accordingly :
  - (i) suitable for agriculture and allotment for agricultural purposes,
  - (ii) suitable for agriculture after preparation or execution of a feasible and economic reclamation, irrigation, drainage or soil conservation scheme,
  - (iii) unsuitable for agriculture but suitable for afforestation,
  - (iv) unsuitable for agriculture but suitable for non-agricultural purposes,
  - (v) unutilisable and unreclaimable waste lands;
- (3) distribution of khas lands and vested lands for agricultural purposes :
  - (a) immediate allotment of available lands on annual licenses for the year 1374 B.S.,
  - (b) re-examination of the propriety of allotments already made in the year 1374 B.S. whether by way of the grant of new annual licenses or the renewal of annual licenses of the previous years with a view to classifying the cases of allotments into the following categories :

- (i) annual licenses which may be renewed for the next year or converted into raiyati settlements,
- (ii) licenses which may be renewed for the next year or converted into raiyati settlement but with a reduction of the area of the land,
- (iii) licenses which should not be renewed or converted into raiyati settlement;
- (c) preparation of allotment lists for the grant of raiyati settlement from the year 1375 B.S. or as soon as possible thereafter;
- (4) Cases of illegal eviction of Bargadars or Adhiars — cases needing enquiry and action for the restoration of possession made under Section 19B acting on behalf of the Chairman, may invite any other person, official or non-official, to be present at a particular meeting of the Committee and to participate in the deliberations on a particular subject or subjects.
- (a) taking of possession by Government of such vested lands including Government share of part-vested lands,
- (b) vested lands under trespass or unauthorised occupation — cases needing action for the eviction of trespassers and the recovery of possession — cases needing regularisation by the recognition of present occupiers and grant of license to them,
- (c) problems arising out of malafide transfers or transactions in respect of vested lands after the date of vesting — action required for enforcing the title of Government and recovering possession of such lands — penalties to be imposed by way of forfeiture of compensation or otherwise — relief to be given by way of restoration of possession of allotment of alternative lands to bargadars or Adhiars who may have been displaced by reason of such malafide transactions,
- (d) survey of vested lands reported to be not suitable for agriculture with a view to their classification into categories such as follows and utilisation accordingly :
  - (i) suitable for agriculture and allotment for agricultural purposes,
  - (ii) suitable for agriculture after preparation or execution of a feasible and economic reclamation, irrigation, drainage or soil conservation scheme,
  - (iii) unsuitable for agriculture but suitable for afforestation,
  - (iv) unsuitable for agriculture but suitable for non-agricultural purposes,
  - (v) unutilisable and unreclaimable waste lands,



- (c) preparation of allotment lists for the grant of raiyati settlement from the year 1375 B.S. or as soon as possible thereafter;
- (5) Thana Land Reforms Committee will also maintain contact with all sections of the agricultural population within the Thana — *raiya*s, *bargadars*, *adhiars* and agricultural workers, and assist in educating them in their rights and obligations under the law;
- (6) Thana Land Reforms Committee will also maintain a watch on the agrarian situation within the Thana.
8. The functions of the sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee will be as follows :
- (1) to receive copies of the minutes of proceedings of the Thana Committees and monthly reports of their work;
- (2) to co-ordinate the work of the Thana Committees and to keep a watch over the progress of their work;
- (3) to give directives to the Thana Committees on important questions of principle, particularly as regards matters in respect of which there may be differences of views between two Thana Committees or a division of opinion within the same Thana Committee;
- (4) to keep watch on the agrarian situation in the sub-division;
- (5) to advise the local administration on measures which may be necessary to expedite the progress of work.
9. The deliberations and recommendations of the sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee and the Thana Land Reforms Committee will be within the framework of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act, 1953 and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955, statutory laws framed thereunder and executive instructions issued by the Government or by the Board of Revenue from time to time.

'Ordered that the Resolution be published in the Calcutta Gazette and that copies be forwarded to the Members of the Committees and to all Departments of this Government.

By order of the Governor

Sd. K. Sen

Secretary to the Government of West Bengal

**Incidence of (a) Rioting and (b) Murder over land disputes (including harvesting) in the sub-divisions of Diamond Harbour (24-Parganas district) and Siliguri (Darjeeling district) during the years 1960 - 1966.**

(Note: These statistical data were collected to assess the intensity of jotedar-bargadar clashes, frictions and resultant tension in these two sub-divisions)

**A. Diamond Harbour sub-division (10 PSs having a total area of 1263 sq. miles):**

Year	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	Total
Rioting	64	103	114	116	105	86	78	666
Murder	5	4	2	4	4	8	2	29

**B. Siliguri sub-division : (4 PSs having a total area of 338 sq. miles)**

Rioting	6	3	11	8	4	5	5	42
Murder	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2

Notes : A. : Mathurapur and Mograhat PSs were (and perhaps still are) the most violence-prone in Diamond Harbour sub-division, contributing the largest number of those cases.

B. : Phansidewa PS alone contributed as many as 25 out of the 42 cases of Rioting and one of the two cases of Murder.

**Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday the 5th July 1967 at 10.30 A.M. and again at 7 P.M. at the Chief Minister's room in the Assembly House. The Chief Minister presided.**

Ministers present:

1. Shri A. K. Mukherji
2. Shri J. Basu
3. Shri S. Lahiri
4. Dr. P. C. Ghosh (Absent in the evening)
5. Shri H. K. Basu
6. Shri S. K. Dhara
7. Shri Deo Prakash Rai
8. Shri N. Sen Gupta
9. Shri A. P. Chakraborty
10. Shri N. Bhattacharya
11. Shri H. K. Konar
12. Shri J. Bhattacharya



13. Shri Subodh Banerjee
14. Shri B. B. Das Gupta
15. Shri B. Mukherjee
16. Shri N. N. Kundu
17. Shri K. K. Maitra
18. Shri Charumihir Sarkar

#### HOME DEPARTMENT: NAXALBARI AFFAIRS

Cabinet discussed at great length the situation in the Naxalbari area. Cabinet reiterated that the policy to be followed in dealing with the situation in the Naxalbari area was to isolate the extremists from the people of the area and to ensure restoration of normal conditions. With this objective in view Cabinet directed that the following measures should be taken:

- (1) Work of land reform and distribution committees should be speeded up. Full propaganda and publicity should be arranged (i) for enabling this work to go on as speedily as possible and (ii) for facilitating the surrender of the wanted persons in terms of the decision taken earlier.
- (2) Police camps should be set up and Police patrols organised wherever necessary (including stronghold areas) for the following purposes:
  - (a) They will strictly enforce section 144 Cr. P. C. orders (including taking of action against movement of mobs with weapons)
  - (b) They will prevent further action on the part of both extremists and resistance groups and help restoration of normal conditions.
  - (c) Arrests may be made in the course of action taken under (a) and (b)
  - (d) They will continue to encourage the policy of facilitating surrender of wanted persons in terms of the decision taken earlier.
  - (e) Searches for and arrests of wanted persons, mainly ring-leaders, should be made only on information received but there should be no mass-scale searches for this purpose. Investigation of cases involving serious offences on both sides should go on. Police will exercise their discretion in carrying out the instructions given above but subject to the conditions stated therein.

#### Socio-economic profiles and other details of arrested extremists in Siliguri sub-division, based on their interrogation (1967-68)

1. Most of the arrested persons joined the extremist group very recently, within the last 4-5 months.
2. Many of the arrested persons stated that they joined the 'movement' of the Lal Party under threat. Those who did not join were driven out of the area or were tortured. This also applied to the village police (i.e. Dafadars and Chowkidars).
3. Many of them possess cultivable land (their own or given by tea garden authorities) sufficient to maintain their families.
4. No one could cite any recent case of any adhiar (bargardar) being deprived of this right to cultivate the land of his jotedar.
5. Santhals, Rajbanshis and a few Muslims, Biharis and Nepalies have come within the fold of the party.
6. One adibasi (Harma Santhal) from Khayerbani, P.S Nagrakata (District Jalpaiguri) and six other adibasis of Jamriguri of PS Jhapa (Nepal) were brought to Hatighisa area (PS Naxalbari) by Jangal Santhal in recent months with the promise of providing them with land.
7. A section of the tea garden labourers having interest in land have also joined this movement as they had no choice.
8. The age group of the persons involved ranges from 18 to 50 years.
9. Some of the participants have criminal background, believed to have been brought into the movement to add to its militancy and also to effectively terrorise the local people, especially those who refuse to join the movement. Mention may be made of some such persons with criminal background: Saiba Tharu, Jharia Tharu, Bhachak Singh, Udharu Mallick, Oli Mohammad, Kandra Saibya etc.
10. Jangal Santhal, Khokan Majumdar @ Abdul Hanif, Keshab Sarkar, Phani Das, Babulal Biswakarmakar, Kamakshya Banerjee, Mujibar Rahman etc. used to hold meetings with villagers and talked about armed revolution by the peasants as preached by Chairman Mao Tse-tung of China. They urged them to join the Krishak Sabha for this purpose and held out threats to those who were not agreeable.
11. Kanu Sanyal generally does not lead the raiders for looting (foodgrains, guns etc.) but meets them when the party returns with the booty.



12. The party leaders are reported to have fixed up several hide-outs/shelters in the nearby forest areas of Tukuria, Jhabra etc.
13. Police operations in their stronghold areas of Hatighisa and Buraganj Anchals on 12.7.67 and on 13.7.67 respectively have led to considerable demoralisation among the leaders and the rank and file. But the villagers in general in these areas feel happy about the total success of the police operations which, they hope, will lead to peace and normalcy in the entire disturbed area.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It came to light later that this person was brutally murdered by the miscreants.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Lessons of Naxalbari

[Explanatory note: This was written during August-September, 1968 by A.P.Mukherjee when he was the Superintendent of Police, Darjeeling District and submitted in 1969 to the Government of West Bengal for permission to publish it at a later date.]

#### Section I: THE PROBLEM AND THE STRATEGY

The political and administrative atmosphere in West Bengal was surcharged with emotion, suspense and suspicion at the formation of the United Front Government on March 2, 1967, consisting of Bangla Congress, CPI, CPI(M), Forward Bloc, Samjukt Socialist Party/SSP, Praja Socialist Party/PSP, Revolutionary Socialist Party/SP, Socialist Unity Centre/SUC, Lok Sevak Sangha/LSS, Gorkha League/GL, Workers Party of India/WPI etc. There was a sudden upsurge of high hopes in certain quarters, particularly amongst the peasants, the labourers and the working middle class in schools and in private or public undertakings. The labourers being the most organised as a group amongst the three, were not slow in starting their offensive in the form of *Gherao* (indefinitely confining the managerial staff) for immediate fulfilment of their demands. It spread like wild fire and engulfed practically the majority of industrial and commercial enterprises, creating great concern among employers. The working middle class, the next best group in organisation, was not required to take to this war-path as the United Front Government readily agreed to considerable enhancement of their emoluments, particularly of the teachers and the clerical staff in the Government Departments. The inevitable next conflagration was to be in the peasant front which, though possessed of a strong organisation in the shape of Krishak Sabha, had to surmount considerable local factions to be able to launch and sustain a really formidable peasant offensive. Before the feasibility and also its desirability could be fully explored at the State level of Krishak Sabha leadership, the ultras in



this organisation, cooped up within the narrow confines of Darjeeling district, had launched their much-vaunted 'Peoples' Revolution' based on their ill-digested Maoist wisdom and meagre experience.

The State level leadership of the Krishak Sabha was indeed caught unawares by this precipitate direct action by a microscopic section of its following in an area traditionally free from violent jotedar - bargadar clashes. No less surprised was the peasantry in this area, a section of which suddenly imagined itself to be the master of all it surveyed, whereas some others were not really so surprised, for they knew what the inner motivation was and consequently the shape of things to come. This would be borne out by subsequent narration of the rapidly developing situations. For the present, let me explain what I meant by Krishak Sabha's dilemma regarding the feasibility and desirability of launching a full-scale offensive.

In the first place, any such venture in the peasant front, unlike the labour front, needed considerable preparation and field-work which were denied to the Sabha as its President (Shri Biswanath Mukherjee) and General Secretary (Shri Harekrishna Konar) were both in the United Front Cabinet, then faced with the mounting tensions over *gherao*, procurement of foodgrains and the episodes of lawlessness in Santipur (Nadia District) and Howrah in which both had to take very active roles. In the second place, the Krishak Sabha General Secretary himself was holding the Land and Land Revenue portfolio and its President had the Irrigation portfolio. As veteran leaders in the peasant front, both of them knew that land reforms laws in West Bengal contained some liberal provisions in favour of the cultivators. According to many of them, the desired reforms were frustrated due to (a) some deliberate lacunae (kept) in the legal provisions and administrative orders, which could be straightened out to some extent, without recourse to direct action but with active cooperation of organised peasantry, and (b) lethargy in the administrative branch charged with the reforms machinery and its refusal to associate the actual beneficiaries (i.e. poor peasantry) with the implementation process, both of which could now be cajoled into action under the new dispensation.

To what extent the above hopes of the Krishak Sabha stalwarts were fulfilled or belied is now a thing of the past, though I shall have occasion to revert to this aspect briefly in my subsequent analysis. The fact remains, however, that their strategy was the most sensible one, judged by pragmatism and the reality of the situation then

prevailing. Alas, the ultras had other ideas. To them, persons embodying the CPI(M) leadership in West Bengal, against whom they were fretting and fuming in subdued anguish for sometime, were revisionists who had betrayed the cause of peoples' liberation struggle by joining the United Front Govt. containing some 'untouchables' like the Bangla Congress, the S.S.P., the F.B. and the P.S.P. Their local mentor, one Charu Majumdar of Siliguri, could never suppress his ancient grudge against the official leadership of the Communist Party (especially of its Krishak Sabha) for the snubbing he got for his fiasco during the well-known Tebhaga movement of the Bengal peasantry.<sup>1</sup> Thanks to the neglect of the top echelons of W.B.P.K.S. (West Bengal Provincial Krishak Sabha), the rank and file of the Krishak Sabha in Siliguri Sub-Division had gradually slipped into the clutches of this 'angry old man' who had developed during recent years an almost fanatical respect for the 'teachings of Chairman Mao'. If, according to the CPI(M) leadership, the revolutionary situation does not exist in India now for launching armed liberation movement, Charu would like to create one in the light of Chairman Mao's teachings. Secondly, according to Charu, this reluctance of the CPI(M) leadership to launch a violent armed confrontation amply exposed their true class character and their addiction to revisionism, a blissfully vague term but nonetheless made popular by Communist jargon. He, therefore, wanted to kill two birds with one stone, the local Krishak Sabha being exploited as the 'stone'; the person chosen by Charu to catapult the 'stone' was one Kanu Sanyal, an 'angry young man' who is equally dedicated to the 'cause' and also an able field leader.

Thus was launched the Naxalbari confrontation with a duality of purpose behind it. That it was doomed to a double-exposure in the end was not readily perceived by many and less readily could it be explained to most, as one could not deny its nuisance value in terms of danger to the safety and security of the inhabitants of the three affected Police Stations of Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa. Though local in inception, it was unmistakably an ultra menace with variegated ramifications which needed adequate exposure before being scotched, so that they could never mount the ultimate offensive which alone counts in a planned struggle. This, to my judgement, called for a strategy in which they could be beaten in their own game. That it was a planned move with the guiding political motivations originating from Maoist formulations was initially not



acceptable to most, some of whom tended to take too legalistic a view of the unfolding incidents, and the others sought to explain these away as the natural and innocuous outbursts of an oppressed peasantry, may be misguided by an adventurist leadership.

Those who pinned their faith on the letters of the law wanted us to strictly follow the coercive provisions of the Indian Penal Code coupled with the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Police Act against every individual infraction of the law. This logic of the law could hardly be challenged. But it has often not been realised by us that this logic, not infrequently, turns into a trap, frustrating the very purpose for which law was sought to be invoked. Instances are not rare in this country when Police Officers, in sincere adherence to the tenets of law, have used force to deal with a politically motivated riotous people or unlawful assembly just to play into the hands of the latter, achieving only the proximate aim of dispersing the mob but in the end giving it a better foothold for future violent offensive by skilful manipulation of alleged police violence and atrocity. We, as members of the Police, have always been held guilty, rightly or wrongly, either of precipitate action or of no action, for the simple reason that those who sit on judgement over such actions are persons blessed with hindsight and are far removed from the rapidly engulfing situation which some wretched police officers are required to face. With his back always to the wall, a police officer frequently finds himself in the unenviable position in which he has perforce to resort to the short-cut of ordering firing. It is a tactic which, as I said earlier, will achieve the proximate objective but it will be at the cost of the strategy which alone counts in the long run. In dealing with the Naxalbari situations we were occasionally provoked by many, obviously the ultras included, to sacrifice strategy for the easy lures of instant success.

What really was the strategy? Reduced to its simplest but concrete terms, it may be enumerated thus :

(a) To induce sincere and emergent administrative measures to look into the alleged unsatisfactory land settlement operations in the affected areas and also into the alleged misappropriation of vested lands by certain jotedars and also into the prevalence of benami lands as well as eviction of bargadars. I considered it not only basic to, but also a condition precedent for any large-scale Police action on the following grounds: In the first place, we must be morally, and not simply legally, convinced that a sincere attempt has been made

to sort out the alleged misgivings of a section of the agitated peasantry. Any Police Officer who has had occasion to serve in rural Sub-Divisions or Districts knows only too well that the majority of the cases of murder and deadly rioting in the rural areas primarily originate from our unsatisfactory land tenure system and land settlement administration.

And it does nobody any harm to be told, on appropriate occasions (as we did this time) that let a sincere attempt be made to remove the cause, real or supposed, and we, as police officers, will see to it that the apprehended deadly effect does not take place, and if at all it does, is not allowed to assume a menacing proportion. Therefore, before asking the police to do the second thing first, would it not be in the best interest of all to do the first thing first?

Secondly, we sought, by this process, to take the wind out of the sail of the ultras who were harping on alleged stories of large-scale eviction of bargadars, retention of benami lands and misappropriation of vested lands by jotedars. Their experience and field of activity being solely confined to Siliguri Sub-Division, little did they know that the magnitude of the alleged exploitation (and mischief) was perhaps much less in this area than that prevailing in most other rural sub-divisions of West Bengal. This, however, does not mean that the peasants here were living in an idyllic condition and had no genuine grievances. But, as one who had occasion to serve in two such notorious Sub-Divisions (viz. Contai in Midnapore District and Diamond Harbour in 24-Parganas District), I knew the difference in magnitude of this problem and hence in the resultant tension in jotedar-bargadar relationship. This knowledge possibly prompted in me the initial caution in the face of artificially boosted tension by the ultras in Siliguri Sub-Division. I tried to bring home to both Kanu Sanyal and Charubabu the likely impact of this phenomenon on their proposed 'protracted struggle' when I met them on 18 May and 16 July, 1967 respectively in our genuine effort at avoiding further bloodshed.<sup>2</sup>

(b) To carry the local people with us at every stage of our action. This was not to be a routine and grudging affirmation of faith in that nebulous thing called 'public opinion'. To see us through a possible prolonged confrontation, it had to be a living relationship with the masses in the distant villages as well as with the organised bodies of public opinion in different parts of the district. Our task was made somewhat easier by dint of our past performance in this district



during the troubled days of 1965 (Pak. aggression) and 1966 (series of bandhs, tea-garden strikes, student agitations and the like). The majority of the people here knew that the existing set-up of local administration could be relied upon for its objectivity and firmness, without losing sanity even in trying circumstances. This possibly accounted for the fact even before the U.F. Committees were formed at district and sub-divisional levels after installation of the United Front Govt., we were in touch with the leaders of responsible public opinion, irrespective of their political affiliations, in dealing with occasional law and order problems. And I must concede that, by and large, all concerned played a fair game during all those trying days. As would be seen later, contacts were strengthened throughout the period of trouble not only with the local U.F. Committees but also with individuals in the affected areas, so that all aspects of our operations, including the implications and the results of the same, were fully known to the people at large. And this saved a lot of undue suspicion and misgiving which arise mainly because of our reluctance to share with the public our broad policy and our experience with those directly or indirectly involved in or affected by the whole process. Moreover, this exercise in mutual sharing of experience played a very large part in completing the process of isolation of the extremists who were, perforce, completely cut off from the mainstream of public opinion.

(c) It was not enough to carry with us only a portion of the Cabinet but it was the imperative logic of the day that the whole Cabinet should be with us. This possibly needs a little elucidation. Normally, as a District Superintendent of Police or as any other police officer, we are not to be concerned as to what the Cabinet feels or does about a situation, so long as we know that our actions follow the prescribed pattern as enjoined under the law and are bonafide. Unless, of course, there is a clear and written directive of the Chief Minister or the Police Minister, communicated through prescribed official channel, as to the manner in which certain situations are to be dealt with by the police or the local administration, provided such directive or instruction is not totally contrary to the law and the Constitution. The Chief Minister or the Minister-in-charge of the Police Department, being accountable to the legislature, can always ask for explanations, through the I.G.P., for any such action or deviation from the instruction of the government. If the officer concerned is found guilty of dereliction of duty or mis-demeanour

or of excesses inspite of his explanations, suitable action as prescribed under the law or the Service Conduct Rules may be taken against him. Otherwise the matter is left at that, touching neither the reputation nor the sincerity of the officer.

In short, our strategy was : (a) to accelerate administrative measures for meeting the legitimate grievances regarding eviction, land settlement, benami lands and vested lands, and thereby proving the genuineness or hollowness of the extremist viewpoint, (b) to take the local people into our fullest confidence which would, ipso facto, weaken the extremists' so-called mass base, and finally, (c) to make sincere efforts for a peaceful settlement of the extremist outburst, and in the process, to ensure the co-operation of the large majority of the people of the area and also the broad spectrum of the government since, as some of them indicated that the very survival of their ministry was largely dependent on the manner in which the district police and the local administration handled the unexpected extremist outburst.

I had occasion to make a pointed reference to this strategy in a despatch dated 31.5.1967 to the IGP in these words: "...Since it is not a pure law and order problem, we propose to tackle this in phases with due planning which will include mobilisation of public opinion at the conclusion of each stage and also neutralisation of elements who may frustrate our efforts...."

Why we persistently refused to accept the initial outbursts of violence as a purely law and order problem needs possibly a bit of elucidation. This would be clear from the following exposition of the aims and strategy of the extremists who were concerned in these illegal activities. Early in 1965 Darjeeling District Police chanced upon an important cyclostyled Bengali circular, allegedly issued by the State Committee of the CPI(M), urging collection of daos (choppers), lathis, knives etc. for eventual forcible collection of fire-arms to start the imminent revolutionary armed struggle. Almost simultaneously with this, there was hectic activity in this area for formation of underground cells etc. Then followed a period of detention of most of the leaders under the Defence of India Rules, but they were eventually released by Government in 1966 prior to the General Elections. Then again during early 1966, three significant documents were found to be in secret circulation amongst local CPI(M) members - one urging preparation to launch a people's democratic revolution in India on the basis of Chinese experience;



the second one pledging support to the struggle of the Kashmiris, the Nagas and the Mizos and urging unity with these forces in conjunction with China for a joint fight against American imperialism etc. and the third document, allegedly issued by the Politburo of the CPI(M), called for development of the underground apparatus and for measures to preserve and strengthen the militant core of the party organ.<sup>3</sup>

At the local level in Siliguri Sub-division, there was an adventurist upsurge in a substantial group of this party at the behest of Charu Majumdar. Their utterances and preparations here appeared to be fully attuned to an armed confrontation, howsoever ill-assorted the men and their materials might have been. Thanks to our effective intelligence network in this area, practically everything that went on inside this group was not totally unknown to us.

All these things taken together could not but make us alive to the motivations of this group. How did they want to go about the task? I had better quote from the writings of Charubabu, lest I be guilty of misinterpretation and misrepresentation: "If armed struggle can be started here, it will spread to the whole of Bengal and to the rest of India like wild fire .... Remember that the peasant revolution has commenced; who will win this battle depends on how fiercely we can hit at the opponents. The jotedars will have to be driven away from the villages, if necessary, by setting fire to their houses. If we can take this struggle to its new stage, we will be the pioneers of the first democratic revolution in the whole of India .... Our old comrades in the peasant front in Pakistan are elated at our struggle here and want to maintain contact with us .... There is bound to be hesitation in some quarters while treading a new path but this can be overcome only by unquestioned obedience to Chairman (Mao) .... Remember that the danger of adventurist deviation is much less now ...."<sup>4</sup>

So, even if the 'revisionists' in the CPI(M) think that a revolutionary situation does not exist in India for commencing armed struggle, Charu would like to 'create' one. What are the preparations for this struggle? Since Chairman Mao has said so, it can be started with even boulders, bows and arrows and the other arms would flow in when the struggle commenced. And why start the struggle in this particular area? Firstly, because Charubabu and his fellow-travellers thought that they were mentally prepared for the same, and secondly, think of its strategic advantages - close proximity to Nepal, East Pakistan and what not, so favourable for the expected

throw in of arms! It may sound queer to many but not to this band of ultras. It was indeed a tragic combination of immaturity and ill-digested Maoism.<sup>5</sup>

At this stage, we may be charged with procrastination and inaction for not having hit hard at them with the first outburst of illegal activity, since we were possessed of the above inside information. A little patience on the part of the reader will show how foolish it would have been to do so. Despite Charubabu's exhortations, the leaders of the movement in the field started the process by bringing out groups of persons (strength varying from 50 to 150) armed with bows, arrows, spears etc. for taking forcible possession of lands they claimed to be vested or benami and in certain cases also resorted to forcible removal of paddy. This was the pattern from March till about the end of April, 1967. They were hoping that the inevitable clash with the police would take place very early in this venture, resulting in police firing on the peasants. This will help them, they calculated, to seize the handle of police brutality to invoke wide public sympathy towards their cause by making capital out of tales of police atrocities on oppressed and innocent peasants.

This, their strategist felt, would lead to a qualitative change in the complexion of their struggle, enabling them to mount further offensives with solid popular backing. And the process was to go on till the entire area was inflamed with hatred against the government, the administration and the police and the atmosphere became propitious enough to attack police parties and camps for capture of arms. This was to be their third qualitative leap, ushering in armed skirmishes with the forces of the State, in course of which the promised 'throw in' of arms from across the borders could be reasonably expected. Here, again, we were not imagining things. True to the Maoist strategy, this was their reckoning of the sequence of things to come. Behind that, what exactly they sought to achieve - linking up this pocket with parts of Assam or East Pakistan or Nepal - I have no material to corroborate. If at all they had entertained any such high hope with their prevailing stage of preparations and orientation, they deserved to be pitied, for they knew not what they could be up against.

Let me revert to the possible charge of procrastination and initial inaction (on the part of the police). I maintained at the early stage of these developments, and maintain it even now, that much of the sufferings of the inhabitants of Naxalbari-Khoribari-Phansidewa could



possibly have been averted if determined armed police action was taken at the initial stage, i.e. sometime in March-April. But we could not have, in all probability, avoided police firings and considerable loss of life. At this turn of events none would have been happier than the ultras who were itching for just such a handle. And, then, who would have believed in the 'untrustworthy police versions' of an armed struggle and an adventurist peasant movement and all that? Today the world accepts these as well-established facts, simply because we allowed full exposure of their motivations, because we carried the people with us at every stage of our action and because the simmering trend of ultraism could no longer be concealed as an unwitting deviation of some erring innocents but had to be officially condemned by the parent body as ultra adventurism.

However, I must make one very pertinent point here. Had there been, at any stage, an iota of suspicion in our mind that this group, by such activities, could pose any real or even possible threat to the security of our nation, there could have been no scope for our strategic manoeuvrability. In any such eventuality, the slightest delay would have been an instant breach of trust to the cause of the nation. Since we could contain the miscreants within the confines of the three Police Stations and deny them any purposeful contact with their fellow-travellers beyond our borders, we were always confident of our ultimate success.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It was alleged by the Party that even in the small area (Pacha-Badagarh, now in East Pakistan and adjacent to Phansidewa PS area of Darjeeling district), there were instances of reckless looting, arson and killings at the instance of Charu Majumdar against the general guidelines of the Party. This led to Charubabu's temporary suspension and withdrawal from the area. This was largely corroborated by Souren Bose and others who were acquainted with the above episode.
2. Please refer to the Table of incidence of (a) Rioting and (b) Murder over land disputes in Siliguri sub-division as compared to another rural sub-division of Diamond Harbour (district 24-Parganas) of West Bengal.
3. Subsequent developments revealed that such documents were prepared by a small coterie of hardcore pro-China extremists, behind the back of the official CPI(M), of whom Charu Majumdar and perhaps

Ganesh Ghosh of the Chittagong Armoury Raid case of 1930s were the main proponents. This was also later confirmed in one of the marginal comments of Shri Konar on the manuscript copy of this paper to the effect that "It was learnt later that (such statements/documents) were not issued by the State Committee but by a small group led by Charu Majumdar, in utter disregard of State Committee." The statements of Souren Bose and Charu Majumdar to police after their arrest during 1971-72 also confirmed this.

4. Surprisingly, CM's Statement to police after his arrest in July 1972 almost totally confirmed what I had written in this paper way back in Aug.-Sept. 1968.
5. A letter in Bengali dt. 11 June, 1967 from Charu Majumdar to Kanu Sanyal, while the latter was underground to escape being arrested by police. This as well as many other letters of Charu Majumdar were seized by police during a raid on one of the shelters of Kanu Sanyal during July 1967.



## Section II: THE UNFOLDING OF EVENTS (03.03.1967 to 11.06.1967)

Before we deal with the principal events, it would be desirable to analyse the pattern of incidents, collectively known as the Naxalbari disturbances. The following tabulation of incidents would bring out the salient features in clear perspective. By 'incidents' I have meant not only cognizable offences but instances of threat and intimidation, parade and procession with bows and arrows, and local resistance to the miscreants.

TABLE 1 : INCIDENTS INVOLVING THE EXTREMISTS  
IN SILIGURI SUB-DIVISION  
(March - 17 July 1967)

Type of incidents	March	April	May	June	July(1-17)
1. Forcible ploughing & damage to standing crops (64)	5	12	47	—	—
2. Removal of paddy (from the field) by adhiars/share-croppers (3)	3	—	—	—	—
3. Looting of paddy and other things (62)	—	—	6	38	18
4. Assault (9)	—	2	3	4	—
5. Abduction (1)	—	—	1	—	—
6. Attack on Police (2)	—	—	2	—	—
7. Attempted gun-looting (6)	—	—	—	6	—
8. Gun-looting (10)	—	—	—	9	1
9. Procession in violation of Sec.144 Cr.PC	—	1	—	10	—
10. Murder (2)	—	—	1	1	—
11. Threat/intimidation (4).	—	—	—	3	1
12. Molestation of women (3)	—	—	—	3	—
13. Local resistance (3)	—	—	—	3	—
14. Arson (5)	—	—	—	2	3
15. Damage to houses (5)	—	—	—	3	2
Total incidents (190)	8	15	60	82	25

From 3rd. March, 1967 till the end of April, 23 incidents were reported to the police out of which 17 were instances of forcible ploughing of others' land by groups of the extremists; in some such cases, standing crops like jute, paddy etc. were damaged. The first

incident as reported to police was like this: On 3.3.67 at about 10.00 hours, some adhiars (share-croppers) of a particular jotedar of Baramaniramjote, P.S. Naxalbari, accompanied by about 150 extremist followers armed with bows, arrows, lathis and carrying party flags, came to the *khamar* (place of storage of paddy soon after harvesting and threshing) and took away the entire stock of paddy weighing about 300 maunds without giving the share due to the jotedar. Two similar cases of removal of paddy by adhiars were reported during March. It is significant that all subsequent cases of removal or forcible taking away of paddy were not done under cover of the adhiars. In general, till about the end of April, land and standing crops were the only targets.

But two incidents of 13th April and 14th April respectively added to the tension. It was reported that on 13/4 one ex-adhiar of a petty jotedar of Bhimramjote (P.S. Naxalbari) resumed ploughing the land which he used to cultivate previously; this was resented by the jotedar who was also reported to have assaulted the ex-adhiar. On 14th April, as a sequel to the above incident, about 200 ultras armed with bows, arrows, spears etc. led by some of the extremist leaders trespassed into the house of the jotedar and assaulted the inmates. A further attack on the house of the brother (a popular local leader belonging to Bangla Congress) of the above jotedar was contemplated on the following night but the posting of a strong police picket there prevented any such incident. However, these were enough to generate tension in the locality and telegrams flowed in all directions.

For sometime during this week, our resources were tied up in connection with the Prime Minister's proposed visit to Darjeeling. Ultimately the visit did not take place and we hurriedly convened a co-operation meeting on 18th April at Naxalbari, intending to bring together the contending parties, so that tension could subside and peace could be restored in the area. Though the meeting was attended by all the leaders of the constituent parties of the local United Front and the neighbouring villagers, there was no response from the extremists. Nonetheless, there was some restoration of confidence in the local people.

The atmosphere was again vitiated by an armed procession and demonstration in and around Naxalbari bandar (town) in course of which the extremists held out threats of physical violence against some leading local people who were not sympathetic towards their venture. This took place on 23.4.67. At this stage, the situation was



reviewed by us both at official level and at non-official level with the United Front Committee. The consensus was that this being a political movement, indulged in by a group of CPI(M) extremists, the leaders of the party concerned in the United Front Government should be immediately asked to intervene and bring their recalcitrant members to order.

Thus, on 2nd May I visited Calcutta and held discussions with the I.G.P. on the following day, in course of which the above viewpoint was placed before him. Thereafter, with his permission, I met the Land and Land Revenue Minister (Shri Hare Krishna Konar), who was also the General Secretary of the W.B.P.K.S. He was given an account of all the incidents of lawlessness reported to police till then and was also informed of their political complexion and motivation. He substantially agreed with our assessment and assured that he would soon visit the disturbed area, meet the principal organisers of the agitation and help in settling the problem in a peaceful manner.

Shri Konar's visit to this district took place on 15.5.67. But before that certain significant developments had taken place. The first public announcement of the extremists' objective was made in two public meetings at Rambholajote, P.S. Naxalbari on 6.5.67 and 7.5.67 in course of which it was given out that fire-arms from police and local gun-licensees will be snatched at opportune moments for realisation of their aims. Then, on 11.5.67 for the first time in this series, a raid was organised by them on a house under Phansidewa P.S. and 12 maunds of paddy were forcibly taken away under threats.

Meanwhile, a crisis was brewing in a tea-garden (Sannyasisthan Tea Estate) under Phansidewa P.S. over construction of huts for newly inducted labourers on a plot of land occupied by some ex-labourers. We refused to oblige the management since we did not feel that its stand was justified. However, the extremists quickly exploited the situation to support the ex-labourers and hence the inevitable appearance in the scene of bows and arrows on 9th May. The matter, however, did not take a violent turn due to the timely intervention of the local administration including the S.D.O. but there were the usual flashing of S.O.S. telegrams by the management to all concerned.<sup>1</sup>

It would be wrong to assume that the police and the local administration were silent spectators during this period. Strict instructions were issued to police station officers to accurately

register all incidents reported at the police stations, take up investigation of cognizable cases, initiate preventive proceedings u/s 107/117 Cr.P. C. or u/s 109(a) Cr.P.C. in appropriate cases. Extra staff was also posted at Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa P.Ss. to cope with the increasing violations of law. Thus, till 15 May, 42 persons were arrested in connection with different cases registered at the P.Ss and even charge sheets were submitted in two cases after completing investigation. In addition, printed Bengali leaflets, giving immediate specific assurance against any eviction of bargadar and also administering warning against lawless activities by the extremists were widely distributed under the signature of the S.D.O. from 15 May in pursuance of the decision of a conference at Siliguri on 13 May it was also decided at this conference, attended by D.C., S.P., S.D.O. and S.D.P.O., that the instructions as indicated above would be followed for the time being and the results of intervention by the Land and Land Revenue Minister may be awaited.

Shri Konar arrived at Darjeeling on 15 May when the D.C. and myself apprised him of all the incidents reported till then, actions taken by the administration, local reactions and our assessment of the unfolding events. He agreed with our assessment and went to the extent of expressing annoyance at such 'adventurist' and tactless actions of the ultras. He assured us of doing his best to wean away as many of these misguided persons as possible in course of his meetings and discussions in Siliguri Sub-Division on 17.5.67. It was also decided that we would accompany Shri Konar to Naxalbari and some other disturbed areas on 17.5.67 morning when he would meet, apart from the affected people, as many of the CPI(M) workers as possible for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation.

On 17.5.67, we accompanied Shri Konar to Naxalbari where he met about 50 persons and listened to their grievances. He told them that most of the disputes had arisen out of certain basic land problems and assured them of an early solution. He further stated that he would do his best to ensure that his party workers and followers did not intimidate them by resorting to demonstrations with bows, arrows etc. This meeting at Naxalbari lasted from 11.00 hours till about 14.00 hours which was also attended by the Additional D.C. (in charge of Estate Acquisition), the S.D.O. and the S.D.P.O.

After addressing a large public meeting at Siliguri the same evening from 20.00 hours to 22.00 hours, Shri Konar attended a conference with the United Front leaders of Siliguri from 22.30 hours to 23.30



hours. As desired by Shri Konar, the D.I.G. (Jalpaiguri Range), the S.D.O. and the S.D.P.O., Siliguri and myself were also present in the conference. Here also he spoke about the unhappy state of affairs obtaining in some areas of Siliguri Sub-Division and informed us that he has arranged a meeting with Kanu Sanyal when he will seek to impress upon him the undesirability of such activities which were causing resentment among the people and also embarrassment for the United Front. He thereafter asked me to see him the next morning when he would communicate to me the result of his discussion with Kanu.

On 18.5.67 morning I called on Shri Konar at Sukna Forest Bungalow (Siliguri) when I was told about his discussion with Kanu Sanyal the previous night. In this discussion, lasting from about 00.15 hours till about 02.00 hours, our viewpoints were explained by him to Kanu and also his own views about the undesirability of such activities which were to benefit none. He also indicated that he had asked Kanu to come to Sukna that morning for a face-to-face discussion with me. Shortly thereafter Kanu accompanied by Souren Bose, another extremist leader but not actively participating till then in the current series of lawless activities, arrived there. Shri Konar again explained his stand and then asked me to put forward my viewpoints to Kanu and Souren Bose.

After briefly presenting my assessment of the situation till then and the uncalled for confrontation with police who had so far been doing their best to avoid bloodshed, I suggested that they seriously consider immediate acceptance of the following three courses of action for a peaceful solution of the present tangle, which would, I explained, be in the interest of the poor and landless peasants and tea garden labourers:

(i) demonstrations or any other concerted group action by them must not be held with bows, arrows and similar other weapons. If they have any complaint regarding any land, the same should be forthwith brought to the notices of the B.D.O. or the S.D.O. who will arrange immediate investigation into such cases for taking appropriate remedial measures urgently. They were also assured that if the above set of official functionaries fail to do so (say, within a week of the complaint being lodged), I will personally intervene to ensure implementation by whatever manner possible.

(ii) We will have to arrest all persons whose complicity had transpired in connection with various cases of violence in Siliguri

Sub-division. Since we do not want any clash in the process of effecting the arrests, it will be desirable if Kanu ensures that there is no resistance from his party workers at the time of such arrests. If this was agreed to, then I was prepared to furnish to Kanu a list of such 'wanted' persons in specific cognizable cases and then we could work out the modalities of their arrest, most of whom could also be released on bail by police the same day.

(iii) In their proposed attempt at forcible dehoarding of foodgrains in the near future, they should not take the law into their own hands and refrain from doing anything which may amount to looting. On the other hand, their efforts at dehoarding will receive due support from us if they contact the nearest police or any other responsible Govt. officer and we would then and there arrange for unearthing of hidden stocks in their presence. In most cases, we may also arrange to sell the seized paddy/rice at reasonable/nominal price to the poor and landless peasants of the area in their presence.

After some more discussion as to why I thought that the acceptance of this peace formula would be in the interest of the peasants themselves, Kanu agreed to the above formula in principle. It was further decided that he would go round the villages to hold discussions to ensure acceptance of the modalities (particularly, surrender without resistance) and communicate to me such acceptance on 20.5.67 at Siliguri either personally or through Souren Bose, whereupon I would let them know the names of persons wanted in different cases, so that the modalities of their arrest, bail etc. could be worked out amicably.

Proceedings of the above meeting and discussions are being narrated at some length to dispel some doubts and confusion which were sought to be created soon after the two ghastly incidents of 24.5.67 (attack on police party and murder of Inspector Shri Sonam Wangdi) and 25.5.67 (attack on a police party headed by S.D.O. at Prosadujote and police firing resulting in death of some persons in the mob including, most distressingly, some women and children).

Now let us see how the extremists reacted to the dead-line of 20.5.67. Souren Bose was contacted by me at Siliguri on 20.5.67 and again on 21.5.67 but no assurances regarding acceptance of the peace-formula was conveyed. We extended the date to 21.5.67, still hoping that good sense will prevail upon at least a section of the extremists. I even went to the extent of making a last and direct attempt at contacting Kanu Sanyal or Jangal Santhal or some of the

other principal leaders by visiting, and waiting in vain, in some of their stronghold areas in Hatighisa (P. S. Naxalbari) and Buraganj (P. S. Khoribari) on 22.5.67. This was done even against the ominous background of a series of group meetings by them between 18 May and 21 May when they reiterated their resolve to 'defy the reactionaries and revisionists of the United Front Govt.' and to 'draw the blood of any policeman who sought to arrest anybody engaged in this militant struggle.'<sup>2</sup>

Hence the ultras considerably stepped up their activity during this period. Thus, out of a total of about 60 cases between 3.3.67 and 22.5.67, as many 22 were committed between 18 May and 22 May only. The second instance of raid on a house in the series took place on 19 May at Baramaniramjote (P.S. Naxalbari) and the first case of looting of articles other than paddy occurred on the same day in the same village but in a different house. Naturally enough, the patience and sense of toleration of the affected people in the areas were well nigh exhausted at the continued depredation by this band of persons, and their demand for immediate presence of law enforcement agents in the interior elakas became correspondingly stronger. Thus, (a) to prevent further acts of organised lawlessness, and (b) to make it easier for some of the not-too-hardened miscreants to surrender, it was decided to set up two police camps in the interior elakas with effect from 23.5.67. The two police camps were established at Hatighisa (P.S. Naxalbari) and Buraganj (P.S. Khoribari), partially equipped with some men and wireless sets on the night of 22nd May for their proper functioning from 23rd May. The setting up of these two camps produced an instantaneous effect by restoring the long-deserved sense of security in the affected areas. Unfortunately, however, two tragic happenings of 24th May and 25th May retarded the process.

20th of May was the date by which we were to be finally informed by the emissaries of the extremists regarding their acceptance of the 3-point peace-formula as outlined above. The following two days were treated as days of grace. Then, on the 23rd, two police camps were set up. On the same day, orders u/s 144 Cr.P.C. were promulgated by the Sub-divisional Magistrate, covering the jurisdictions of three affected Police Stations of Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa, "prohibiting movement of any person armed with bows, arrows, spears and any other deadly weapon and the assembly of 5 or more persons and/or to take out any procession in public

places and/or open fields and also restraining from encroaching upon and occupying lands and other properties of other persons and to cause disturbances of public peace and tranquillity in any way whatsoever." Arrangements were made on that very day for giving wide publicity to the above prohibitory order.

In spite of this, a menacing congregation of miscreants was reported on 24th May in which some of the ring-leaders were present. O.C., Naxalbari P.S. with a police party from the nearby camp (one Inspector, 3 S.Is., 5 NCOs., 31 Constables including 15 armed constables and two gas) proceeded to the place of congregation near a village called Barajharujote, P. S. Naxalbari. They were confronted by a mob of about 300 persons armed with bows, arrows etc., with the womenfolk forming the vanguard. Apprehending a serious clash, the O.C. sent a message through somebody to Naxalbari P.S. (at a distance of about two miles) for immediate reinforcement, which arrived soon with Inspector Shri Sonam Wangdi. On seeing this, the male miscreants retreated behind the village huts, leaving the womenfolk there. Thereafter, Inspector Shri Wangdi with the O.C. and two S.I.s. (all unarmed) advanced towards the group of women and asked them to disperse in view of the prohibitory order u/s 144 Cr.P.C. They, however, kept the main police party at a distance and out of their sight as also of the mob, presuming that the advance by the armed police party might provoke the mob. Who could imagine, at that stage, that the good faith of Shri Wangdi would prompt such a vile thirst for blood on the part of the miscreants? As the unarmed officers along with Shri Wangdi were talking to the women, the men suddenly rushed towards them and started shooting arrows. Shri Wangdi received three or four arrow shots and fell down unconscious. The O.C., Naxalbari P.S. also received two arrow shots and fell down. The other officers also received injuries. One of the officers blew his whistle which attracted the attention of the main police party and it came running to the spot. By then the miscreants had run away. Inspector Shri Wangdi never regained consciousness and finally expired at Siliguri Hospital the same night. On the death of Shri Wangdi we not only lost a police officer of the highest integrity and discipline but a true gentleman of a rare variety. The funeral procession, both at Siliguri and at Darjeeling, attended by hundreds of grief-stricken people from all walks of life, irrespective of their political affiliations, amply proved the personal popularity of Shri Wangdi and the people's faith in the cause for which he laid down his life.



Our D.I.B. photographer was detailed by me in Siliguri Sub-division with effect from 22nd May for taking photographs of recent incidents of lawlessness. On 24th May the photographer accompanied Shri Wangdi to the scene of occurrence and had just taken some photographs when the murderous assault started. These photographs, which were shown to the Cabinet Committee and others concerned, clearly show :

- (a) that all our officers were unarmed,
- (b) that the women and children were at the forefront and that some of them were armed with bows and arrows,
- (c) that the miscreants carried party flags,
- (d) the degree of preparedness of the miscreants and their tactic of putting women and children at the front, a tactic which was repeated by them on the following day (25th May) when another police party headed by the S.D.O. was attacked and was forced to open fire in self-defence under order of the S.D.O.<sup>3</sup>

We were due for another shock on the following day (25th May). On receipt of information that an armed mob was assembling near a village called Prasadujote (P.S. Khoribari), about three miles from Naxalbari, for an eventual attack on a nearby police post on the Nepal border, the S.D.O. proceeded towards the village with a police party. As this party arrived near the village, it was confronted by mobs from two directions, each group consisting of about 300 men and women armed with bows, arrows etc. Both groups had women at the front, also armed with bows, arrows etc. The S.D.O. administered repeated warnings to the mobs and also reminded them of the prohibitory order u/s 144 Cr.P.C. These had no effect. On the contrary, the mobs from both directions started advancing towards the police party, shooting arrows in the process. The S.D.O. (Shri Dipak Ghosh, IAS) then ordered firing of five warning shots but these had no deterrent effect. He then ordered firing of five rounds at the hostile mob. This, too, did not have the desired impact. Another five rounds were fired towards the other group. But since the mob continued to press forward from both directions, another eight rounds were ordered, after which they started running away. Obviously, all these happened in quick succession and the effect of the initial rounds were not realised by the majority of the members of the groups who persisted in surging forward. Though two policemen received injuries from arrows, the net result was extremely tragic to us as to anybody else. I, in particular, felt totally shattered since from the very inception

of the disturbances, I left no stone unturned to prevent bloodshed. I was equally at a loss to understand whether the ring-leaders were prompted by cowardice or by chivalry in putting women and children at the forefront of the mob and misleading them all the time that police had strict orders not to open fire. They possibly wanted to repeat the episode of the previous day but in the process ten precious lives were lost. In fact, when we interrogated the people of that area later, including some who were in the mob, many of them clearly stated that they were forced to join that day's congregation ('julush' in local parlance) under threat of physical harm or social boycott.

At the height of this tension, the Chief Minister arrived at Siliguri on 26th May, addressed two public meetings at Siliguri and Naxalbari on 27th May, and held discussions with local officers including the Divisional Commissioner and the Range D.I.G. This visit at a crucial moment served two useful purposes: (a) he roundly condemned the attack on the police party on 24th May resulting in the death of Inspector Wangdi, expressed regrets for the loss of lives in the incidents of 24th May and 25th May but made it clear that if the miscreants persisted in their violent activities, the police will be compelled to resort to the unpleasant task of using fire-arms against such violent mobs, and (b) there was a further swing of public opinion in our favour.

In a meeting which was held by the miscreants on 28.5.67 in a village called Lakshmansinghjote under Phansidewa P.S., it was decided to attack on the following day the house of a gentlemen in that village who refused to align himself with this group. Immediately a strong police party was sent to the village and the intended plan of mischief was frustrated.

We were extending our net of police camps further into the disturbed areas. Thus, two more police camps were set up towards the end of May in Bijohnagar T.E. (P.S. Naxalbari) and Buragang (P.S. Khoribari), both equipped with R/T sets. This helped in confining the active bands within much smaller areas. In addition, we had a number of smaller police units (checkposts, patrol posts etc.) around the disturbed areas. Lest the miscreants get a chance to overwhelm any such relatively weak unit, it was decided to merge some of them into stronger ones. This also was completed by May.

Upto June 10, about 80 incidents of lawlessness had been registered with police; 150 persons were arrested by them in connection with these cases, of which 12 had been submitted in

charge-sheet and the rest were under further investigation; moreover, 8 proceedings u/s 107 Cr.P.C. (binding down for good behaviour) against 60 persons had been submitted by June 10.

The Cabinet Committee came to Siliguri on 12 June 1967. For the purpose of the present Chapter, let us summarise the events upto 11.6.67. In the wake of the police firing on 25th May, the miscreants took out some processions in the interior areas. But, confined as they were within narrow limits, these had hardly any effect on the mass of people. On the contrary, it exploded their earlier misrepresentations to their followers that police had been ordered by the Government not to use fire-arms. There were positive signs of rift in their ranks. But the excitement had to be kept up and the 'struggle' was to take a 'qualitative leap' as Charubabu had ordained. Hence, primarily at his instigation, a further offensive was launched - this time for looting of guns from the gun-licensees in the villages, some of whom had already shifted with their guns to Naxalbari and Khoribari Bandars. Eight attempts were made during this period for looting guns, out of which four were frustrated but the rest were successful. During the same period, they also started, again at the prompting of Charu, to drive out the non-faithfuls from their stronghold areas. Their first appearance on the scene to commit depredations equipped with guns took place on 11th June. By then, they also swelled their ranks with some known criminals of the area, since their original strength was being sapped by desertions.

Failing to convert the people of Naxalbari Bandar to their cause and finding that these people were most vociferous against them, they planned an attack on Naxalbari Bandar on the night of 11th June. Information about this leaked out and panicky people surged around Naxalbari P.S. for protection. Immediate reinforcements were rushed to Naxalbari, resistance parties organised overnight from amongst the people and the ultras did not dare to come anywhere near Naxalbari.

It was against this background that the Government decided to send a Committee of the Cabinet with plenary powers, to study the situation on the spot, decide about actions to be taken and then issue necessary instructions to the local administration.

### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. May refer to my report to the IGP dt.11 May, 1967 on this issue which was in response to an alarming telegram from the Tea Garden management to the Chief Minister and the latter's instruction for 'immediate firm action against the trouble-makers' was received by the SP through the IGP. My report to IGP was sent by him to the Chief Minister. It was learnt later that this report was eventually discussed in one of the cabinet meetings. On a subsequent occasion, the Cabinet Committee and Shri Konar in particular appreciated our analysis and our stand, stating that 'such an objective and forthright report to the Govt. by a police officer was quite unexpected'.
2. It was learnt later that though Kanu Sanyal and a few other leading members of the group wanted to try out our suggestions for some time, Charu Majumdar reportedly took them to task for entertaining such revisionist ideas at the very crucial stage of the struggle and strongly advised further escalation of their militant activities.
3. Some of these photographs are reproduced in this publication as just one instance to counter many distorted versions not only about the incident of 24 May, 1967 (unprovoked attack on an unarmed group of police officers led by Inspector Sonam Wangdi) but also about the next day's incident at Prasadujote.



### Section III: VISITS OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE AND A PERIOD OF INDECISION (12.6.67-4.7.67)

On 9.6.67 the following message from the Government was received by us at Siliguri : "In view of the serious situation of Naxalbari area over land problems, relationship between jotedars and kisans, and law and order etc., the Government have decided, as a first step, to send some ministers with full powers to study the situation on the spot and take all necessary steps to assure the people of a satisfactory solution of the problems. It shall be competent for the visiting ministers to give appropriate directions to the local executive officers including the police in dealing with law and order situation during their stay."

The Cabinet Committee consisting of six ministers (S/Shri Harekrishna Konar, Biswanath Mukherjee, Sushil Dhara, Nani Bhattacharya, Amar Chakraborty and Deo Prakash Rai) arrived at Siliguri on 12.6.67. Soon after their arrival they were briefed by us regarding the latest situation. The Deputy Commissioner and myself prepared two notes - one mainly dealing with land and settlement matters and the other regarding law and order matters<sup>1</sup> These were handed over to the ministers before our first conference the same afternoon. Discussions in this series of conferences between 12/6/67 and 17/6/67 were frank and informal and no minutes were drawn up. But, at the conclusion of every such conference, I used to prepare a memorandum, incorporating the trends of discussions and decisions taken, so that there was no confusion or misunderstanding at a later stage. These aide memoirs have stood me in good stead in preparing this narrative. Moreover, this also helped me in keeping my I.G.P., and through him the Government, informed of all incidents and discussions at periodic intervals.<sup>2</sup>

In the conference with the ministers on 13.6.67 morning, it was decided to immediately set up a special Committee on land matters. Besides this, the following decisions were taken regarding the police:

(i) the existing police camps will continue, including the special reserves at the police stations;

(ii) Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa *bandars* will be patrolled effectively and any attack on any person or property within this zone must be repulsed adequately, even if it means the use of force, though tear-gas should be tried initially. (It was pointed out to the ministers that tear-gas smoke will have very little effect or no effect

in these areas and against the present miscreants in view of limitations regarding range, terrain and weather condition and as such it may aggravate the situation. The limited availability of tear-smoke materials was also pointed out. The ministers, however, felt that inspite of all these limitations, tear-smoke should be used initially to scare away women and children who were not exposed to it so far in this area.);

(iii) the two outlying police camps at Bijoynagar and Buraganj will continue but they will not send any force to the affected areas for the coming 6-7 days as this may result in clashes with the miscreants. The force at the Police Stations will also follow this procedure for the same period. It was pointed out to the ministers that delay in removing dead body and taking other immediate preliminary actions may result in disappearance of valuable evidence, which itself would make us liable for an offence u/s 201 I.P.C. The ministers felt that no notice need be taken of this now for avoiding further bloodshed. This question of removal of deadbody arose out of a tragic incident of 10.6.67 afternoon when the miscreants attacked the house of one Nagen Roy Choudhury of Nazirjote (P.S. Khoribari); Shri Roy Choudhury ran away with his gun and took shelter in the house of one Sani Rai which was surrounded and ransacked. Shri Roy Choudhury was dragged out, his gun was taken away and he was brutally murdered. Information was lodged with the police the following day. In the meantime, in view of the mounting offensive of the miscreants on 10.6.67, we requested that the proposed Cabinet Committee should come to Siliguri the same day (i.e. 10.6.67) or the following day (i.e. 11.6.67). But that was not possible and we received verbal communication from the Government that the status quo (so far as the police is concerned) should be maintained and no police party should be sent out till the arrival of the ministers on 12.6.67. On 11.6.67, soon after receiving information regarding the murder of Nagen Roy Choudhury, the same was communicated to the Range Dy. I.G. and the Divisional Commissioner; it was agreed that in view of the ban on the movement of police parties pending arrival of the Cabinet Committee, a specific clearance should be obtained from the Government for sending out a strong police party to recover the dead body from the heart of the stronghold area. Accordingly the Inspector General of Police was contacted forthwith over phone; as the Cabinet was in session at that moment, the matter was placed before the Cabinet by the Inspr. Genl. of Police and half an hour later (around 13.00 hrs.) we were informed about the Government

instruction that the 'police should hold on till the arrival of the ministers and not take out a police party for recovery of the dead body';

(iv) the Police Station force as well as the force at the two Police camps will defend themselves effectively against any attack on these units, even if it amounted to use of force by police;

(v) 3 or 4 Railway Stations in the affected areas should be adequately guarded. Strong police camps should be set up within the Railway Station premises. This force will take any action, including use of firearms, to protect the Railway Stations from any attack by the miscreants. (3 police camps were accordingly set up the following day at Hatighisa, Batasi and Chathat Railway Stations, thereby further extending our area of operation.)

(vi) The ministers will hold public meetings at the following places on the following dates:

Naxalbari - 13.6.67

Khoribari & Phansidewa - 14.6.67

Buraganj & Hatighisa - 15.6.67

(vii) The ministers were also informed that 2 companies of the Eastern Frontier Rifles (a para-military unit) were being stationed at Siliguri so that they could be utilised for any immediate large-scale operation if the ministers so decided at a short notice.

The meeting of the ministers at Naxalbari on 13.6.67 ended in chaos and confusion when the local people refused to allow the ministers to speak and demanded an on-the-spot decision to allow the police to operate freely in the affected areas, an assurance which the ministers declined to give impromptu. Consequently the ministers were *gheraoed* by the local people from about 15.15 hrs. till about 21.45 hrs. when we had to intervene and pacify the frayed tempers of the gathering. Some of the ministers mistakenly presumed that such 'unseemly gherao' must have been organised by the police. They had sadly misjudged the temper of the local people, and they realised this to some extent during their two public meetings on the following day at Khoribari and Phansidewa respectively where also excited demonstrations were held by the local people and these were largely organised by the political parties which formed constituents of the U.F. itself. Here also the demand was for immediate police action. Then we put this unpleasant question to the ministers: Since when did they think that police had become so popular as to be able to 'organise' such mass demonstrations against six popular political leaders? They, however, admitted readily that their earlier notion was

erroneous, and as one minister jokingly remarked, their own teaching had boomeranged on them!

In our conference on 14.6.67 morning, it was decided by the ministers, somewhat reluctantly, that a police party should be sent out from Buraganj camp to recover the dead body of Nagen Roy Choudhury from Nazirjote. They, however, stipulated that the police party should not enter into any serious clash with the miscreants for the purpose of removing the corpse. If there be any possibility of clash, the party should come back to the camp and report the matter to the Supdt. of Police who will inform the ministers, when the latter would try to go to the spot for recovering the body. Accordingly, a police party was sent to Nazirjote which reported that the dead body had been buried by the relatives of the deceased and a magistrate's order will be required to disinter it. On receiving this information the ministers decided that the police party should go back to the spot on the following day after taking an order from the magistrate. This was done and the dead body was ultimately recovered on 15.6.67 and sent to Siliguri for post-mortem.

On 15.6.67 a further conference was held with the Cabinet Committee when it was decided that:

(i) the people should be encouraged to organise resistance against the miscreants in the exercise of their right of private defence. (As a matter of fact, this was put forward by some of the ministers in course of their speeches in the public meetings at Khoribari and Phansidewa on 14.6.67).

(ii) The Cabinet Committee will immediately issue an appeal to the people for restoring normalcy in the disturbed area and also warn the miscreants that stern measures will have to be taken if they persist in their lawless activities. (This appeal, under the signature of six ministers of the Cabinet Committee was printed and widely distributed the same evening.)

(iii) The Supdt. of Police will submit to the Cabinet Committee on 16.6.67 a scheme of police action to deal with different contingencies arising out of the response of the miscreants to the appeal of the ministers.

On the same day the ministers held two public meetings at Buraganj and Hatighisa where the attendance was very poor. Some of the ministers also visited certain villages in which the miscreants had committed some acts of lawlessness; their primary aim, possibly, was to check the veracity of our reports on those incidents. They



were surprised to find, as some of the ministers later admitted, that our reports were correct even to the minutest details.

The same afternoon, while I was at Siliguri Control Room, a message was received by me over the radio telephone (R/T) from the O.C., Khoribari P.S. to the effect that one Paulash Kujur of Bhatagoch (P.S. Khoribari) had fired some rounds from his shotgun killing two and injuring a few others when the miscreants attacked his house and that the miscreants were still surrounding the house, hoping to mobilise more men for a renewed attack. Shri Sushil Dhara (of Bangla Congress and Minister-in-charge, Commerce and Industries) listened to this information over the R/T at Buraganj camp which he happened to visit at that moment. He promptly asked me to send out a strong police party for the rescue of Paulash Kujur and his family members and also to protect them against any attack, even if that entailed police firing. At last, being in the field and caught by the vortex of fast changing situations, they could no longer deny the logic of events. I conveyed the instruction to the O.C., Khoribari P.S. over R/T. As I was relaying this, Shri Biswanath Mukherjee (of CPI and Minister-in-charge, Irrigation) arrived at Naxalbari P.S. and overheard the R/T conversations. He also approved of the instruction but suggested that the police should try tear-gas first before using fire-arms, and that if police firing was at all necessary, the same should be directed below the knee level of the miscreants. The police party went out from Khoribari P.S. very promptly, arrived at the spot just in time to be able to rescue the besieged inmates after firing 3 rounds at the miscreants who immediately started dispersing. None appeared to have been injured or killed as a result of the police firing. The police party, headed by the O.C., Khoribari P.S., displayed commendable restraint and tact in achieving the objective without any bloodshed. On the next morning (16.6.67), three of the ministers visited Bhatagoch, interrogated neighbouring people and satisfied themselves about the veracity of the information leading to sending out of police party in spite of a decision of 13.6.67 to the contrary! The ministers returned happy at the way in which the police had dealt with this difficult 'test case'.

In the conference on 16.6.67, the Plans of Operation prepared by me in accordance with the decision of the previous day were discussed clause by clause and finally approved by the Committee with some modifications. S/Shri Biswanath Mukherjee, Harekrishna Konar and Nani Bhattacharya initialed 2 final copies on 17.6.67 with

some further modifications inserted by Shri Mukherjee. One copy of the Plans bearing the initials of the 3 ministers was retained by me and the other copy handed over to Shri Mukherjee. A copy of the Plans was despatched to the Inspector General of Police so as to reach him the same night. These Plans will be discussed a little later.

The Cabinet Committee convened a Press Conference at Siliguri on 16.6.67, at which it was stated that :

(a) they did not come across any report of police atrocity nor did they receive any complaint from anybody against any action of the police so far;

(b) they had not come across any instance in which the police appeared to have exaggerated or suppressed facts;

(c) they appreciated the exemplary manner in which the police dealt with the Bhatagoch incident;

(d) they appreciated the sincere efforts of the local administration in dealing with this very difficult and delicate situation of lawlessness;

(e) a further appeal will be made by the Cabinet Committee announcing formation of Land Committees at thana (police station) and Sub-Divisional levels in Siliguri Subdivision forthwith, and another leaflet will be issued asking for cessation of lawless and violent activities by 22.6.67.

S/Shri Sushil Dhara (of Bangla Congress and Minister-in-charge of Commerce & Industry) and Amar Chakraborty (of Forward Block and Minister-in-charge of Law) left for Calcutta on 16.6.67 and the remaining 4 ministers on 17.6.67.

On 17.6.67 two leaflets were issued under the signature of the latter. One leaflet announced (a) appointment of a special officer at Siliguri for dealing with land matters, (b) formation of 3 Land Committees for Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa P.S. areas with official and non-official members to sort out all problems regarding eviction, vested and benami lands etc., and (c) formation of a sub-divisional Land Committee at Siliguri with official and non-official members to supervise the working of the 3 Thana Committees. The second leaflet, entitled "Stop all lawless activities by 22nd June," pointed out that the Land Committees have been formed to sort out grievances regarding land matters and as such there was no justification in perpetuating lawless and violent activities in the name of peasant movement; all such activities must stop by 22nd June, failing which the Government will be compelled to resort to necessary police actions to bring about normalcy. It also warned against violent and retaliatory activities in the name of resistance.

The 'Plans of Operation' approved by the Cabinet Committee consisted of three parts (A, B & C) to meet three different contingencies arising out of the ministerial appeal of 17.6.67. Thus :

(1) In accordance with the decision of the Cabinet Committee on 15.6.67, the last date by which the agitators must stop their illegal activities was 22.6.67. If they did so, reasonable time and opportunity would be given for surrenders, arrests, bail, etc. and other steps for normalisation of the situation will follow. However, if it was found that generally the lawless activities had ceased but there be one or two stray incidents of a very minor nature, then the period of stoppage of all such illegal activities may be extended up to 24.6.67.

(2) But in case the organisers and their followers of the present series of lawless activities showed no sign of cessation of their illegal activities by 22.6.67 or 24.6.67 and continue to commit acts of lawlessness, it will be presumed that they had no intention of responding to the call of the Ministers for a peaceful solution of the problem.

(3) We should have, accordingly, different plans of operation as indicated below:

Plan "A" (For the period up to 22.6.67)

Plan "B" (For the extended period i.e. for 23.6.67 and 24.6.67)

Plan "C" (For the period from 23.6.67 or 25.6.67)

Then followed Plans A, B & C, giving only the guidelines of police actions for the period. In addition to activities of the police as outlined earlier, the only new features of Plan A were :

(a) .... "The police will also go to other areas, excepting a few pockets indicated below, in order to protect and rescue people who may be in imminent danger." (12 villages under Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa P.Ss. were excluded from police operation for the period up to 22.6.67)

(b) "The police will go to any area where a murder may be committed for recovery of the dead body. If in doing so the police is attacked by the miscreants, the attack should be effectively repulsed by the police, if necessary, by the use of firearms."

(c) Two new police camps were to be set up in the disturbed areas.

(d) Introduction of mobile police patrols along three routes passing through the disturbed areas.

(e) Immediate measures for sealing the borders with Nepal, East Pakistan and Bihar to prevent clandestine movement.

(f) Magistrates to be posted at the three disturbed police stations. (Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa)

Plan B was an extension of the above measures up to 24.6.67.

Plan C gave the outlines of a full-scale police operation if "even after 22.6.67 or 24.6.67, the unlawful activities continue in the main." Two guidelines of Plan C were:

(a) "Movement of heavy police columns in a planned manner so as to encircle the probable areas of concentration of the miscreants and thereby force them to surrender without resistance;"

(b) "by taking firm and determined action against them in one or two pockets for setting an example to the miscreants in other areas, thereby compelling the rest to surrender without any futile attempt at resistance."

Detailed operational instructions were prepared by 20.6.67 in consultation with the Range Dy. I. G. to give a proper shape to Plan C, which was termed 'Operation Crossbow.' As subsequent events will show, this 'Operation Crossbow' was put off under orders of the Government and a revised plan had to be drawn up in accordance with the Cabinet decision of 5.7.67.

In the 'Plans of Operation' approved by the Cabinet Committee, the last paragraph, entitled 'Appreciation', contained a sub-para which led to some furore in the Cabinet meeting at Calcutta. It read "a) As regards the operation as in 'C', possibility of heavy casualties cannot be ruled out in case of desperate and violent resistance by the offenders. In this case, the casualty figures may run up to anything between 30 and 250, though every possible effort will be made to keep the casualty figures to the minimum." Initially some of the ministers were not in favour of retaining this sub-para, though they all agreed that, in the event of violent resistance, there was bound to be heavy casualty. We did not want anybody to feign 'surprise and shock' at a later stage when the operations started and there were some casualties.

It would be apparent from the detailed instructions contained in Operation Crossbow that every possible precaution was being taken to avoid unnecessary casualties. But we were to cover an area of about 200 sq. miles, divided into 4 sectors comprising about 16 stronghold areas. If violent resistance from each such stronghold area was put up, the police parties (about 8 companies consisting of approximately 800 officers and men) must subdue them into eventual



surrender. In such an eventuality, the casualty figure could go very high. We had also thought of an alternative to bring down the figure. Thus, we calculated, instead of organising simultaneous operations in all the Sectors at the same hour, a massive show of strength could be arranged initially in one Sector, making it impossible for the miscreants to mount any resistance; this would demoralise other pockets, when encirclement and arrests could be done without much resistance. We were taking every possible precaution so that the best results could be achieved (i.e. with the minimum of casualty), but at the same time we had to be prepared for the worst as well. In fact, it was also suggested in the Appreciation paragraph that "It would be desirable if two or three of the Ministers who have come here also revisit Siliguri before the commencement of our Plan of Operation as outlined in C above in order to ensure that actions are taken by all concerned on proper lines." Since we had nothing to hide and all our actions were above-board, we suggested that the ministers, as leaders of the people, could see for themselves whether the police and the other branches of local administration were trying their best to implement the ministerial decision in the proper spirit.

The period from June 17 to July 4 was marked by indecision, more so when June 22 (or June 24) was announced by the Cabinet Committee to be the date by which all unlawful activities were to stop. Let us first analyse how the extremists reacted to the visit of the Cabinet Committee and its announced decisions. If the number of incidents be any index, they had reached the peak of their activity between 10.6.67 and 16.6.67. Apart from a stepping up of looting, for the first time in this series we came across instances of arson and molestation of women during the very same period, which also witnessed the first signs of local resistance, including armed resistance, against the offenders.

The Cabinet Committee announcement of 17.6.67 asked for cessation of unlawful activities by 22.6.67 or by 24.6.67 at the latest. Between 17/6 and 24/6, we received reports of 10 cases of looting (paddy and other things) and 2 cases of gun looting. Thus, though a reduction in the number of incidents took place during this period, it was by no means a cessation of unlawful activities. Incidentally there was hard bargaining going on in the Cabinet regarding the timing and extent of inevitable police action.

The miscreants took full advantage of this obvious vacillation and their activities were again stepped up between 25.6.67 and 30.6.67

when another 4 cases of looting (paddy and other things), 1 case of assault, 2 cases of gun looting and 1 case of molestation of women were reported.

During the same period (i.e. between 18.6.67 and 30.6.67), there had been some significant shifts in Government attitude, substantially modifying the Cabinet Committee decisions. Thus, on 22.6.67, we received the following instructions based on Cabinet decisions:

(a) "Police action in accordance with plans A and B of the scheme approved by the Cabinet Committee will continue until further order. The Cabinet will review the position again after 24.6.67 and appropriate direction would be given in the light of such review. Plan C will not be put into operation until a clear directive is received from the Government." As would be evident from subsequent developments, the Cabinet could not arrive at a decision till 5.7.67 night.

(b) "In respect of persons who are now in jail and also in respect of persons who may surrender, police will not oppose bail except against those who are concerned in murder cases or those who are ring-leaders. This also applies to persons who are already in jail custody..."

This offer of immediate bail on surrender was extended till 4.7.67 by Government, though we continued to follow this policy even after that date. On 3.7.67, the figures for arrest, surrender, release etc. were as follows:

Total No. of persons arrested by police or surrendered to Court = 160

Total No. of persons released on police bail. = 34

No. of persons released on Court bail from jail = 42

No. of persons released on Court bail on surrender = 5

No. of persons in custody = 79

The swing of public opinion against the miscreants was so complete that, despite our repeated unofficial requests to the lawyers, almost no one was prepared to stand surety for the release of persons from jail custody.

By June 24, we had set up a few more police camps in the disturbed areas. We were also equipping our operational camps with fibre-glass shields (as protection against arrow shots) and other requisite items.

On 27.6.67, the second group of Cabinet ministers (S/Shri Biswanath Mukherjee, D. P. Rai and Amar Chakraborty) arrived at

Siliguri to study the reactions of the extremists to earlier appeals by the Cabinet Committee and also to expedite the work of the Land Committees. As the response to the call for surrender was not encouraging, the ministers wanted to establish contact with the miscreants. Thanawise lists of wanted persons in various cases were prepared and handed over to the ministers. Apart from this, we printed such lists in the form of booklets and arranged for their wide distribution in the affected areas, asking the wanted persons to surrender to the nearest police camp or police station. It would be seen later that the response was encouraging only after the police operations commenced. The ministers stayed at Siliguri only for two days and no important decisions were taken during the stay. The local U.F. Committee, however, submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet Committee urging immediate police action.

Before we close this chapter, we may note some other interesting developments:

(a) China and Pakistan started evincing an unseemly interest in the happenings of Naxalbari. The Chinese press and radio magnified the incidents and hailed these as the beginning of the people's armed revolt against the reactionaries and the revisionists in India. *The People's Daily of China* came out with an editorial dated July 7, 1967 ("Spring thunder over India"). The Chinese leadership could not have given a better account of their utter lack of perspective.

(b) However superficial this display of Chinese interest in Naxalbari affairs might be, it naturally attracted wide attention in this country. Members of the Congress Parliamentary Party, in a meeting at New Delhi on June 30, 'expressed concern over reports of Chinese involvement in Naxalbari.' The Union Cabinet also discussed this subject on July 3 and 4. All India leaders of other political parties were also excitedly analysing at Delhi the implications of Chinese interest in Naxalbari affairs.

(c) The CPI(M) Politburo was obviously in a difficult position. It ultimately took, on July 2, the bold and unprecedented step of issuing a statement in Calcutta, publicly disagreeing with the Chinese Communist Party. The statement asserted, inter alia, that the entire assessment of the peasants' struggle in Naxalbari, reported to have been made by Peking Radio, was in total variance with that made by the CPI(M).

(d) The air was thick with rumours of imminent Central intervention in this State, i.e. dismissal of the U.F. Ministry and

promulgation of President's Rule. Between 25 June and 4 July 1967, the U.F. Government could not take any definite decision regarding the extent and approximate timing of police action. On the contrary, different ministers were making contradictory statements, creating further doubt about the Government's resolve to put down lawlessness. This, we believed, was one of the main reasons which prompted some people (in Delhi) to think in terms of a quick and decisive Central intervention to do away with the ultra menace. Though things did not move in this direction, few people knew at that time that the preparation for the same for the Naxalbari affair was well under way and a powerful Army detachment was standing by on the fringe of the disturbed area. At that time I was casually asked by a senior Army commander of the area to comment on their 'preparations' as indicated above. My instant reaction was that sledge hammers are never to be recommended for dealing with a mosquito menace, which may only aggravate the problem in the long run.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. These two Notes are included in this publication.
2. Some of these communications to IGP have been reproduced in this publication.



#### Section IV: THE CONSENSUS & THE REVISED 'OPERATION CROSSBOW'

We (Divisional Commissioner, Range D.I.G., D.C. and S.P.) were summoned to attend a crucial Cabinet meeting on 5.7.67 when decisions on Naxalbari affairs were supposed to be taken. The meeting started at about 10.30 A.M. and continued till 1 P.M. but no decision could be arrived at. The Assembly was in session then and the Chief Minister desired that this meeting of the Cabinet should be resumed in the afternoon. Thus, it began again at 7 P.M. and terminated at 10 P.M. All the 18 Cabinet Ministers were present. Though the Resolution adopted in this meeting on Naxalbari affairs was unanimous, it was the result of a hard and bitter bargaining between the two sharply divided groups within the U.F. Ministry. It must be conceded, however, that the Resolution, though hedged in with provisos, did reflect the collective wisdom of the Cabinet and was the best possible consensus of views that one could hope for.

The consensus was to the following effect :

"Cabinet reiterated that the policy to be followed in dealing with the situation in the Naxalbari area was to isolate the extremists from the people of the area and to ensure restoration of normal conditions. With this objective in view, Cabinet directed that the following measures should be taken :

"(1) Work of land reform and distribution committees should be speeded up. Full propaganda and publicity should be arranged (i) for enabling this work to go on as speedily as possible and (ii) for facilitating the surrender of the wanted persons in terms of the decision taken earlier.

"(2) Police Camps should be set up and Police patrols organised wherever necessary (including stronghold areas) for the following purposes :

"(a) They will strictly enforce section 144 Cr.P.C. orders (including taking of action against movement of mobs with weapons.)

"(b) They will prevent further action on the part of both extremists and resistance groups and help restoration of normal conditions.

"(c) Arrests may be made in the course of action taken under (a) & (b).

"(d) They will continue to encourage the policy of facilitating surrender of wanted persons in terms of the decision taken earlier.

"(e) Searches for and arrests of wanted persons, mainly ring-

leaders, should be made only on information received but there should be no mass-scale searches for this purpose. Investigation of cases involving serious offences on both sides should go on.

"Police will exercise their discretion in carrying out the instructions given above but subject to the conditions stated therein."

This meant some major changes in the 'Operation Crossbow' which was drawn up earlier in accordance with Plan C of the Plan of Actions approved by the Cabinet Committee on 17.6.67. It was, accordingly, decided that the Operation Crossbow should be redrafted by me in the light of the above Cabinet decision and the revised plan will be discussed at a conference with the Divisional Commissioner and the Range D.I.G. at Siliguri on 9.7.67. This was done and the Police Officers were suitably briefed on the following morning.

Meanwhile, we decided on 6.7.67 to organise route marches in the affected areas with all our reserve companies (it totalled about 700 officers and men) and available transports. This turned out to be a massive and impressive show of strength, aimed at dispelling any childish idea about organising resistance against Police operations. One such route march was held on 7.7.67 in the Hatighisa area and on 8.7.67 along a 4-mile stretch of the Naxalbari-Khoribari road. Portable microphones were carried with the Police parties and announcements were made in course of the route marches requesting the people to assist us in restoring normalcy in the disturbed areas quickly, asking the wanted persons to surrender without any further delay with the assurance that none will be subjected to any ill-treatment and also warning the miscreants against any violation of the prohibitory orders u/s 144 Cr.P.C.

As we could gather subsequently by interrogating many of the arrested persons, these two demonstrations produced the desired sense of helplessness in the rank and file of the miscreants who could not be cajoled by the ring-leaders into putting up any form of resistance. On the contrary, henceforth the leaders eschewed their earlier promises and openly advocated the age-old selfish dictum 'fend for yourself', with shattering effect on the morale of their rank and file.

The success of any large-scale operation depends on many factors — intelligence collection, planning, briefing of officers and men participating in the operation and so on. But the decisive factor very often turns out to be the element of surprise. In this respect we were somewhat handicapped. It was known to everybody on the

6th of July (courtesy Calcutta media) that the Cabinet had authorised the Police on the previous night to undertake adequate Police actions to curb the lawless elements. Thus, many people anticipated that the long-awaited Police operations would start in a day or two. In fact by the 8th, Siliguri was invaded by media persons from all over the country.

In spite of all this, we did spring a certain amount of surprise both in regard to the date, the time and the target of our operation. Thus, when the first operation started over Hatighisa sector (P.S. Naxalbari) on 12.7.67 (01.00 hrs. to 12.00 hrs.), covering an area of about 12 sq. miles with 6 villages, none appeared to have been caught more unawares than the extremists themselves.

Some details about this 'Operation Hatighisa' are called for, since this was the first test of the efficacy of the overall plan, i.e. Operation Crossbow, and also because very soon we were to be faced with the Calcutta-based clamour about our alleged violation of the Cabinet instructions. By the time we were preparing to launch our operations, hectic activities were afoot for collecting agents and guides from the areas to be covered. Some of these agents gave us convincing information about the groupings of the ring-leaders - Jangal Santhal, Khokon Majumdar, Kamakshya Banerji, Raghunath Biswakarmakar, Babulal Biswakarmakar etc. being in charge of the Hatighisa Sector and Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik, Sibcharan Malpaharia, Upen Barman, Khudan Mallik etc. leading the Buraganj group.

Hatighisa had to be our first choice, more so because it was from this area that the initial activities of the extremists were organised. In accordance with para 2(e) of the Cabinet decision, we could conduct direct raids on the villages where the ringleaders could be found on the basis of available information. But this would have invariably led to confusion amongst the villagers, resulting in panicky skirmishes with Police parties. On the contrary, the same objective (viz. arrest of wanted persons) could be achieved with greater ease if - (a) we could treat all the villages in this sector as one unit and surround the same under cover of darkness and then (b) at day break, announce over portable microphones the names of the wanted persons and ask them to come out and surrender one by one.

This latter course of action was followed at Hatighisa with remarkable success. Seeing the massive concentration of Police force all around the villages at the first light of dawn and realising the futility of any resistance, the wanted persons started coming out in

ones and twos as their names were called out over the microphone. After the initial panic had died down, some of the houses suspected to be the storing places of guns, bows and arrows were searched. 76 wanted persons were taken into custody and 98 bows, 245 arrows, 17 spears, 20 khukris etc. were seized. We, however, missed the ringleaders of this area who managed to escape through the tea-bushes as one Police party erroneously left an important corner uncovered.

Notwithstanding this, we considered our first operation eminently successful on the following grounds: our intelligence was found to be as accurate as it could be under the prevailing adverse circumstances; secondly, we demonstrated to the people that we practised what we professed, in so far as no ill-treatment was meted out to any person even though such a large body of policemen (approximately 500 officers & men) participated in the operation in the midst of the worst conceivable weather conditions; thirdly, movements of our Police parties from about five directions worked with clock-like precision; and finally, the whole process was completed without a single shot being fired by our parties. We consolidated our gains further by opening a strong Police Camp the same day at Birsinghote in the heart of Hatighisa area.

The next operation was to be in the Buraganj area (P.S. Khoribari). For this purpose a Police Camp was set up on 11.7.67 near a village called Raimatijote, deep inside the Buraganj anchal. Setting up of this camp was a direct challenge to the ring-leaders of this area who were so long telling their compatriots that any policeman found in this area will be murdered. However, we were faced with some difficulties in organising the operation in this pocket. Firstly, it was well nigh impossible to move any large body of men into this area without being observed, thanks to the peculiar terrain; secondly, it was noticed that the ring-leaders and some of their followers in this pocket were more prone to violence than their colleagues in other pockets and as such we were required to move in swiftly and be prepared to encounter some resistance. For working out details of the plan, I reconnoitered the area on the morning of 13.7.67 with four of my colleagues who were to lead different parties for the Operation on the following day.

As we returned to our camp and were discussing the details of the next day's operation, a frantic message was received over the R/T from Raimati Camp to the effect that about 2000 persons had



collected at a distance of about a mile from the Camp with guns, bows and arrows, presumably for an attack on the Camp. We knew that such a step would be utterly suicidal on the part of the miscreants. Immediately a tea-garden on the fringe of this area was contacted over the phone and they also confirmed the congregation but could not say anything definite about their object.

But there was one problem for Raimati Camp manned by EFR personnel — the Camp-in-Charge had gone out in the morning with a Platoon for patrolling the area, leaving two Platoons behind but they had not yet returned to the Camp. The Camp personnel were asked over the R/T to stand-by in full strength and not to allow any outsider within 150 yards of the Camp; they were also informed that adequate reinforcements from various directions were being sent out to apprehend the miscreants. We hurriedly deployed four police parties (each party of about half Company strength) under four Superior Police Officers; each party was assigned a specific task, the aim being - (a) to prevent the miscreants from attempting any raid on the Raimati Police Camp, and (b) to encircle the miscreants from all sides and force them to surrender.

By about 3 P.M. the same day (13.7.67), all of us were in the Operation Area - covering about 12 Sq. miles containing innumerable streamlets and marshy lands with ankle-deep water and mud on the South, South-east and West and a thick Sal forest on the North. Two parties converged in the field from the North-West with the task of cutting off escape routes to the North and the West and also to cover a portion of the South; another two parties emerged from the North-East for sealing off escape routes to part of the North, the entire East and part of South. Unfortunately however, the North was not adequately covered which permitted some of the ringleaders to slip through the Sal forest. Apart from this lapse, which ought to have been avoided, the movements of the remaining parties synchronised so unexpectedly well that the miscreants, inspite of being armed and in good strength, were completely outwitted and demoralised. Their bewilderment was apparent when they suddenly found themselves being commanded to drop their bows and arrows and raise their hands over their heads which they did, thanks to the very skilful and daring manoeuvre of a Police Party led by Shri S. J. Philip, IPS, (a Commandant of the State Armed Police).

The whole affair was completed by about 5.30 P.M. but then we started screening the apprehended persons (approximately 600). Most

of them were found to have been coerced into joining the *Julus* (congregation) and as such we let them off straightway on the spot - a decision which further enhanced our credibility among the villagers and the peasantry. We finally took into custody 290 persons, including 2-3 ringleaders of this area; we also seized a huge quantity of bows, arrows, spears and other weapons.

With these two Operations of 12.7.67 and 13.7.67 at Hatighisa and Buraganj respectively, the back of the miscreants was completely broken and the ring-leaders had to be on the run almost continuously since then.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter raids were conducted every day in different parts of the operational area for apprehending the wanted persons; in the process, seized bows and arrows kept on growing into bigger piles in every Police Station. Moreover, in order to keep up our pressure in their erstwhile stronghold areas, we started moving our Camps deeper inside the areas. Within less than a week of the commencement of our Operation Crossbow, there was no area where people could not move about freely and, conversely there was no area where any leading member of the extremist group could come out openly.

By July 23, 1967 our position could be summed up thus: "Our first phase of Operation which was mainly aimed at isolating the ring-leaders from their rank and file and also to dislodge them from their bases of operations has almost been completed. Our second Phase, which has partly begun, was directed towards apprehension of the ring-leaders and their hardcore following. We have so far arrested 3 of the ringleaders (viz. Panchanan Sarkar, Shibcharan Malpaharia and Prahlad Singh) and about half a dozen of the second-ranking leaders. Our Third Phase would be directed towards release of as many of the arrested persons as possible for enabling them to attend to farming and also to settle all the families which have not yet returned to their villages in the erstwhile disturbed areas. We propose to carry on the second and the third phases simultaneously with the hope that this will help in quick restoration of normalcy." (SP, Darjeeling despatch to IGP, West Bengal.)

Along with our sustained raids for apprehension of wanted persons, we could notice the ever-increasing number of persons surrendering themselves either directly to the Police Camps and Police Stations or to the Court. This was an unmistakable sign of disillusionment amongst the poor cultivators. It also showed a complete break of the rank and file from the ring-leaders. In order to

keep up this trend and also to honour the earlier pledge of the Government, we policemen took the initiative in arranging lawyers and other persons who could stand surety so that as many of the arrested persons as possible could be released on bail. This had a very good effect on the villagers who realised that surrender to Police or to Court did not necessarily mean indefinite detention in prison; secondly, release of so many people meant more men on the field for cultivation, the time for which was not yet over. Thus upto 26.8.67, the figures for arrest, surrender, released on bail etc. stand as follows :

TABLE - 2  
ARRESTS, SURRENDER, BAIL AND JAIL CUSTODY  
OF THE EXTREMISTS  
(3 MARCH - 26 AUGUST 1967)

	Persons arrested	Surrender to court	Surrender to police	Total arrest +surrender	Total bailed out
March 1967	40	x	x	40	38
April	1	x	x	1	1
May	106	x	x	106	3
June	2	x	x	2	
July(upto 11/7)	1	5	x	6	58
July(12-31/7)	552	3	18	573	29
August (upto 26.8.67)	165	112	22		546
TOTAL	867	120	40	1027	695
					(including 7 jotedars)

On 25/7/67 an interesting episode took place. 125 persons came to Khoribari P.S. of their own to 'surrender'; on checking our records, it was found that only 18 of them were wanted persons as they were named in F.I.Rs. as accused. These 18 persons were taken into custody and forwarded to Court wherefrom they were released on bail on police 'recommendations'; the remaining 107 persons went back to their villages merrily from the P.S. There were many such instances during July, August and September, and we did not expect that the response to our surrender call could be so spontaneous unless the people were fully confident of receiving fair and sympathetic treatment from us.

On 27.7.67 Muzibar Rahaman, one of the top leaders of the extremists, was arrested by Bihar Police (Purnea district) while he was attempting to enter Bihar from Galgalia side; he was handed

over to us on the following day. Moreover, in a number of cases the villagers themselves, and they were not jotedars by any stretch of imagination, produced before us quite a few wanted persons, including some second-ranking leaders of the extremist group. Then, to cap it all, one of the top leaders of the group, Oli Md., meekly surrendered to Court on 9.8.67.

On 9/10.8.67 night we conducted extensive raids in a far flung sector (Azamabad - Naxalbari tea-gardens and forests) having the most difficult terrain in the Sub-division. We recovered 4 shot-guns and seized some valuable documents. This was our first recovery of guns.<sup>2</sup> This good luck, resulting from painstaking collection of intelligence and perseverance, was repeated on 10.8.67 noon when a police party led by Shri Kamalesh Roy, IPS, an Asstt. Commandant of the Eastern Frontier Rifles, gave a hot chase to two noted fugitives, Jangal Santhal and Babulal Biswakarmakar, and arrested both of them with another DBBL gun and 6 live cartridges.

Both of them were in a pitiable condition - without food for about two days. I asked Shri Santhal to explain such a strange phenomenon that he had to go without food for two days while hiding around Hatighisa area, for long known to be his home ground and their strong base. His frank reply revealed the truth: no one was bold enough to feed him, since he was one of the 'wanted persons'. It was an irony of fate that the same people for whom he allowed himself to be a 'wanted person' refused to take any risk on his account the moment they felt that his activities had transgressed the permissible limits of law and had caused considerable miseries to the common villagers.

This chapter may be closed with a resume of subsequent events and developments. Phani Bhusan Das @ Phani Master, another ring-leader, surrendered to Court on 31.8.67. Two other noted stalwarts Kamakshya Banerji and Kadamlal Mallik were arrested by surprise raids on 15.9.67 and 8.6.68 respectively.

Ten shotguns (6 SBBL and 4 DBBL) were looted by the miscreants. We recovered till then 10 shotguns (5 SBBL and 5 DBBL). It may be mentioned here that all these recovered guns did not belong to the 10 looted ones; 7 out of these 10 were looted ones and the remaining 3 might have been obtained by the miscreants from some criminals who had joined their ranks.

Till about the end of August, 1967 the Police had registered 190 criminal cases in connection with the disturbances; this included a few counter-cases also. Another 7 cases were registered (over



recovery of firearms etc.), thus bringing the total of cases to 197 (Naxalbari P.S. 71 + Khoribari P.S. 88 + Phansidewa P.S. 37 + Siliguri P.S. 1). 133 of these cases were submitted in Charge-Sheet and the remaining 64 cases were otherwise disposed of (Final Report etc.).

In July 1967, the Inspector General of Police very thoughtfully detailed a Special Investigation Team (3 Inspectors & 12 Sub-Inspectors) for speedy and proper investigation of all those cases. This timely step proved to be of invaluable help in the matter of investigation, a measure which is very often neglected as soon as any large-scale disturbance subsides for the time being.

Realising that immediate steps were necessary "for the full implementation of land reforms measures as provided for by the law and for the expeditious redressal of the legitimate grievances of the various sections of the agricultural population of the area", the Government adopted a Resolution (N.10578-L.Ref. dt.21.6.67) constituting a Sub-divisional Land Reforms Committee for Siliguri Sub-division and under it four Thana Land Reforms Committees for each of the Police Stations, viz. Siliguri, Naxalbari, Khoribari and Phansidewa. The composition and functions of the committees can be seen in the Resolution in Appendices. Subsequently formation of such Committees were allowed by the Govt. in some Police Stations of Malda and West Dinajpur Districts; finally these provisions were extended towards the end of October to cover the remaining districts. But, as would be seen in the next Chapter, such Committees were doomed to a premature death with the change of government.

Life in the villages returned to complete normalcy by the middle of August 1967 when cultivation was resumed in full swing in virtually all the villages of the erstwhile disturbed areas. Reaching this stage in less than four and half months was possible only due to the total dedication, objectivity and unfailing optimism of numerous public servants and the continued community support during those very trying days and nights.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It was fully corroborated even in Souren Bose's Bengali book *Charu Majumdarer Katha*, 1989, pp.116-117.
2. It was learnt later that Kanu Sanyal and a few other top leaders were in this pocket but they managed to escape by running away under cover of darkness, leaving behind these guns and a bundle of letters written to Kanu by Charu Majumdar.

## Section V: THE LESSONS

### Lessons for the Administration

My principal object in attempting this post-mortem of the Naxalbari episode has been to analyse the events and developments of those fateful days for deducing suitable lessons out of this experience. It would be my endeavour in the following pages to draw up, as objectively as possible, balance-sheets separately for the Administration (including the Police) and also for the extremists so as to assess how these two entities fared in this episode.

On the debit side, no one could deny the failure of the administration on the vital issues connected with land, even within the known limitations of the Land Reforms and Estates Acquisition legislations. It was only too patent that those charged with the responsibility of acquisition and disposal of vested lands failed to act with vigour and social commitment during the past decade. That this failure was at the root of social tension and violence in the rural areas for decades should not need any reiteration. For the first time this issue was brought to the fore due to a peculiar conjunction of the actions of the extremists and the 'unusual' stand taken by the district police of Darjeeling.

Its credit side was the accelerated implementation attempts of the neglected land reform measures and also setting the pattern for other districts in the shape of Sub-division and Thana level Land Reforms Committees, prompt detection and recovery of vested lands and their distribution among landless cultivators as also a substantial check on eviction of bargadars. That all such landmark steps, neglected for decades, could be initiated, if not substantially implemented during a short period of a couple of months was surely not a mean achievement. It is not our contention that our efforts succeeded in bringing about a long-term solution of the land problem but we did succeed in bringing to the fore the centrality of this issue in matters which are quite often dubbed as pure law and order matter to be dealt with by police in their 'traditional' methods of wielding the lathis and the guns at the drop of a hat. Hence *the first lesson* which I would like to be drawn is that the Police leaders should insist on honest, sincere and urgent steps by the government to remove the basic cause/causes which lie behind any organised unrest of this kind, preferably before it is asked to wield the lathi and the gun to quell the unrest.

The *second lesson* for the administration in general but more specifically for the police in dealing with anticipated large-scale organised lawlessness would be to mobilise public opinion. Allied to it will be the administration's transparency vis-a-vis the media, without which the desired level of mutual trust and confidence cannot be established and sustained. Add to it the local community's support and assistance, again to be developed not through some facile public relations activity but by painstakingly explaining to them the overall objective of police operations, how these are sought to be achieved for fulfilling the expectations of the local community and for their immediate as well as long-term interest. These are easier said than done but our experience during the Naxalbari disturbances amply proved that this objective is quite capable of being achieved provided, of course, that there exists the requisite mutuality of trust and confidence on both sides.

A time came during June-July, 1967 when everybody was more or less reconciled to the inevitability and imminence of large-scale police action. But there was understandable hesitation in some quarters regarding the scale and nature of police operation. Thus, in course of discussion in a Cabinet meeting, one Minister came out with his 'vivid experiences of police operations in the past' which were marked, according to him, by 'pillage, indiscriminate beating, rape and arson.' Even otherwise we knew from our own experience that organising sensitive police operations with the help of an assorted force drawn from various sources would call for certain special precautions.

We were indeed faced with a situation which called for massing of adequate force and it had to be an assorted conglomeration, drawn from different sources like the Eastern Frontier Rifles, the Border Security Force, the State Armed Police in addition to our own District Police; moreover, we had to draw officers from the other districts of North Bengal. To wield the contingents drawn from these divergent sources into a unified body imbued with a common spirit suited to the delicate task to be performed in the full glare of public attention was indeed a challenging job. I could anticipate from April-May that a stage would come, sooner or later, for mobilising such an assorted body of policemen, when the real test of police leadership on the ground would come into play: whether our policemen in considerable strength but scattered in isolated pockets in PSs, camps and outposts could be galvanized into something about which we could be truly

proud. I had started planning for such an eventuality from May 1967 itself, when the full mobilisation was yet to materialise.

Since the third week of June, when the contingents from various sources (SAP/EFR/BSF) started pouring into Siliguri till the beginning of the police operation on July 12, 1967, we kept on meeting the officers and men of these units in their respective camps almost on a daily basis, to impress upon them the following points:

(a) Even though the people in general are demanding police action to stop lawless activities, nobody will ever forgive any police atrocity. It is not enough for us to curb lawlessness but more important is the manner in which we do so.

(b) Since every member of the force is believed to be endowed with *self-respect*, it was necessary for everybody to ensure that no action of even one individual member of the force can invite public criticism. (We believed that motivating the police force to develop self-respect among each and every member can be the best possible antidote to misconduct and misbehaviour of policemen.)

(c) There must be no attitude of vindictiveness in any member of the force, who should remember that our operations will be directed not against alien enemy nationals but against a section of our own countrymen who, unfortunately, had taken recourse to the path of violence and lawlessness.

(d) Every individual officer or man charged with participation in police operations must exercise utmost restraint in his conduct and utterances even in the midst of tense and trying situations.

(e) Women, children and old or invalid persons even in the strongholds of the miscreants must be treated with utmost moderation and courtesy. The policemen of all ranks were being repeatedly reminded that no misconduct in this matter will be tolerated.

(f) If any policeman (officer or other rank) purchased any item (vegetable, meat or anything else) from the local people or shop, he must make full payment like anybody else; any failure to observe these norms will be severely and promptly punished.<sup>1</sup>

We kept on emphasising these vital guidelines even after the commencement of the operations on July 12 and the process was repeated almost to the point of exhaustion. That these guidelines were not mere platitudes were borne out by the thousands of villagers with whom our officers and men came in contact at different hours of day and night running into several months.

In addition to this attempted 'indoctrination' of the force, several other precautionary steps were also taken:



(i) From 12th. July till about the middle of August, 1967 all the raids (more than one a day/night) were conducted under the direct supervision of Superior Police Officers who were fully attuned to the above code of personal behaviour. Though the number of raids gradually came down after August 1967, field supervision by Superior Police Officers was continued.

(ii) Police Camps in the interiors were asked not to hold any raid of their own without obtaining clearance from the SP or the Addl.SP. Incidentally, all our Police Units and Camps in the Sub-division during those days were connected with radio-telephone (R/T) with the Central Control Room at Siliguri and the Sub-Controls at the various Police Stations. This restriction on the Camps was necessary to avoid indiscriminate and uncoordinated activities by individual camps and units. By and large, all the raids were centrally controlled, co-ordinated and even supervised in the field.

(iii) Whenever a house was to be searched, it was laid down that no officer below the rank of a Sub-Inspector or Asstt. Sub-Inspector would enter a room for the purpose of the search and it had to be done in the presence of a member of the household. If any seizure was made, the seized articles were to be shown to the inmates at the time of the seizure and before preparation of the seizure list. Thereafter the eldest member of the household was asked to check up and report if all their belongings, including cash and valuables, were in order. Only after obtaining such a 'clearance' did the seniormost police officer allow his party to move out of the spot.

After one such raid and search, I sought a clearance from the old lady of a thatched house searched by us. As she came out of her modest mud hut, she stated with tears that her torch-light was missing! The word was immediately passed on to our officers and men in the raiding party, with the warning that either her torchlight will have to be recovered and returned to this old lady or else all of us (including myself) would have to pay on the spot to this lady Five rupees each (which would have amounted to at least four times the cost of such a torchlight). The police (EFR) party was given 15 minutes' time. Within a couple of minutes, a constable came forward, with apparent embarrassment, and handed over the torch-light to me. When I returned it to the lady, apologising for this indiscretion, I still recall the face of this lady which lit up as though she had got back her lost child!

On another occasion, we had to dig up portions of the mud floor of a room which we were searching for recovery of a fire-arm on the basis of a source information. We did not succeed in recovering the weapon but realised that some damage had been caused to the hut by digging a part of the floor. Before withdrawing from that village ('coolie line' of a tea garden), I spoke to the head of the household (Shibsingh Rajgore) about the gist of the information on the basis of which we had to dig up his mud floor, expressed our regrets for the inconvenience caused to them and paid him a small amount of money as our 'penalty', which he accepted only after a great deal of coaxing from us.

I have given here only two instances in support of our earlier guidelines about the code of conduct which were to be observed by each one of us. [I should recall here a much later sequence of the above episodes. Souren Bose, one of the leading figures of the Naxalite movement and a Central Committee and Politburo Member of the CPI(ML), was arrested in Calcutta on 7 July 1971 by the Special Branch of Calcutta Police. Souren and I got to know each other during my days as the SP, Darjeeling and I considered him as a good gentleman. During his interrogation by me in my Special Branch room, we quite often used to recall our respective experiences about the troubled Naxalbari days of 1967-68. One day he suddenly asked me if I could recollect the name of one Shibsingh Rajgore. I took a little while to place this person and asked Souren, in turn, why was he asking about Shibsingh. What was disclosed by Souren brought home to me the full impact of what we had been doing there in course of almost every raid, arrest and search. Souren mentioned that after our raid in his village and search of his house, Shibsingh, who was an important link with the underground leaders, refused to assist them in any manner, stating that his personal experience about policemen was totally at variance with the usual tales of police highhandedness and atrocities dished out to them by the leaders. In fact, Souren enquired if we had succeeded in 'recruiting' Shibsingh as one of our agents! I informed him in all sincerity that his impression was totally incorrect and that we had made no such effort to co-opt Shibsingh and then narrated the above incident of search of his house and subsequent development mentioned above. Souren was honest enough to admit that such 'unusual' conduct on our part in most cases of raids and searches including the majority of arrested villagers was one of the important factors behind large-scale desertions from their ranks in the Naxalbari-Khoribari-Phansidewa areas during 1967-68.]

It may be argued at this stage that too much of control from the top is apt to sap initiative at lower levels. This is undoubtedly true as a general principle but, as I have pointed out earlier, we were faced with an unusual situation - with the haunting spectre of alleged police excesses almost invariably associated in the public mind with any large-scale police operation. Unavoidable mobilisation of assorted police units of considerable strength for any police action may be generally regarded as a sure recipe for police excesses of all kinds unless certain firm and precautionary steps are taken.

In any such eventuality, therefore, the officer-in-charge of the operation must have a complete grip over every action of individual units which must not only conform to the overall pattern but should also be attuned to the guiding spirit of the operation in the minutest details. Till this pattern assumes a fairly concrete shape and the individual members fully imbibe the spirit and start practising these in the field, it would be utterly irresponsible and hazardous on the part of the police leader to relax his grip even if this means sacrificing initiative at lower levels for the time being. But as situations start improving and after the above two requirements have been achieved, there should be a gradual building up of initiative and self-confidence at lower levels. *The fourth lesson*, therefore, that can save us from many pitfalls should be that effective control must be exercised by the officer-in-charge of the operation not only over its execution but also over the personal conduct and behaviour of the individuals comprising the force. And such control and supervision must be from the frontline in the field and not from the safe distance and cool comfort of his office or even Control Room.

Ensuring team work amongst the members of the police contingents is not enough for the success of an operation of this magnitude. It is essential that the entire district administration is attuned to a common perspective and geared to the same degree of urgency and commitment. This may well be the fifth lesson which every administration must strive to achieve whenever faced with such a situation. We had been extremely fortunate on this score as the Divisional Commissioner (Shri Ivan Surita), the Range Dy.I.G.(Shri S.N. De Chowdhury, followed by Shri S.N. de' Silva), the Deputy Commissioner (Shri Manamoy Bhattacharya followed by Shri P.R. Balasubramaniam) and all other officers including the successive SDOs (S/Shri Dipak Ghosh, IAS and Debu Bhattacharya, WBCS) and

SDPOs (S/Shri Sarajit Chatterjee, WBPS and Dipak Ghosh, WBPS) worked in complete harmony at all times. Whenever any minor difference in approach arose, we never failed to resolve the same by means of frank and constructive discussions unmarred by personal prejudices. This remarkable team spirit was adequately sustained throughout by the administrative headquarters at Calcutta, especially the IGP (Shri Upananda Mukharji).

### The 'other' camp

Let us now focus our attention on the personnel and the performance of the extremist group involved in the Naxalbari movement. Their undeniable asset was the unquestioned integrity of purpose and unflinching devotion to the tenets of their own political faith. This applies in particular to S/Shri Charu Majumdar, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal whereas most of the other leaders of the agitation cannot exactly be said to be endowed with such attributes of the required degree. This, in fact, reflects the strength as well as the weakness of their enterprise. Shri Majumdar, because of his ill-health, could hardly devote any time and energy for field work and had to be content with providing abstract guidance and that too generally from the safety of his own home in Siliguri town. The field work was mainly carried on by Kanu Sanyal with the assistance of his colleagues like Jangal Santhal, Kadam and Khudan Mallik, Kamakshya Banerji, Keshab Sarkar, Khokan Majumdar, Panchanan Sarkar and others, practically none of whom had any previous experience of a militant peasant movement of such magnitude. This, together with a total lack of understanding about the intensity and extent of jotedar-bargadar frictions in other parts of West Bengal resulted in many wrong premises on which they calculated the prospects of their movement. This inevitably resulted in the series of tactical blunders committed by them.

Besides a few other critical factors referred to earlier, though not always within their control, the latter two factors were primarily responsible for the quick collapse of their enterprise and the consequent disorganisation in their ranks. Let us first take up the wrong presumptions on which their endeavour was based. Their first presumption must have been that their rank and file in particular and the people of this area in general were prepared for a period of prolonged confrontation with the coercive power of the State. This includes mental as well as material preparation on their part to



withstand the expected degree of privations and harassments likely to be faced by them at personal and family level. But could their rank and file, including their family members, be expected to stand up to this? Subsequent developments have shown that the first major premise was based on utter miscalculations and the reasons are not far to seek. Firstly, their political indoctrination was neither qualitatively nor quantitatively adequate to hold them together once they encountered the critical stage of police operation.

In the second place, their rank and file was composed of persons, many of whom were not solely dependent for their sustenance on land (either own land or barga land) since they had a subsidiary means of subsistence as tea-garden labourers. Moreover, they seldom suffered from violent clashes with jotedars, so rampant in some other parts of rural West Bengal or in other States. Such persons, therefore, could hardly be expected to align themselves for a period of prolonged and agonising confrontation with the forces of law since it did not really appeal to them as their struggle for survival. Hence the required degree of mass desperation could never be expected from them. One could not really apply the dictum that these people had nothing to lose except their chains!

Their second premise that the struggle here will catch on elsewhere in West Bengal and in various other parts of India was equally naive. They had neither the organisational contacts nor the field-work to hope for any such eventuality.<sup>2</sup>

The third premise was closely related to the second, namely, that the resources and the energy of State power will be dissipated in dealing with the epidemic of Naxalbari in other parts of the country, thereby giving them a necessary breathing space for consolidating their position. In this, they not only grossly over-estimated their own strength in terms of their personnel, organisation and public support but made an equally gross underestimation of the reality of State resources.

Let us turn now to the series of tactical blunders committed by the leadership of the Naxalbari agitation, the cumulative effect of which proved to be their own undoing. The first lapse which attracted the attention of many is that no concrete and precise charter of the local peasantry's economic and other very legitimate grievances over land matters were ever put forward by them. The 'seizure of political power by armed struggle' was their objective as propagated by Charu Majumdar. But this proved to be too abstract and impersonal to the

aggrieved and exploited peasantry to enkindle the requisite zeal in them for a sustained struggle.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, their repeated failure to make good use of the offers of negotiation at various stages proved costly. They obviously had not grasped Mao Tse-tung's dictum that 'properly utilised negotiations can be a tit for tat.' They got their first opportunity on 18.5.67 during discussions at Sukna Forest Bungalow when a three-point peace-formula was offered by the SP; their second chance came with the Cabinet Committee's appeals between 15.6.67 and 17.6.67. If they had accepted, even as a temporary tactic any of these overtures for a negotiated settlement of the issues involved (barring, of course, 'seizure of political power'!), they could not only exploit the interregnum for consolidation of their gains but could wrest many other vital concessions as by-products which could be seen by the rank and file concretely as a sequel to the first leg of their struggle. Thus a full-scale police action and eventual disintegration in their ranks could possibly be averted. Even nominal surrender of the wanted persons might have secured not only their prompt release from police or jail custody but also the very likely withdrawal of all or most of the cases lodged against them. At least that appeared to be the trend of thought in influential sections of the U.F. Govt. The extremist leaders could have easily exploited all these as the direct outcome of the first lap of their struggle.

Who could fail to watch, with amazement, their third folly when one after another the small and middle peasants were being made the victims of their fanatic adherence to the irrational postulate that 'whoever was not with us must be against us'? It was no wonder, therefore, that their leader Jangal Santhal had to go without any food for two days prior to his arrest by police even though he was in hiding within less than a mile of their professedly stronghold area of Hatighisa Anchal, which was also supposed to be Jangal's base as well.

They had prepared for 'shelter' in the adjacent forests (Tukuria, Dalka, Kalabari etc.) wherefrom to build up resistance in the event of being forced out of the villages by police actions. They were accordingly asking their comrades to prepare 'traps' and 'snares' and the like! (We came across none during our operations including in these forests!) But little did they realise that howsoever dense or extensive these forests might be, none was impenetrable. Any determined police action, in requisite strength, could ferret out even rabbits from these forests, leave alone groups of human beings. It

was, thus a childish conjecture on their part to think in terms of safe sanctuary in and eventual resistance from these forests.

This fourth miscalculation was also reflected in their undue reliance on a flight across the border into Nepal or East Pakistan. Though they did succeed in fleeing the area a couple of times when the police were on their heels, the simultaneous prolonged absence of all the leaders from the scene (either due to capture/surrender or by escape across the border) created an immediate sense of distrust and disillusionment in the rank and file who became intensely aggrieved at their leaders having escaped to comparative safety when the former were passing through days of considerable stress and strain. This, then, was their fifth serious error of judgment.

The process of distrust and disenchantment, however, had started earlier, thanks to their sixth miscalculation. Some of the leaders had been telling their men and women that police had strict order from the Government not to open fire, thereby cajoling the women to form the vanguard in many of their offensives. When a police party headed by the S.D.O. (Dipak Ghosh, IAS) on 25.5.67 was eventually forced by the compelling circumstances to order fire against violent mobs with women in front resulting in considerable casualties, including some women, there was open consternation against the leaders who had lulled them into believing otherwise.

To counter this crisis, the leadership (particularly Khokan Majumdar @ Abdul Hamid) took recourse to another subterfuge by telling them about the imminent delivery of Chinese arms. When this too did not materialise to stem the tide of resentment, the climax of deception took place on 16.6.67. On that day, a Nepali gentleman of Darjeeling unwittingly visited his land in a village of Phansidewa P.S. Seeing his somewhat mongoloid features, the leaders had the bright idea of forcing this gentleman to be present in their party gathering (*julus*) of that date. Under threats of physical harm, he was compelled to say just a few words in broken Hindi to the effect that the current struggle was receiving 'their' due attention (implying Chinese attention) and every possible material assistance would be forthcoming. Greatly relieved after this delivery, the 'honoured guest' was safely escorted out of the area, and promptly did this interesting episode come to public knowledge. Soon after departure of the 'guest' from the scene, Kanu eulogised the Chinese leadership in his speech and expressed 'gratification' for their promise of 'comradely assistance'! The local comrades in the audience on that day were

possibly fooled for sometime but the bluff was called off soon and the inevitable disenchantment and bitterness were not slow to creep in.

The seventh tactical faux pas on the part of the extremist leadership was revealed in their copy-book urge for 'going underground'. They went underground as soon as the police operations started, presuming that all or most of them would be able to remain in hiding long enough to wear out police patience and activity, enabling them to organise 'actions' from the underground. Such hopes were belied because of prompt arrest/surrender of most of the ring-leaders and their lieutenants. The remaining ones sought comparative safety in places across our border but in the process lost active contacts with their followers who remained in the areas. The outcome was more damaging in other respects too. Thus, they were completely cut off from the mainstream of public opinion which quickly galvanized against tales of their atrocities, leading to formation of resistance groups in certain areas. Secondly, they completely failed to provide even the minimum of succour to many of the distressed families of their active followers and thereby forced these families to seek out their members for surrender to Police. As a matter of fact, we came across several villages where the women were literally up in arms against their menfolk who had left them in the lurch. June and July being the tilling and sowing season in this area, the women had to take up these tasks all by themselves.

As we came to know subsequently, there was sharp differences amongst the leaders themselves since early June and it continued thereafter. This was mainly over the question of negotiation and surrender. Some of the leaders thought that they should respond favourably to the SP's and later the Ministers' appeal for negotiation and surrender since the same would be followed up by release on bail and withdrawal of most or all of the cases against them. As I have indicated earlier, this was the line of thinking in some influential section of the Cabinet itself and a broad hint to this effect was given in Resolution (2) of the Cabinet Committee contained in the leaflet dated 15.6.67 under the signature of six Cabinet Ministers. But the dissident group among the extremists was soon elated by the misleading broadcasts and unrealistic appraisal of the local situation by Peking and Pakistan radios. Coupled with this was Charu Majumdar's short-sighted interpretation of some news-items of that period regarding agrarian troubles in 24-Parganas district in West



Bengal and Purnea district in Bihar which made him believe that the Naxalbari epidemic had started. In this, however, he was reportedly misguided by some 'College Street and Coffee House revolutionaries' from Calcutta.

Perhaps their crowning folly was the unprovoked attack on the unarmed police officers on 24.5.67 resulting in the tragic death of one of the most respected Inspectors of Police in Darjeeling district (Sonam Wangdi) and serious injuries to three Sub-Inspectors. This foolish, uncontrolled and uncontrollable urge to draw the first blood aroused unprecedented indignation against them in all sections of the public, including a segment of their own camp. The following day's tragic death of some women and children at Prasadujote was no less shattering to most of us who had been untiring in their sincere efforts from the very inception of the disturbances to avoid bloodshed and loss of lives on either side. And I have continued to feel that both these tragedies were totally avoidable.

It is neither my intention nor my domain to offer unsolicited advice to these misguided citizens of our country. Right from the beginning of May 1967, if not earlier, my earnest appeal to such leaders has been: 'If your game (some may call it reckless adventurism just as some may call it 'peoples' revolution') involves the safety and security of the lives of others, including those in your own ranks, it is expected that you play your game with requisite sanity'. But most regrettably their enterprise in this part of our country caused incalculable damage not only to themselves but to several others who also sincerely wished for a happier living for the tillers of the soil and other inhabitants of Darjeeling district.

**Extract from a note by Shri Harekrishna Konar, Minister, Land & Land Revenue, Govt. of West Bengal dt 5.3.1970 after studying the manuscript of 'The Lessons of Naxalbari' by Arun Mukherjee as the SP, Darjeeling district (written during August-September, 1968)**

"I have gone through the draft. I did not go into the merits of the analysis and political assessment made by the author. The author has got his own point of view and as an official he has, I admit, certain limitations. But his analysis is not superficial. From his own point of view he seems to have given serious thought to the subject.

"I was more particular in checking up the facts as narrated by him. So far I can remember, the facts have been properly narrated.

"The author may be permitted to publish it."

Sd./ HK Konar

5.3.70

**Extract from Govt. of West Bengal, Home (GA) Dept. order no. 343-GAC dt 11.3.1970 addressed to Shri A.P. Mukherjee, IPS, Dy. Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, Calcutta**

"I am directed to refer to your U.O. note no. DC.Con. 47/69 dt 9th December 1969 regarding permission to publish a Note entitled the 'Lessons of Naxalbari' prepared by you and to state that Government. are pleased to permit you to publish the same subject to the condition that no material change in the draft Note submitted by you nor any significant departure from the purport thereof should be made, and further that it should be made clear by you that the views expressed in the Note are entirely your own and do not represent the views of the Government."

Sd. N. Nanda

Dy. Secy. to the Govt of West Bengal

**Extract from a handwritten letter (1969 but undated) of Shri Upananda Mukharji, JP, IP, (Inspector General of Police, West Bengal) on APM's manuscript 'The Lessons of Naxalbari' (written during Aug.-Sept., 1968) .**

"Chapter I: Your enunciation of the problem, which you faced after the UF ministry was formed and the role played by Charu, 'the angry old man of Siliguri', has been done admirably well in a short compass.

Page-10: Under the Constitutional law, an individual minister not holding the portfolio of Home (Police) cannot give directions to the district police officers direct. If the decision be of the cabinet, it will reach the district police officer through the IGP and can then be a lawful direction. You have very intelligently avoided the question of propriety and constitutionality of the fiat of the individual ministers taken on the spot at Santipur and other places.

Your Strategy: The strategy which you formulated during the Naxalbari disturbances is something unique in the history of police operations in our country. Your strategy needs wide publicity and it should be borne in mind by every police officer faced with similar crisis. In view of the recent developments, there might be need for such strategy in near future in our country.

Your strategy to take the local people into fullest confidence is also a great lesson.

Chapter-IV: In my opinion, the said chapter needs making up to date.

Page-62: The failure of the Departments to solve the problem of distribution of lands to landless labourers has been rightly pointed out by you. The germ of future unrest is not killed. It will spread the disease in future wherever it will find a scope.

Your enunciation of the West Bengal Land Reforms Act is very correct.

Chapter-V: The Lessons

This chapter is unique, specially from page 82 onwards where you have dissected like a surgeon the performances of the extremists, their failures and blunders. Their criticisms are direct and pointed...."

Sd./ UM

(Upananda Mukharji)

**Postscript to "The Lessons of Naxalbari": Arrest of Kanu Sanyal (31 Oct. 1968)**

12 July 1967 (01.00 hrs. till about 14.00 hrs.): 'Operation Hatighisa' as part of the overall plan called 'Operation Crossbow' : First large-scale and planned police operation covering the entire Hatighisa Anchal, PS Naxalbari. The massive show of force but totally restrained conduct on the part of the raiding parties, the encirclement parties, search and seizure parties had the desired effect of disorganisation and demoralisation amongst the extremists. We knew that Kanu Sanyal was not likely to be in this area which was, according to our information, under the charge of Jangal Santhal, Abdul Hamid @ Khokon Mazumdar, Babulal Biswakarmakar and a few others, most of whom managed to escape because of some deficiency on the part of one of the four encirclement parties.

13 July 1967 (16.00 hrs. till about 22.00 hrs.): 'Operation Buraganj' as part of the "Operation Crossbow", the second large-scale operation organised in quick succession to previous day's operation. This was originally scheduled for 14th or 15th July but because of some vital information (indicating possible attack on a nearby police camp) received around 14.00 hrs. of 13th, it was decided to go ahead though the bulk of the police force and all the senior officers were fatigued due to involvement in 'Operation Hatighisa' on the previous night. There could be no element of surprise or secrecy regarding the movement of the huge police force from

four different directions, the terrain being a flat land on all sides except a fairly dense *sal* jungle on one side. Nevertheless, the sudden and unexpected convergence of police parties in large number was enough to overawe the extremist assembly numbering about a thousand. When they were commanded over microphone to drop down whatever weapons (including bows, arrows etc.) they were carrying, there was total confusion and demoralisation among them and they obeyed the command. There was only one casualty but this time too luck was on the side of the extremist leaders including Kanu Sanyal who managed to escape during the ensuing confusion.

After these two police operations in the heart of their stronghold areas, the top leaders were on the run. However, raids were being carried on at frequent intervals on the basis of specific information (e.g. at Gangaram TE, Naxalbari TE, Maniram anchal, Merryview TE, Dara Baksh, Subal Bhita, Satbhaiya-Azamabad areas etc.). Many of the leaders of all levels could be arrested but neither Kanu nor Jangal. But luck seemed to be running out for them and we narrowly missed capturing Kanu Sanyal and some other top leaders during our raids in Chhachhalia and Jangal Daura Lines of Azamabad TE and No.9 Bustee of Naxalbari TE during the night of 9-10 Aug. 1967; the leading group along with Kanu Sanyal managed to literally run away under cover of darkness, leaving behind four guns which were seized by us. They were in close enough range of the police party which could shoot them down but the SP ordered that no shots were to be fired as he would like to capture them alive, sooner or later, and that blind firing in darkness could hit innocent villagers.<sup>4</sup>

On 10th Aug. 1967 Jangal Santhal and Babulal Biswakarmakar were arrested during a day time raid (15.30 - 17.30 hrs.) at Hochaimallikjote (PS Naxalbari). Another leader Kamakshya Banerjee was arrested during a raid at Girijote (PS Naxalbari) on 14-15.9.67 night. By the end of July 1967, the Naxalbari movement had virtually collapsed. During the following months, most of the other leaders were either arrested or had left the district; some even surrendered to police or in court.

But the prize catch, namely, Kanu Sanyal continued to elude the police net, perhaps by his remaining outside Darjeeling district. The police also had so many other preoccupations meanwhile to divert their attention - dismissal of the UF Govt. and promulgation of President's Rule (21 Nov. 1967), series of protest bandhs, strikes and agitations of various kinds as a sequel to the dismissal of the UF Government.



Nearly 10 months rolled by and from 4th-5th. October, 1968, Sikkim as well as the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri experienced unprecedented devastation by landslides and floods. It took several months for a semblance of normalcy to be restored. As it happens on such occasions, the district administration, especially the police had to be on their toes to attend to rescue and relief operations not only in Darjeeling district but also in neighbouring Jalpaiguri district, large parts of which were under water for several days. And there were the inevitable visits on such occasions by VIPs including the Prime Minister.

So Kanu Sanyal receded to the background, almost! While camping again at Siliguri from 28 Oct. 1968, the SP received information about Kanu Sanyal having returned to the district. His earlier hunch proved correct, when a couple of months ago he quietly instructed his officers not to hold any further raids against the extremists without his prior clearance. One of the objectives behind this directive was to create a sense of 'security' amongst them, besides preventing unnecessary harassment to villagers during the sowing season starting from July.

While on an inspection visit to Bagdogra Investigation Centre on 30th Oct. 1968, the SP received an information, for which he had been waiting for long. He intensively interviewed his officer who brought the information about Kanu being in a certain village called Birsinghjote (PS Phansidewa). To be doubly sure, the SP also interviewed at Siliguri the source who supplied the information and it appeared credible.

By this time, most of the police camps were closed and the outside forces (one Siliguri-based BSF Company and Salua-based EFR) were returned to their parent units. A plan of operation was drawn up the same evening with whatever residual force was available in and around Siliguri and Bagdogra. Three parties were formed: one each under the SDPO and the Circle Inspector for encirclement of the village and one party under the SP for conducting the actual raid in the village. Each party was briefed about its tasks, on the basis of sketch maps drawn up earlier by the SP with the help of the agent-dealing officer and the source/agent. All the three parties marched off in single-file on foot from Bagdogra Investigation Centre around the midnight of 30-31 Oct., reaching the village around 01.00 hrs., in complete silence and without using any torch-light. After reaching the vicinity of the village, the encirclement was organised at a distance

of about 300 yards from the village, so that the village dogs could not pick up the scent of the police party and start barking - this happened on a couple of occasions in the past!

The encirclement was completed by about 02.00 hrs. of 31.10.68. To prevent recurrence of the mistakes during the Hatighisa and Buraganj operations, the SP himself went round the entire cordon quietly, literally from man-to-man, to satisfy himself that there were no uncovered gaps. Then everybody was asked to squat on the ground for a little rest (but not a nap!) from 03.00 hrs. to 04.00 hrs., then stand up facing the village at the blowing of whistles by the SP, followed by the SDPO and the Inspector respectively with the break of dawn. All this was accomplished with absolute precision. (The SP had instructed the force through their respective leaders during briefing that the actual raiding party into the village will be led by the SP himself and that no one, in any of the three parties, will open fire under any circumstances unless ordered to do so by the SP).

Then the raiding party (equipped with a hand-held portable microphone) with the SP at the front advanced towards the village but stopped at a distance of about 50 yards when the SP started making the following announcement: "Dear residents of Birsinghjote village, we policemen from Darjeeling district have completely surrounded your village and you can see it for yourself. Please do not feel afraid or panicky. I as the SP of the District Police assure all of you that no harm will be caused to you. We have come here in search of a few persons who are wanted in some cases. After arresting only these persons, we will go back without causing any harm to you. Some of us will now enter into your village and search some houses to look for these few wanted persons. If such persons or any one of you do not resort to resistance or any other form of violence, no force will be used by us and no harm will be caused to any person including the wanted persons. So please remain calm and co-operate with us. We now request you to stay in your respective houses, with the head of the family standing in front his house."

The SP repeated such message from all four sides of the village, made sure that it had reached the villagers and that they did not appear to be unduly panicky. He then asked the encirclement parties to close in within about 25 yards of the village and stay put there.

He then entered with his small party, mostly composed of some officers besides some armed Constables/Naiks/Head Constables. Within less than an hour, Kanu Sanyal and Keshab Sarkar (another

top-ranking extremist leader) were virtually woken up by the raiding party inside a corner room (somewhat like a cow-shed) of a mud hut. The SP reached the spot within a couple of seconds, looked at a totally surprised and shaken Kanu Sanyal. On seeing the SP standing before him, Kanu's sense of relief was too apparent to be missed by any one and he asked the SP "You have come yourself?" The SP responded by saying "What else could I do and I am glad that our long wait is over now" and then squatted on the ground nearby with a mixture of relief and exhaustion. Thus ended the last chapter of the Naxalbari episode. That is what we thought at that time, without any premonition that a much more agonising and bloody spell was yet to be unleashed during the next 2-3 years.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. During 1967-68, I was truly ignorant about Mao Tse-tung's "Three Main Rules of Discipline" and "Eight Points for Attention", which stipulated for his PLA: 'Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses', 'Turn in everything captured', 'Speak politely', 'Pay fairly for what you buy', 'Return everything you borrow', 'Pay for anything you damage', 'Do not hit or swear at people', 'Do not damage crops', 'Do not ill-treat captives', 'Do not take liberties with women' and so on. How very valid and valuable these guidelines are even today not only for police officers and men in all States but more so for the Army and the para-military forces all over the country, especially in the insurgency affected J&K and the North-East! I do not have the slightest doubt that observance of these ethical codes of conduct would make a world of difference among the local inhabitants and in the process substantially weaken the base of the terrorists and insurgents.
2. These factors came into being much later, after the Naxalbari episode had totally collapsed and could not be resurrected in this belt even during the 1970-71 peak period of Naxalite activity.
3. Incidentally, this was precisely one of the major criticisms of Charu Majumdar and the CPI-ML by the Chinese leaders - Chou-en-lai and Kang-Sheng, vide Statements Police Interrogation reports) of Souren Bose. But when the same points were clearly emphasised by the SP, Darjeeling to Kanu Sanyal on 18 May 1967 and to Charu Majumdar on 16 July 1967 at Sukna and Siliguri respectively, this was treated in a cavalier fashion. Perhaps it was taken as a 'policeman's viewpoint' and as such not deserving careful consideration, vide SP, Darjeeling's Note to the Cabinet Committee.

4. Souren Bose's book *Charu Majumdarer Katha* (1989/reprint March, 2000), p.117 refers to this incident when Kanu along with Kadam Mallick, Khudan Mallick, Khokon Mazumdar just managed to escape and that soon thereafter Kanu sent an SOS to Charubabu 'to arrange for their urgent evacuation as no area was any longer safe for them, otherwise there were chances of their being killed'. And they were removed from the area on 28 Aug. 1967. (Souren Bose's, book, op.cit., p.117



PART-II  
NAXALITE ACTIVITIES IN WEST BENGAL AND  
OTHER PARTS OF INDIA, WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO CALCUTTA AND ITS  
SUBURBS (1969-1972)



▲ Sushital Roy Choudhury

▼ Santu Santhal

▼ Now



● Jangal Santhal  
(arrested on 11/08/1967)





▲ Charu Majumdar

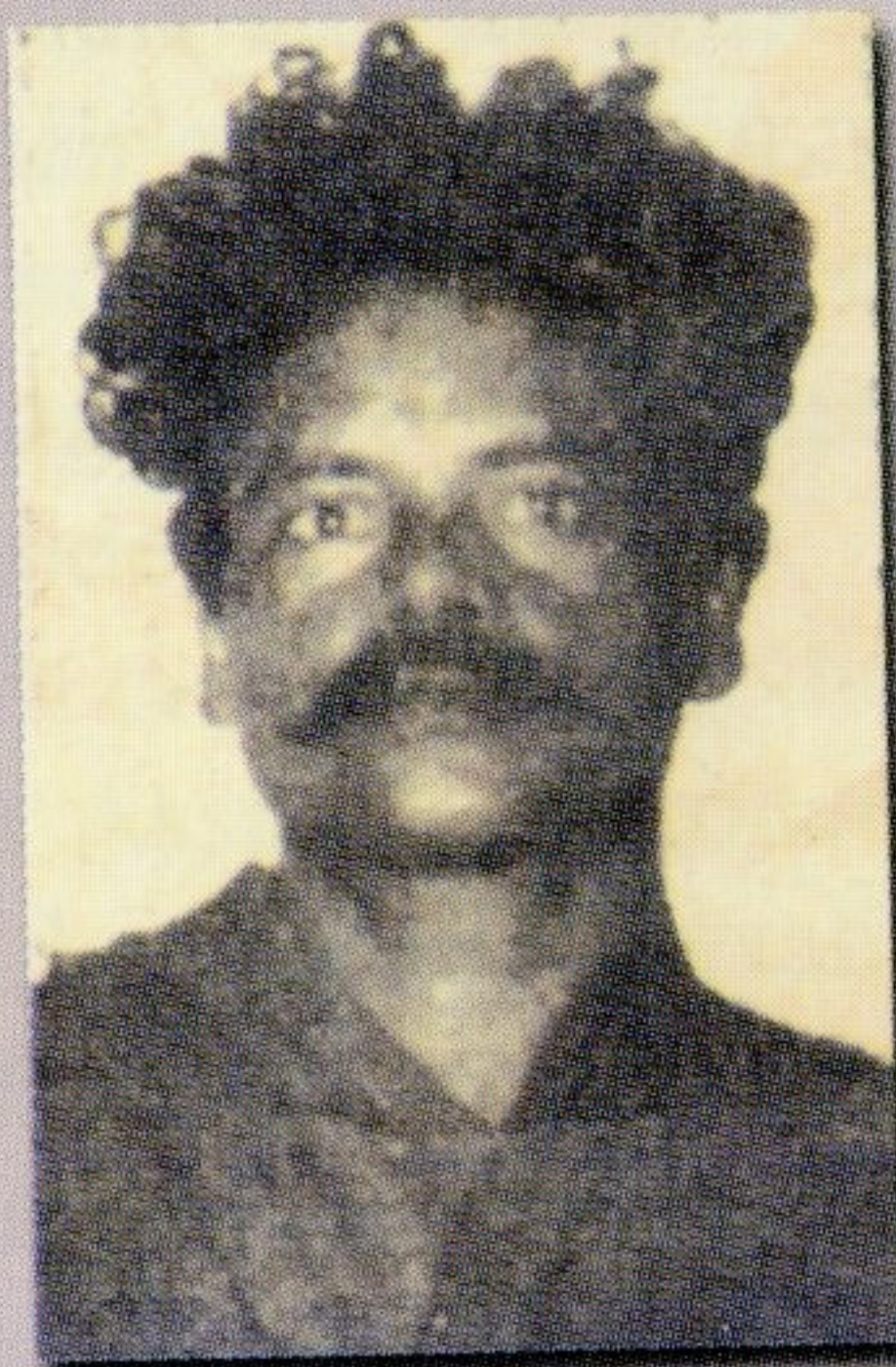
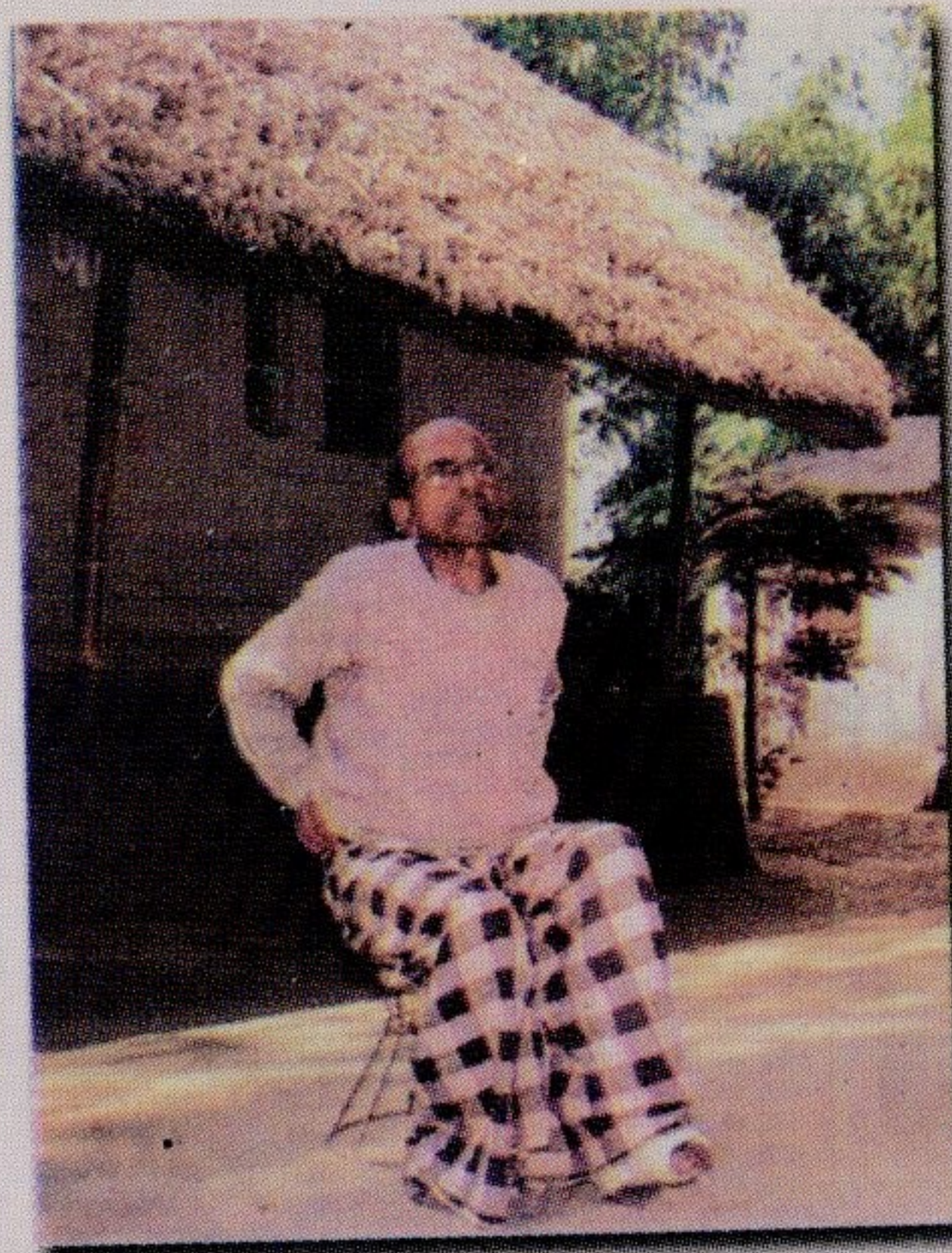
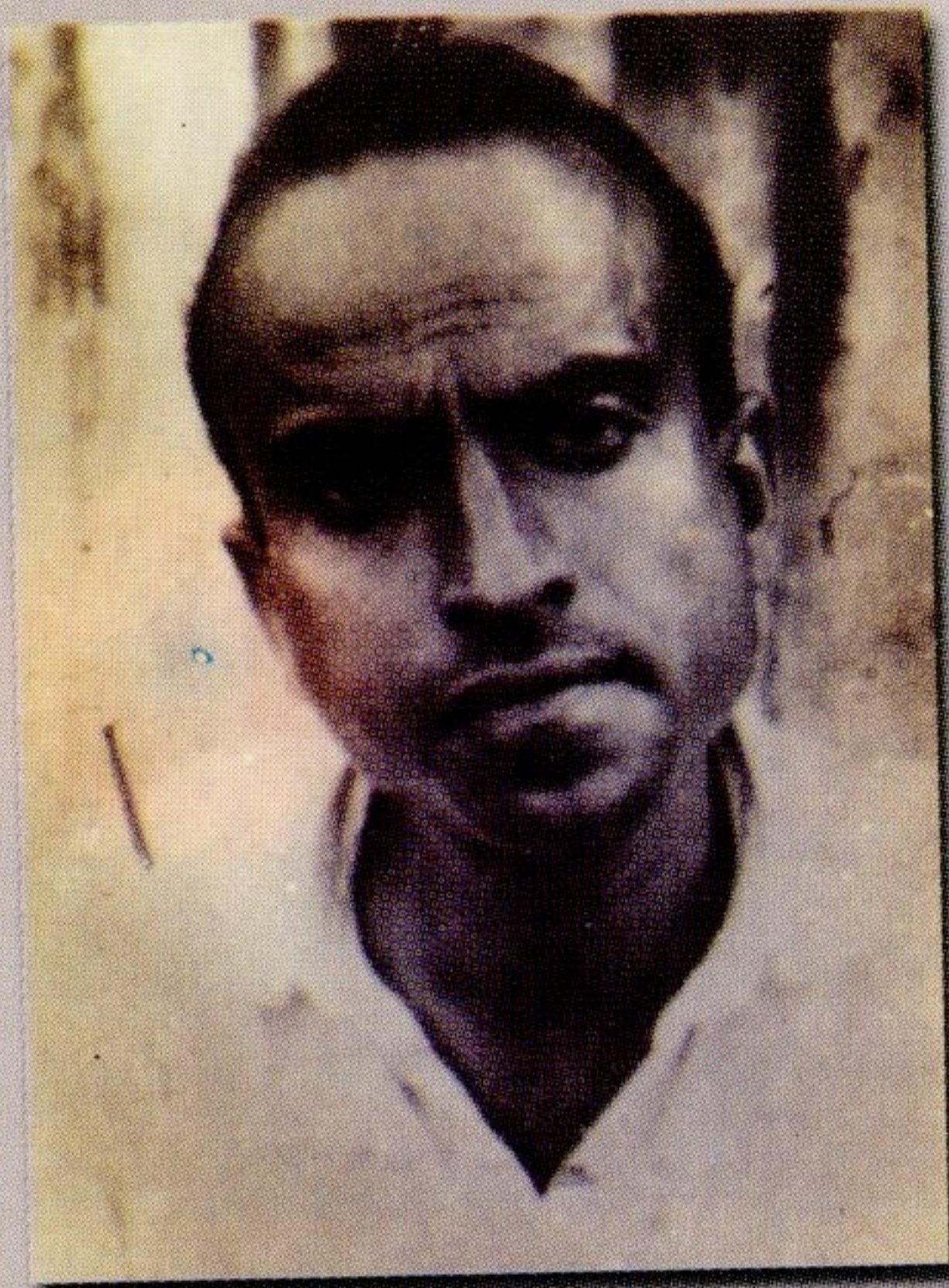


▲ Sushital Roy Choudhury

▼ Then

Kanu Sanyal

▼ Now



◀ Jangal Santhal  
(arrested on 10.08.1967)



### CHAPTER 3

## **'Peasant Revolutionaries' To 'Urban Guerrillas' - Mao Tse-tung to Che Guevera?**

**Excerpts from an assessment report of the DIG, Intelligence Branch, West Bengal dt. 6.3.1970**

Subject: An assessment of the situation arising out of the Naxalite activities in West Bengal

In the first week of November 1969, we made an assessment of the Naxalite situation in West Bengal...It is time, four months later, that we reassessed the situation.

2. Our conclusions were :

- (i) The Naxalite elements in the Urban areas would increase in number and influence.
- (ii) The urban cadres would provide the leadership for Krishi Biplab in the agrarian pockets detailed in the previous assessment. But as Krishi Biplab would be thwarted by the then vigorous land policy (of the Left parties), the activities in the rural bases would develop on terroristic lines.
- (iii) We also concluded that there would probably be a link up between the anti-socials and the frustrated Naxalite elements which might raise their activities to a more intense pitch.
- (iv) We concluded that some arms were coming to the Naxalite elements in West Bengal. There was also a financial pipe-line to this group from outside.
- (v) We concluded that in our picture of the Eastern Region, there was a gap so far as Assam was concerned, where very little light was thrown on the probable Naxalite activities.

3. We would like to point out that our conclusions have been justified by subsequent facts. In Calcutta and the suburbs, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the Naxalite activities have been stepped up. Today it is true their numerical strength is not seen in the street demonstrations. Since our last assessment, the CPI(ML) have



developed their secret organisation in Calcutta with more elaboration. Although no repressive measures are adopted against them in the urban areas, the CPI(ML) constantly insist on secret underground work. That is why the recent demonstrations are not indicative of their actual strength. There is, however, no doubt that the CPI(ML) organisation in the urban area have increased in strength.... Qualitatively, as predicted before, the CPI(ML) is swinging over the terroristic lines. Just as in the rural areas they organised themselves in squads (in "dalams" in Andhra Pradesh), similarly, in urban areas also they organised themselves in small, determined and effective squads. This is evidenced in the recent students' clash between the Presidency College Naxalites and the BPSF(R) students of the University. Further, attacks on 9 or 10 cinema houses on 3.3.70 were also committed by small batches simultaneously.

4. This is to be contrasted with their lack of progress in the rural areas. In Gopiballavpur they are, at the moment, inactive. In Debra and Kharagpur Local (also in Midnapore district), the activities are on terroristic lines but less intense than before. In Purulia early arrest of the Naxalite leaders before the harvest set back their movement considerably. In the areas on the border of Birbhum and Santal Parganas they have not been able to make any mark. In South 24-Parganas one or two pockets of the Naxalite elements have come to our notice. But they have not yet been able to organise any action there. That is probably due to two reasons - first the local cadres are still in favour of mass rather than terroristic actions; secondly, in the South 24- Parganas, a Jotedar can give as much as he can take; a Naxalite is in as much a danger from the Jotedar as the latter is from Naxalite terrorism. In Nadia, although we had apprehended some activity, there was practically none. In Naxalbari itself (Darjeeling district) there have been, in the last three months only 3 murders and one murderous assault. Here also our prediction has proved right. The Krishi Biplab in the rural areas has made no progress; rather the cadres have had to beat a retreat. At this moment, we have observed them indulging in self-criticism, which usually is a sign of failure.

5. However, secret activities in the rural areas are getting sharper; there is constant insistence on underground. Recent documents which have fallen in our hands show the Naxalite cadres organising themselves into small squads varying in strength from 2 to 4 in Gopiballavpur, Bahargara, and Debra areas.... There are some

indications of the movement spreading from Debra to Kharagpur Local and from Gopiballavpur to Datan and Nayagram (also in Midnapore district). These are, however, no signs of progress but rather may indicate that the cadres under police pressure have had to find shelter elsewhere where their secret activities have come to our notice.

6. Thus there is, however, no doubt that the CPI(ML) has definitely, for the time being, given up the Maoist line and have concentrated on the Guevara line. Asit Sen's criticism of Charu Majumdar appears now to be perfectly valid. There is no attempt in the rural areas of greater and wider politicalisation. .... This failure in the country-side of the CPI (ML) in the North (including Jalpaiguri) and in the South (Bengal) must be attributed to the land policy followed by other left parties. If the CPI(M), CPI, SUC and RSP seize land by force, what can the CPI(ML) cadres do but to plan murders of jotedars? But such murders also are not easy. Again when the rural poor hope to seize land by force along the lines of other political parties, why should they fall for the political line of Charu Majumdar? That is why in the rural areas, Naxalite politicalisation has not progressed and consequently secret terroristic thinking has hardened.

7. Financially, however, the CPI(ML) seems to be better off. Early in 1969, we have had cases of Naxalite student cadres based in villages for Krishi Biplab having to pass their days even on the verge of starvation. Now apparently quite a number of city Naxalite cadres are maintaining themselves under-ground in the rural bases. There is another report to indicate that the personal allowance of Charu Majumdar and other leaders are not much less than the personal allowance of the top leadership of the CPI(M), which is a much bigger party. It also seems that recently Asim Chatterji of the Presidency Consolidation Group came to Calcutta and was able to collect Rs. 8000/- in no time. Charu Majumdar has recently asked the party to collect Rs. 200,000/- before May. This target may have been set very high; yet it shows the party's fiscal self-confidence. This financial improvement has to be attributed to three factors:

- (i) The increased number of Naxalite cadres in the urban areas;
- (ii) The possibility of the foreign pipe-line of funds functioning better; and
- (iii) Another prediction of ours has proved correct through the link up of the CPI (ML) with anti-social elements, who have committed dacoities, some of which loot might have gone to the party cadres.

8. We made one mistake in our assessment in November, 1969: we thought there would be a link up between the cadres of Hena Ganguli (formerly of the extremist RCPI group of Pannalal Dasgupta) and the Naxalites, we did not have Ananta Singh in mind. But recent investigation has shown that Ananta Singh, a veteran terrorist turned a veteran criminal, was able to organise, under his leadership, a Naxalite Activist Group called M.M.G. (Men, Money and Guns). These cadres were committing big dacoities and as stated above some of the cash might well have gone to the rural bases.

9. Besides, the literature published by the party is flourishing. There is clearly an extension of readership.

10. We have not had any further information about the arms flow into the Naxalite hands since what we had received before the last assessment. It does not seem that Kanu Sanyal and his lieutenants who had been commuting between Eastern Nepal and Naxalbari in the hope of collecting arms, have been very successful. On the other hand, our belief that the Naxalites had a secret cache of arms have been proved by the activities of the M.M.G., who used sophisticated small arms. In the rural areas, the CPI(ML) have, since our last assessment, been able to collect some shot-guns. They also may have in the urban areas a few country-made pipe-guns. The weakly held West Bengal-East Pakistan border still continues to worry us as a probable channel for supply of arms. There was a (Govt. of India's Intelligence) Bureau report on this point earlier and gun-running across this border appears to be so easy. We ourselves had, in April 1969, an unconfirmed report of some Chinese arms coming into the hands of the Bhashani group (extremist communal group in East Pakistan) for eventual transfer to Naxalites in West Bengal.

11. This trend towards acts of near-terrorism is rendered inevitable by the developing extreme left disintegration. We have noted in our previous assessment that the CPI(ML) was the dominant group on the extremist left. It still continues to be so. But while the smaller groups like Commune Group, Lokayan Group, Bolshevik Core, Biplabi Sanjog Sangstha, Bhatti, Kasti Pathar have declined in activity and influence, the Lal Jhanda Group led by Phani Bagchi and Debu Ghosal has certainly increased considerably in strength. Dakshin Desh Group is still a significant factor and is still sitting on the fence. In the CPI(ML) itself the split between the activists of the Presidency College Consolidation Group (of Asim Chatterjee) and the Deshabrati Group (in the absence of a better term) is wider than before. The

ideological gap between the Lal Jhanda Group and the CPI (ML) is also more considerable than before. That is why the CPI (ML) is heading towards terrorism.... There is also a 'back to the wall' attitude in some of the slogans of the CPI (ML) caused probably by the failure of Krishi Biplab. For the last few months the CPI (ML) have been considering itself as a wing of the C.C.P. (Chinese Communist Party). Chairman Mao, they say, is their Chairman - an attempt, no doubt, to enthuse the vacillating cadres by bringing them under the powerful wings of Maoism.

12. This trend of terrorism will be intensified in the near future, particularly in the countryside from the month of April onwards. For in the rural areas the forward land policy of the left parties in West Bengal would soon receive a check. Some land has been seized by force; the total quantum, however, happens to be less than 3% of the total arable area in West Bengal and its distribution has been causing great difficulties. Again paddy has been harvested by force but here also distribution is not easy. At any rate, the progress in the land distribution should have been followed up by the Government by either proper organisation of credit, seeds, bullocks and ploughs, which has not been done. The armoured thrust has gone far but the fuel and other supplies have not yet caught up. The Jotedar in the rural areas still wields influence and power. He is likely not to co-operate with the rural poor by offering the usual credit and the loan of agricultural implements. This would not only cause frustrations but provide new issues of class hatred. Other left parties would probably have solved the problem by mass pressure on the rural rich. But owing to the present disunited condition of the United Front, this mass pressure will not be possible; if tried, it will develop into inter-party clashes.

13. The CPI(ML) may get a golden opportunity of mass politicalisation if the United Front falls causing the CPI (M) to go on the path of violent agitation. It will then be difficult to distinguish between their line of action and the line of action of the Naxalites. We have not the slightest doubt that the CPI(ML) leadership will convert that situation to their greatest advantage. In fact, we have already been receiving intelligence to that effect.

14. Our present plan against this terroristic party should be clear. The Special Branch and the Suburban DIBs [District Intelligence Branches] will have to step up their activities and intelligence gathering against the CPI(ML) in Calcutta and in the Suburbs. There are a



number of criminal cases committed by the CPI(ML) cadres. Arrests should be made without delay in these cases and the very objectionable to be put out of the harm's way. But there is no doubt that we want another Preventive Detention Act; if necessary an Ordinance should be made for immediate rounding up of the important cadres of the CPI(ML) which can easily subdue them for some time to time. Without such essential powers, the Police, particularly in the urban areas, cannot act effectively against the CPI(ML). We can clearly foresee the shape of things to come. Unless these powers are obtained for the enforcement of law and order, no one should in future hold us responsible for the increasingly disturbing situation which is likely to develop. Of course, the permanent solution is outside the orbit of the Police. We stated in our previous assessment that owing to the failure of the Government to chalk out any economic programme, and owing to lack of economic growth, urban unemployment will vastly increase adding to the ranks of the CPI(ML). This has proved true. There is yet time for the Government to act and provide increased employment.

Sd/- R. K. Gupta

6.3.70

Deputy Inspector General of Police  
Intelligence Branch, West Bengal

**Excerpts from some Naxalite assessment reports of the Deputy Commissioner, Special Branch, Calcutta**

DC, SB report dated 13.3.1970 to DIG, IB, West Bengal :

In view of the increasing violent activities of the Naxalites in Calcutta, particularly their violent attacks on some cinema houses, in the Presidency College and University areas on 24.2.70 and at the crossing of Colootolla Street and Chittaranjan Avenue on 7.3.70, it was decided in a conference with CP, Jt. CP, divisional DCs and others on 8.3.70 that vigorous drives should be organised to arrest as many of the Naxalites as possible in connection with specific cases. Further discussions were held with them on 9.3.70, with the Dy. CM on 9.3.70 and 11.3.70 and also with the Home Secretary on 11.3.70.

2. In course of such discussions everybody agreed that the anti-social and criminal activities of the Naxalites, particularly of the CPI(ML), should be curbed immediately by organising systematic

raids against them in the city of Calcutta and also in certain areas of West Bengal.

3. We have accordingly, started our operations in the city of Calcutta from the midnight of 9.3.70. In the first series of concerted raids on 9.3.70 midnight, we have arrested twenty known Naxalites from various parts. Thereafter, the raids are continuing in isolated manner (based, however, on information) through three different teams that we have deployed for this purpose.

Sd/- A. P. Mukherjee

13.03.70

Dy. Commissioner of Police  
Special Branch, Calcutta

Copy to:

1. Shri P. K. Sen, IP, JP  
Commissioner of Police, Calcutta

**DC, SB report dt. 20.4.1970 to Commissioner of Police, Calcutta**

Since March this year we notice a considerable stepping up of activities by the Naxalites in Calcutta. Thus, as against 3 cases each of violent activities in January and February 1970, as many as 12 took place in March 1970. The trend towards increasing violence by this group continues in April as well. Before analysing the possible reasons for this increased activity on the part of the Naxalites in Calcutta, it may be mentioned here that in the first week of March we had decided upon the arrest of known Naxalites in specific cases of violence; accordingly our first raids in about 25 places were organised in the early hours of 10.03.70. Since then we have kept up the pressure and regular raids have been organised in different parts of the city.

- (i) Infiltration and smuggling of arms from across our border
- (ii) Collection of arms and explosives from internal sources,
- (iii) Intensification of pro-China and anti-India posture of CPI (ML), amounting to subversion and fifth column activities,
- (iv) Murder plans being openly incited, abetted and executed

3. Whatever may be the socio-economic and political factors responsible for this spate of extremist and adventurist activities of a section of the youth, the fact remains that the political leaders, educationists and others charged with the responsibility of facing

this challenge have so far not been able to contain it. This has resulted in a great measure of law and order problems which we are called upon to tackle almost single-handed. We would continue to discharge our duties within the ambits of the existing laws of our country. But we should, at the same time, draw the attention of the Government to the fact that this is an extra-ordinary situation, the solution of which does not lie only in the enforcement of the ordinary laws of the country. I will discuss subsequently our current experiences in this regard.

4. The possible reasons for the spurt in CPI(ML) activities in Calcutta may be listed thus :

- (i) Set-back in the rural belt and consequent frustration in the ranks
- (ii) Doubt as to the feasibility of recruiting a sufficient number of students and youth cadres from Calcutta for their induction into rural areas during the ensuing summer vacation. The CPI (ML) leadership has been exhorting the students and youths in Calcutta for quite some time to go to the villages to undertake the politicalization of peasants during the Summer vacation but it was not receiving adequate response. This might have prompted the leadership to organise some violent actions in the city and its suburbs which will result in repressive actions by the police, and this may ultimately eject the relatively indifferent and vacillating cadres out of the urban belt.
- (iii) It might be a diversionary tactics to drain the resources of the police out of the rural areas where the pressure is possibly too much for them to operate with relative ease.
- (iv) Towards the end of the UF rule when the fall of the Government was imminent and the possibility of a mini-Front Government excluding the CPI(M) was being talked about, the CPI(ML) leadership presumed that this will lead to a mass movement by the CPI(M) in course of which the CPI(ML) cadres will infiltrate into the movement and resort to large-scale violence and sabotage. There was considerable preparation on the part of the CPI(ML) towards this direction but this did not come to anything when the CPI(M) ultimately chalked out an entirely different line after the fall of the UF Government. Having once raised the tempo for militant action backed by some material preparations, the rank and file of the CPI(ML) were obviously restive and needed some outlet.
- (v) Current series of violence by the CPI (ML) may as well be for

the purpose of raising the tempo for the 22nd April which is Lenin's birthday as well as the Foundation Day of the CPI(ML).

5. It has been our endeavour since 1969 to isolate the CPI(ML) from the other Naxalites and certain measure of success has already been achieved in this regard. We propose to continue this strategy. There would be about a thousand CPI(ML) members in Calcutta. Quite a substantial part of it has yet remained unmarked and untraced but we hope to be able to identify them in the near future. Even then we will be left with a large number of unmarked and unidentifiable sympathisers, particularly amongst the students and other teen-agers, who would continue to give us trouble.

6. As you are aware, we are organising systematic raids and combing operations in different parts of Calcutta since 9.3.70. In addition we have also succeeded in arresting some CPI (ML) activists by plain-clothes raiding parties while the former came out on the streets in groups on several occasions for committing acts of violence. The total number of persons arrested thus can be seen in Appendix -I (deleted). We have, however, been greatly handicapped by the leniency displayed by some of the Magistrates, particularly by the Addl. Chief Presidency Magistrate, as a result of which approximately 80% have been released by the Courts on bail (out of which approximately 12% were bailed out on the very first day of their production in Courts). Since very long dates have been given by the Courts for their next appearance, most of these persons have gone underground but continue to swell the ranks of the mischief-makers.

7. We had earlier approached Government for certain steps against the mouthpieces of the CPI(ML) *Deshabrati* in Bengali, *Liberation* in English, *Lok Yudh* in Hindi and *Awami Jung* in Urdu -but we are yet to be favoured with a firm decision on this subject. In view of the mounting anti-national and illegal writings and exhortations in these publications, this subject should attract the immediate attention of the authorities concerned.

8. The current activities of the CPI(ML) being politico-criminal and anti-social in nature, it was felt necessary to integrate the activities of the Special Branch, the Detective Department and the local PSs in dealing with this menace. This has since been organised and special teams have been raised for Jorasanko, Muchipara, Amherst Street and Bowbazar Police Stations; at each of these PSs, there would be an integrated intelligence unit and a raiding unit who will pinpoint the local mischief-makers and arrest them. If this experiment proves



useful, we may introduce it in some more PSs in Calcutta. This, however, will be in addition to the usual machineries of the SB, DD and the local police. We have also instructed the O/Cs of PSs as also the SB officers to arrange for photographing and fingerprinting of all arrested Naxalites. This will help us in building up our records which were found to be deficient in these two vital respects.

9. In view of the facts and circumstances stated above, we can hardly make any preventive arrest of the CPI (ML) cadres so as to nullify the possibility of violent group actions in different parts of the city by unmarked cadres. This danger will continue to haunt us for sometime to come till we are equipped with adequate legal powers. The dangers which we apprehend in this regard have been intimated from time to time to all concerned. The overall aims and objectives of the CPI (ML) being widely known, the smaller isolated groups can act of their own without there being any centrally chalked out plan of every group action. This is bound to leave considerable intelligence gap which cannot be plugged in respect of each and every group in the city. Coupled with this, the activities of Ananta Singh's group who are still at large will continue to cause serious anxiety as they are in possession of a cache of arms and explosives including semi-automatic fire-arms and military type of grenades.

Sd/- A. P. Mukherjee

20.04.70

Dy. Commissioner of Police  
Special Branch, Calcutta

CC:

1. Shri M. M. Basu, ICS  
Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal
2. Shri S. B. Ray, IAS  
Secretary, Government of West Bengal,  
Home Department, Calcutta
3. Shri R. K. Gupta, IP  
Dy. Inspector General of Police  
Intelligence Branch, West Bengal
4. Shri R. K. Mukherjee  
Dy. Director, Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (MHA)  
Government of India, Calcutta.

DC, SB Note dated 28.4.70 to Shri M. M. Basu, ICS (Advisor to the Governor, Home Dept., Govt. of West Bengal), as desired by

him, with copies to the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta (Shri P. K. Sen, IP, JP) /DIG, IB, West Bengal (Shri R. K. Gupta, IP):

It is noticed that anti-social elements and Naxalites are joining hands in committing acts of violence. Moreover, students and youths without any past record of criminal or anti-social activity are also participating in large numbers in the current Naxalite outrage. It was considered necessary that the *thana* officers should feel as much involved as the officers of the intelligence organisation for effectively dealing with this situation. With this end in view, combined teams were formed on an experimental basis in the following four police stations:

Amherst Street Police Station

Muchipara Police Station

Jorasanko Police Station and

Bowbazar Police Station

This practically covers the Calcutta University and Presidency College areas. We have set up one intelligence cell and one raiding party in each of these police stations under the direct supervision of the O/C of the PS. Since 27.4.70, three more police stations (Ballygunge, Tollygunge and Bhowanipore PSs) have been brought under this scheme. By the first week of May, we hope to be able to organise such teams in about 10 more police stations of Calcutta. It is expected that the combined efforts of the *thana* officers and the Special Branch staff would be able to ferret out as many of the Naxalite activists in the city as possible.

2. It is noticed that many peace-loving citizens of Calcutta cannot muster enough courage to help the police with information in tracking down the miscreants since they feel that the police will not be able to hold on to these miscreants for any length of time in the absence of any stringent legal provision and thereafter they will mount attack on persons whom they suspect to have cooperated with the police. This fear is largely borne out by the following facts: since early March till 26.04.70, the police in Calcutta arrested 114 Naxalite activists, out of which 90 have been bailed out by the Courts, 8 are in judicial custody and 16 are in police custody.

DC, SB report to Commissioner of Police, Calcutta dt. 23 June 1970:

Though some schools in Calcutta have already reopened after the summer vacation, the remaining schools and colleges will do so

between the last week of this month and the first week of July. On the basis of available information, the following assessment is given for the months of July and August:

(i) Driven to desperation as a result of continuous police pressure, the CPI(ML) leadership will not only continue attacks on policemen but will try to intensify the same. Since this can be done easily through some anti-social or criminal elements, there may not be much difficulty in sustaining this killing programme in a city like Calcutta. However, effective police actions may have a sobering effect on this menace. For this a greater determination and firmness on the part of the Administration is called for but this is unfortunately not much in evidence in spite of the fact that three policemen have already been killed by the Naxalite lumps.

(ii) The authorities of the educational institutions will find it increasingly difficult to maintain a peaceful academic climate. Sporadic troubles would continue to be engineered by the CPI (ML) in different educational institutions on some pretext or other. It is not known to us if they, at the instance or under the aegis of the Government, have chalked out a common policy of action by now to meet this threat. It may be too late to do so after all the schools and colleges reopen. It is necessary that the police is also kept informed of their policy of action. It would be better still if the appropriate authorities consult the police in advance in formulating their policy.

(iii) During the past couple of months we have arrested a large number of Naxalite activists including many students and some teachers. We have also organised raids in some student hostels on the basis of specific information that these hostels were being misused for criminal activities. As a matter of fact we recovered grenades, bombs and other incriminating materials from most of these hostels. It can be said with a fair degree of certainty that the Naxalite elements and their sympathisers will try to make an issue of these actions against students and their hostels soon after the reopening of the schools and colleges. Unless the Administration and educational authorities are prepared to face it firmly and with due determination, it will mean the end of police operations against such elements and a great moral booster for the future criminal activities of the CPI (ML) cadres in Calcutta. Here also the Government should analyse the whole problem and formulate its policy in advance so that there is no hesitation or operational uncertainty when troubles are engineered

in quick succession by the interested quarters with the reopening of the educational institutions.

(iv) The Naxalite elements and their patrons have already started a whispering campaign that the police is torturing the arrested CPI (ML) cadres. This is being done deliberately and maliciously just to put the police on the defensive and thereby reverse the demoralising effects of police operations on CPI(ML) cadres and sympathisers. Both IB and SB have come across CPI(ML) directives that whoever comes out on bail after being arrested by the police should spread stories of atrocities by police while he was in custody. So far we have treated them more decently than they deserve but some journalists seem to have fallen a prey to the mischievous CPI (ML) propaganda of police atrocities. Nothing seems to have been done by the publicity machinery of our Government to counter such moves as also to focus public attention in a planned and systematic manner on the anti-national, criminal and anti-social activities of the CPI (ML). I would suggest that a special cell consisting of police and publicity officers should be set up immediately for this purpose.

(v) Hauling down of National Flag and/or hoisting of red flags by such elements will be intensified in educational institutions, mills and factories. There should be a standing instruction to the authorities concerned by the appropriate Departments of the Government as to what immediate steps they should take: viz. immediately haul down the red flag, rehoist the National Flag and report the names of miscreants to the police; dereliction of duty in this regard should be viewed with due seriousness by the Government and appropriate actions taken against the defaulters.

(vi) Efforts would be made by CPI(ML) units to extort money from some industrialists and businessmen under threat of dire consequences. Though no such instance, excepting one as indicated below, of extortion has come to our notice so far, it is quite likely that many of these threatened persons may not consider it prudent to bring the matter to the notice of the police but come to terms with the Naxalites surreptitiously. We have recently come across an instance of threat over telephone to a businessman at Ballygunge Park Road and the matter is being investigated; on preliminary scrutiny it appears to be the work of a known local bully whose activities are being watched.

(vii) There may be attempts on the lives of some industrialists and businessmen who are considered oppressive and reactionary by the CPI(ML).



2. You may like to take up appropriate portions of the above matter with the Government for such action as is considered necessary.

**D.O. letter No. 3705/C dated June 24, 1970 of Shri P.K.Sen, Commissioner of Police, Calcutta to Shri B.R.Gupta, IAS, Home Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal:**

Kindly refer to the note on Naxalite activities in Calcutta submitted by DCSB - vide his letter no. SS/F279/69-II dated 23rd June 1970, a copy of which has already been sent to you.

2. We have discussed the Naxalite problems several times but no firm policy decision has yet been issued by Government indicating the guideline. I think such a guideline is necessary.

3. The threat on the educational institutions after the schools and colleges reopen is real and I agree with DCSB that a common policy of action as to how to meet this threat should be chalked out in advance. This matter should immediately be taken up with the Education Department.

4. There is complete absence of publicity and propaganda machinery to counteract Naxalite propaganda. The suggestion of DCSB in setting up a special cell consisting of police and publicity officers should be given immediate consideration.

5. Pulling down the National Flags or hoisting of red ensigns by the Naxalite elements in educational institutions has, of late, become frequent. This is likely to increase after the schools and colleges reopen. The educational institutions must be made to discharge their responsibilities, of course, under adequate police protection, whenever necessary. This task must not be left on the police alone and thus absolve the institutions concerned of their responsibility.

**Instances of resistance to Naxalite 'Actions' in educational institutions in Calcutta during July 1970:**

1. When 16-17 Naxalites entered the Town School (Shyampukur PS) on 2.7.1970 at about 12.15 PM, ransacked the office of the Headmaster and damaged photos of national leaders, some teachers and students tried to resist the attack, when the miscreants started hurling bombs and fled away, vide Shyampukur PS case no. 156 dt. 2.7.70 u/s 148/149/307/332 IPC and 3&5 Explosive Substances Act.
2. 7-8 Naxalite youths entered into Girindra Balika Vidyalaya (170, B.B.Ganguly St., PS Muchipara) at about 7.30 AM on 4.7.70,

ransacked the office of the Head Mistress, entered into Examination halls and tore off answer scripts. When some students tried to resist, the miscreants brandished daggers and asked the students to leave the school. Ultimately the Examination had to be postponed.

3. Around 12.10 pm on 4.7.70, about 4-5 Naxalite youths entered the Sree Gopal Vidyamandir at 11, Gopal Chatterji Road, ransacked the office of the Headmaster, smashed the photos of some national leaders and hoisted a red flag. The students organised themselves and chased away the Naxalites. Police brought down the red flag and recorded Cossipore PS case no.151 dt. 4.7.70 u/ss 147/427 IPC.

4. At about 11.30 AM on 7.7.70 a group of 15 Naxalite youths started hurling crackers at Calcutta Academy (13, Simla Street, PS Jorasanko). The local CPI(M) workers and the students resisted the attack and also caught a student of the school, who was later arrested by the police, vide Jorasanko PS case no. 456 dt. 7.7.70 u/ss 148/149 IPC and 3 & 5 Explosive Substances Act.

5. On 9.7.70 at about 1.20 pm about 6 Naxalite youths ransacked the office of the Vice-Principal of the City College (Main) under Amherst Street PS. One of the miscreants tried to hoist a red flag. This was, however, foiled due to resistance by the BPSF(L) students and the miscreants fled away.

6. On 10.7.70 at about 7 pm, some Naxalites were chased away by CPI(M) workers and the former fled away towards West Bengal Police area from the crossing of Ram Krishna Ghosh Road and Kali Charan Ghosh Road (PS Cossipore) after exploding a few crackers.

7. On 10.7.70 around 11 am about 15 Naxalite youths ransacked the office of Panchkori Radharani Adarsha Vidyalaya at 31B Christopher Road (PS Entally). They set fire to some papers, hoisted a red flag and hurled 3-4 bombs. Some students of the school soon organised themselves, put out the fire and chased away the miscreants after detaining 8 persons who were arrested by police, vide Entally PS case no. 345 dt. 10.7.70 u/ss 148/149/307/427/436/511 IPC and 3 & 5 E.S. Act.

**Socio-economic profiles and other details of arrested Naxalites of West Bengal (800) based on their interrogation reports (1969 - 72):**

1. Age group	Less than 15 years	1
	Between 15 yrs, and 19 yrs	341

	Between 20 yrs. and 25 yrs	320
	Between 26 yrs. and 30 yrs	78
	Between 31 yrs. and above	44
2. Level of education	Drop-outs from schools/colleges...	124
	Read upto Class-X	302
	upto Cl.-XI/HS	139
	Undergraduate	164
	Graduate and above	70
3. Poor Economic status of family/self	Poor	194
	Lower middle class	457
	Upper middle class	140
	Rich	9
4. With criminal/anti-social background (self)		75
5. With physical disabilities		13
6. School/college teachers		7
7. Govt. employees		16
8. Married		27
9. Extent of study of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung:		
(a) Marxism-Leninism :	Very little (127) Good (75)	
(b) Mao-Tse-tung	Very little (160) Good (98)	
10. Employed (219) Unemployed (224)		
11. Likely to give up Naxalite activities		391
12. Appeared to be vacillating (158) /repentant (23) / coerced into Naxalite activity (33)		

[Note: The data in serials 3,9,11 and 12 are based on the interrogating officers' assessment formed during interaction with the arrested persons and as such some subjectivity cannot be ruled out.]

**Extracts from a review report of the Home Ministry, Govt of India on the Naxalite movement during April 1971 to March 1972.**

"During the period April 1971 to March 1972, the Extremist movement in the country passed from a high tide of serious violence and activity in the first few months to a low ebb towards the end of the period. The CP (ML), which had threatened to create 'a mighty storm of revolution' in the country during 1971, suffered a series of reverses and organisational setbacks, particularly in West Bengal, South Bihar, UP and Punjab, with the result that Charu Majumdar was forced to direct the party workers to ensure their personal safety and not to take dogmatically his earlier call to achieve liberation of India by 1975.

"2. The main reasons for the setback to the movement are:

(i) The combined police and army operations in the bordering districts of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from July 1, 1971 to August 15, 1971 not only threw the extremist organisation in the region out of gear but also restored public confidence in the determination and effectiveness of the administration to tackle the extremist menace. It exposed Charu Majumdar's tall claims about the formation of a 'People's Liberation Army'. The sustained police pressure against the Extremists since then in West Bengal and in other parts of the country has driven out the adventurist elements, which had flocked into the Extremist movement.

(ii) The inner-party differences culminating in the formation of a parallel unit of the CP(ML) sapped the party's strength.

(iii) The disillusionment caused among many extremist cadres, particularly the Bengalis, by China's unabashed alignment with the Pak military regime in spite of its ruthless suppression of the national liberation movement in Bangladesh also contributed to a weakening of the extremist movement.

"3. Two graphs of extremist lawlessness for 1971-72 in India and in West Bengal in Appendices-A and B bring out the downward trend of extremist violence since the middle of 1971.

"4. A statement giving the break-up of extremist lawlessness state-wise during the year 1971-72 is given in Appendix-C. Another statement giving a monthwise break-up of different types of incidents is enclosed in Appendix-D. The following salient features emerge from an analysis of the figures:

(i) West Bengal accounted for the largest number of incidents (91%) followed by Bihar (4.3%), Punjab (1.7%) and Andhra Pradesh (1.5%).

(ii) The proportion of heinous offences like murder and dacoity rose during the year under review to 26.6% of the total number of incidents as against 12.9% during the preceding year, whereas petty incidents like attacks on national symbols and hoisting of red flags registered a steep fall from 653 during 1970-71 to 98 during 1971-72.

(iii) Policemen formed an important target of extremist violence and 88 of them were killed during 1971-72, as compared to 75 during 1970-71. Sneak murders of policemen, however, went down during the latter part of the period following strong criticism of this programme and only 2 policemen have been killed in the first quarter of 1972.



"5. However, it is a salient fact that the overall decline in extremist lawlessness in the country has mainly been due to a sharp fall in West Bengal and South Bihar whereas in other parts of the country the decline has not been of the same order as in these States. On the other hand, extremist lawlessness registered an upward trend in Andhra Pradesh due to the activities of a group of Communist Revolutionaries led by Chandra Pulla Reddy and, for a short period in the last quarter of 1971 in UP....

"7. (Inner-party) differences, which first surfaced at the Party Congress in May 1970, went on growing due to policy differences and personality clashes. Charu Majumdar's leadership of the movement came under increasing criticism during the year on the following counts:

(i) Charu Majumdar was trying to don the mantle of an Indian Mao and converting the party into an instrument of self-glorification. He had subverted the functioning of the party organs and disregarded the advice provided by the Chinese Communist Party.

(ii) He was completely ignoring the need for creating bases in the countryside for waging a protracted people's war and was instead encouraging adventurist violence in urban areas by inadequately politicised elements.

(iii) Charu Majumdar was defying Mao's theory that a people's democratic revolution should precede a socialist revolution and trying to intertwine the two unsuccessfully by scorning the role of the national bourgeoisie and the middle peasantry at the present early stage of the revolution.

(iv) Charu Majumdar's view that guerilla struggle was the only form of class struggle was wrong, and it was necessary to coordinate the armed struggle with other forms of struggle. The party should have also organised mass movements on economic and other issues.

(v) The emphasis laid by Charu Majumdar on self-sacrifice (for the sake of implementing his adventurist programme) rather than on self-defence had resulted in the loss of many valuable cadres.

"8. The opposition to Charu Majumdar's policies, led initially in 1970 by the Andhra Party, was spearheaded in 1971 by late Sushital Ray Choudhury of West Bengal, Shiv Kumar Mishra of UP and Satya Narain Singh of Bihar. In May 1971, Asim Chatterjee, a prominent organiser of West Bengal and Bihar areas, also parted company with Charu Majumdar. Besides having other differences, Asim Chatterjee accused Charu Majumdar of indulging in 'mean and vile centrism'

on the Bangladesh issue by not following China's policy of supporting the Yahya regime. The dissidents formalised and split by constituting a new Central Committee in November 1971, electing Satya Narain Singh as the General Secretary, and expelling Charu Majumdar and Suniti Ghosh from the party. This break-away group has since started publishing its own 'Liberation' and 'Deshabrati'. China's disapproval of Charu Majumdar's policies and its implicit support to Satya Narain Singh's group have now become quite clear....

"15. The non-CPI(ML) extremist groups are mostly active in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. In West Bengal, the major non-CPI(ML) groups include the Committee of Communist Revolutionaries, Mukti Yuddha Group and the Maoist Communist Centre. The Committee of Communist Revolutionaries is trying to consolidate the various non-CPI(ML) groups in the country. In Andhra Pradesh, The Revolutionary Communist Committee is quite active, though it is now divided into two factions, one following Nagi Reddy and the other owing allegiance to Chandra Pulla Reddy. The latter group recently stepped up its violent activities in Khammam, Warangal and Karimnagar districts. In Kerala, the various extremist groups are trying to forge unity. In Punjab, the Revolutionary Communist Organising Committee (pro-Nagi Reddy) has set up units in Bhatinda and Ferozepur districts. The party is particularly active among the students and has set up the Punjab Students' Union. In Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and J&K also, there are small extremist groups functioning under different names. There are minor ideological and tactical differences among them, but all these extremist groups accept the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party....

#### Activities in States

"16. In West Bengal, the extremist violence has been considerably contained. The organisational network in the bordering districts of Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore was disrupted as a result of the joint Army-Police action in the month of July-August 1971. However, the pro-Charu faction is currently engaged in reorganising the party apparatus. The CPI(ML) is making special efforts to mobilise the working class and form units in mills and factories. The Charu group is also trying to forge closer links with Mohd. Toha's group in Bangladesh with the prime objective of smuggling arms and ammunitions and acquiring safe hideouts across the border.

"17. The extremist movement in Andhra Pradesh remained subdued despite the sustained efforts made by both the CPI(ML) and the Communist Revolutionaries to regain lost ground. The CPI(ML) in the state is divided into two factions, one led by Intharamana Reddy who supports Charu Majumdar's line, and the other led by Ch. Tejeswara Rao who supports Satya Narain Singh's group. The pro-Charu group plans to intensify the revolutionary struggle in Srikakulam district, and in the Rayalseema region. In Srikakulam district, the CPI(ML) cadres have been making persistent efforts to mobilise the Girijans but the response has not been encouraging. About 350 Girijan Naxalite prisoners lodged in various jails have dissociated themselves from the movement and expressed their allegiance to the CPI. The Communist Revolutionaries have been able to organise about 30 dalams which are active mainly in the forest regions of Khammam, Warangal and Karimnagar districts.

"18. In Bihar, extremist violence remained at a high pitch till May 1971, but subsequently there was a steep fall due to the improvement in South Bihar. The Satya Narain Singh group is well entrenched in the State though of late the Charu group has been trying to build up its strength.

"19. Extremist violence in Punjab was sustained, notwithstanding stringent police measures resulting in the death of 14 extremists in encounters during the period. The extremists were responsible for as many as 30 murders, including that of a Dy. S.P., and were even able to ransack and loot firearms from a police post in Sangrur district in September 1971....

"20. The extremist movement in Kerala remained beset with factionalism, and party activities were mainly confined to propaganda work. During 1971, there was no violent incident in the State as compared to 20 during 1970; no incidents have been reported so far during 1972. The various extremist groups in the State have been trying to forge unity. The representatives of the Communist Party, Workers' Revolutionary Party, A.V.Aryan and Kosalaramdas groups have agreed in principle to merge.

"21. Other States: Extremist activities in other States are not so widespread and well-organised, though there was an attempt to gear them up in UP, Assam and Orissa. In Uttar Pradesh, there were sporadic

acts of violence in the last quarter of 1971. In Assam, the extremists are active in Kamrup, Darrang, Goalpara, Dibrugarh and Nowgong districts. In Orissa, it is largely a spill-over of extremist activities from the bordering Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh and Midnapore district of West Bengal. Among other States, some new areas in MP, Rajasthan and Haryana are witnessing extremist activities. In Madhya Pradesh, some extremists from Andhra Pradesh have been trying to infiltrate into the Bastar region to subvert the tribals. In Rajasthan similarly, the extremists from Punjab are trying to spread their network in the districts of Ganganagar, Alwar and Bharatpur. In Haryana, the extremists have formed some cells in Jind, Karnal and Ambala districts...."

APPENDIX-C  
STATE-WISE BREAK-UP OF EXTREMIST VIOLENCE  
(April 1971 to March 1972)

	Murder	D+	A+	OAV	ANS	Total
Andhra Pradesh	20 (including 6 1 RPF Rakshak) (1)	x	10	x	36	
Assam	7	x	1	x	3	11
Bihar	35 (7)	3(1)	15	51	2	106
Orissa	2(1)	x	x	2	1	5
Punjab	30(2)	x	x	7	6	43
Rajasthan	1	x	x	x	x	1
Tamil Nadu	2	x	1	1	x	4
Tripura	x	x	x	3	x	3
UP	3	x	x	4	3	10
West Bengal	540 (78)	4(1)	384	1227	83	2238
Total	640(89)	13(3)	401	1305	98	2457

- Notes : (a) Figures within brackets under Murder show policemen killed.  
 (b) D+ denotes Dacoity without murder or with murder of non-policemen (shown within brackets).  
 (c) A+ denotes attacks on police or other govt. officials.  
 (d) OAV denotes other acts of violence.  
 ANS denotes attacks on national symbols and hoisting red flags.



APPENDIX-D  
MONTHWISE BREAK-UP OF EXTREMIST VIOLENCE IN INDIA  
(April 1971 to March 1972)

	Murder	D+	A+	OAV	ANS	Total
April/1971	96	1	55	251	20	423
May	80	x	68	303	8	459
June	106	1	55	282	2	446
July	95	2	61	187	x	345
August	88	2	49	88	54	281
September	64	1	28	74	1	168
October	48	2	32	25	4	111
November	29	1	21	43	4	98
December	16	1	17	23	3	60
January/1972	6	1	4	5	1	17
February	7	1	6	13	1	28
March	5	x	5	11	x	21
Total	640	13	401	1305	98	2457

CHAPTER 4

**Critiques of Charu Majumdar and  
CPI(ML) policies and programmes by the  
Communist Party of China and other  
fraternal parties**

(Quoted from statement of Souren Bose, vide his Interrogation Reports)

"....I stayed in London from 27.8.70 to 12.9.70. .... I met Bill Ash, Vice-Chairman of the CPGB(ML), Mrs. Ranjana Ash, Mr. Taylor, Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand and Mr. Rezberg, Chairman of the CPGB(ML) at the office of the CPGB(ML) at 25 Eden Street, Central London. I held discussions with them on the following points.

- (1) Allegiance of the CPI(ML) to the CPC: The leaders of the fraternal parties did not endorse the idea of allegiance of a revolutionary communist party to another fraternal party as a matter of policy.
- (2) City action and annihilation: They decried both the programmes and the ways in which those were being carried out.
- (3) Absence of mass movement and trade union activities in the policy programme of the CPI(ML) was also criticised.
- (4) CPI(ML) slogan "China's Chairman is our Chairman" was trenchantly criticised by them.
- (5) They felt that a lot of revolutionary fervour was being wasted in the urban area actions.
- (6) They also opined that whatever was being achieved in the rural areas could not be sustained without a properly organised armed force of the revolutionary people.
- (7) They stated that the CPI(ML) did not appear to have developed any agrarian policy to fit in with the struggles of the peasants in rural areas.

(8) They offered strong criticism against some of the writings of Charu Majumdar, especially the following:

(a) "Fight against the concrete manifestations of revisionism".... "The ways of doing things which were created and developed so far by the communist movement in India have become wholly and entirely useless in the present era" (*Liberation*, Sept. 1969, pp.8-9). According to them, the style of work of the people of every country grows through struggle. The style of work which was developed by the Indian people cannot be brushed aside so peremptorily simply because the struggles were led by wrong leaders. Such sweeping generalisations, they felt, should be avoided.

(b) A portion of CM's thesis that every deviation in the party is to be regarded as 'revisionism' was, according to the fraternal parties, a type of sectarianism. They felt that deviation should be construed as mistake, and mistake may be committed by anybody including people at leadership level but the same should not be branded as 'revisionism'. Mistakes can be rectified only through discussions and research

(c) They also strongly criticised CM's dictum that "One who has not smeared his hands with the blood of a class enemy is not fit to be called a communist" (CM's *Few words regarding guerrilla actions*, published in Bengali by Deshabrati Prakashani, Calcutta in April 1970). They said that this cannot be a Marxist norm. At one stage, either Rezberg or Bill Ash commented that "we have not come across such sweeping remarks from the leader of any communist party in the world."

[Author's comments : It was quite apparent during our interrogation of Souren Bose that CPGB(ML) leaders made it abundantly clear to him that the above 'views of the fraternal parties' were also the viewpoints of the leaders of the CPC though Souren was not quite sure. But after meeting and listening to Chou-en-lai and Kang-Sheng, the two topmost CPC leaders in Peking on 29 Oct. 1970, he had no scope for any doubt. In fact, according to Souren, on certain points, the Chinese leaders were even more emphatic than the CPGB(ML) leaders. For example, the Chinese leaders strongly denounced the CPI(ML) slogan "China's Chairman is our Chairman" and Charu Majumdar's dictum that "one who has not smeared his hands red with the blood of the class enemy is not fit to be called a 'communist'". Chou mentioned that most of them,

even their Chairman Mao, could not be called a 'communist' according to such a dictum and that was obviously absurd and "totally unacceptable as the norm for a communist." Souren further made it clear, though he did not like this to be put down clearly in his recorded 'Statement', that in addition to Charu Majumdar's aforesaid dictum, the CPC leaders were extremely critical about killing of policemen as part of CPI(ML)'s programme of 'annihilation of class enemies'. He (Chou-en-Lai) made it clear that this is nothing short of 'anarchism' and 'adventurism' and should not be regarded as part of a 'revolutionary programme'. Souren further stated that Chou, in fact, "admitted that it did not take him long after similar initial 'mistakes' by him in Sanghai to realise that such acts of anarchism and adventurism would only damage the prospect of revolution".]

"... From 24th Sept '70 to 2nd Oct. '70 I had a very dull time (in Peking) as during that period no leader met me. On expressing my desire to witness the '1st October Day' celebration in Peking, I was taken there. On 3rd Oct. '70, Cheng-Sheng-Shan, a gentleman of the CPC Foreign Affairs Deptt., saw me and wanted to know the exact purpose of my visit to China, when I explained that I would like to hold political discussions with the leaders of the CPC to clarify the following points :

(a) Why the Peking Radio, which was full of support initially for the CPI(ML) activities, had all of a sudden become silent?

(b) Whether the criticism of the CPI(ML) led by Charu Majumdar made by the leaders of the CPB(ML) quoting the attitude of the CPC was correct.

Till 28th Oct '70 I did not receive any message that the CPC leaders would meet me. Meanwhile, I was, however, taken to the following places .... for the purpose of sight-seeing .... Besides the three occupants in the rear-seat of the car (SB, LI & the interpreter), there was the presence of another man in blue uniform who used to sit by the side of the driver. [Souren suspected that the man in blue uniform must have been from Chinese Security Police] Even then, I felt bored apprehending that I might have to go back without having any chance to meet the CPC leaders.

On 29th Oct '70 evening I was taken to the Great Hall of the People's Culture by Mr. LI and the interpreter. While I waited in the waiting-room, Mr. Cheng-Sheng-Shan came in and took me to an inside room. There both Chou-En-Lai and Kang-Sheng were present.



This was at about 6 pm (Chinese time). Mr. Chang-Sheng-Shan introduced me to them when all of us sat around a table. While Chou-En-Lai, Kang-Sheng and Chang-Sheng-Shan sat on one side of the table, I and a Chinese lady who acted as an English interpreter sat facing them.

Chou En-lai initiated the discussion and the details of his viewpoints were :

- (1) The CPC congratulated the formation of the CPI(ML).
- (2) The Chinese revolution was victorious because of three things: the Party (CPC), formation of the United Fronts and successful raising of armed forces(PLA).
- (3) The CPC did not believe in international association of Communists. He quoted examples from history and stated that such international association of Communists breeds "Big-Brotherism" which the CPC detested very much.  
[Souren felt that this was an indirect criticism against the CPI(ML)'s policy of full allegiance to the CPC and of the experience of the CPC vis-à-vis the CPSU.]
- (4) The calling of the Chairman of one country as the chairman of another country goes against the national sentiments of its peoples.
- (5) The CPI(ML) had negated the role of national bourgeoisie in the armed struggle by the peasants. In 1928 China made the same mistake.
- (6) United front means unity of the exploited classes with even some of the exploiting classes. The stage of revolution at present in India is a people's Democratic Revolution in which the principal task is to overthrow feudalism and the dominance of imperialism and to distribute land among the peasants i.e. it is not a revolution to abolish private property. As such, excepting those classes against whom the revolution is to be done, there are other classes such as the capitalists (mill-owners, industrialists, hotel-owners etc.) who are also exploiters. But they are not to be eliminated at this stage. Hence this question of United Front of the exploited classes with these exploiting classes.
- (7) In 1927, Mr. Chou himself was responsible for the city action in Sanghai. City action included killing of police personnel and distribution of illegal pamphlets which was ultimately found as nothing but adventurism.
- (8) The thinking that open trade unionism and open mass movement is obsolete and that secret assassination is the only way of bringing

in revolution need rethinking. The CPI(ML) 'guerrilla squads' were nothing but secret assassination groups which do not serve the cause of revolution at any stage.

(9) The idea to die for adventurism is not self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice and self-preservation have to go side by side; otherwise revolution's prospect suffers.

(10) The assassination of individual policemen is anarchism. Even hoisting of flags on 1st October (by people in another country) is also a manifestation of the same and not the correct thing to do.

Besides the above, Chou-En-Lai also commented on some other points which I cannot remember. All those were the major viewpoints of the CPC as pointed out by Chou-En-lai, which was interpreted by the Chinese interpreter into English. This lasted for about two hours when Chou left as he had some other important engagement.

After Chou's departure, Kang-Sheng referred to the following two articles which were not broadcast from Peking Radio :

- (1) "Chiner Chairman Amader Chairman" (China's Chairman is our Chairman) by Charu Majumdar
- (2) "Bharater Biplaber Sar Sankalam Kore Egiye Chalo" (Advance by summing up the experiences of Indian revolution) by Charu Majumdar.

As regards these articles, Kang-Sheng pointed out that the CPC did not accept the caption of the first article and the contents of both. He said that the CPC completely differed with the entire idea conveyed in those articles. According to them, Naxalbari struggle was not for capturing state-power but for land. Without mass organisation and mass struggle, no movement could be sustained. The CPI(ML) lacked in depicting its agrarian policy. Initially, the CPC misunderstood the annihilation programme of the CPI(ML). Later it could realise that this annihilation programme was nothing but secret assassinations and it had nothing to do with People's War or revolution.

With this Kang-Sheng continued for half-an-hour more. After they spoke, Kang-Sheng asked me about my opinion on their (Chinese leaders') views. In reply I said that my long-standing conviction seemed to have been shattered by the opinion of the Chinese leaders and that I would have to think a lot to come to a positive conclusion. The entire discussion lasted for approximately two and a half hours.

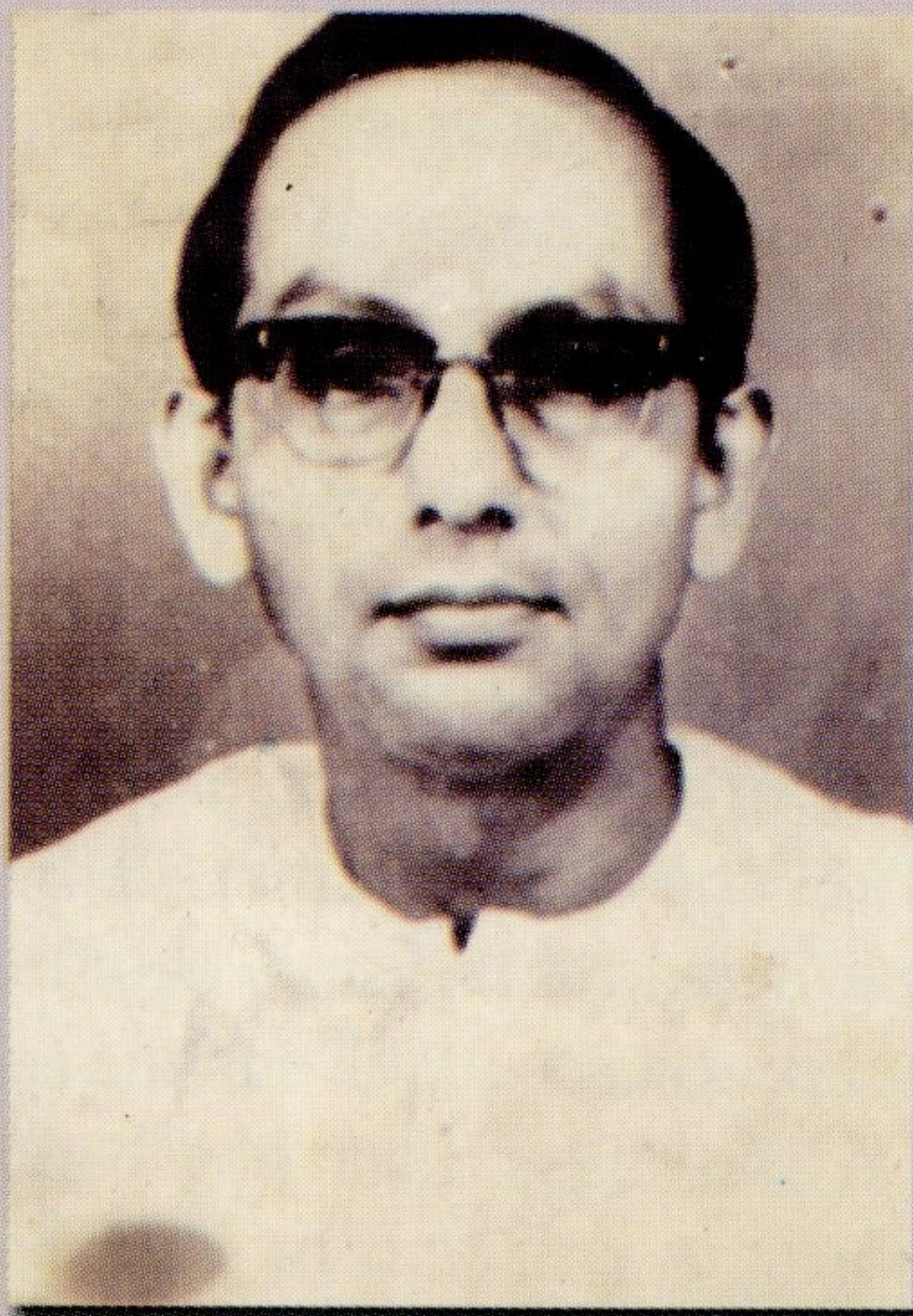
"I had an exercise book in which I noted down all the points raised by both the aforesaid leaders. Seeing the exercise-book, I was advised not to carry the same with me to India. In the guest-house there were some white sheets of paper. I noted those points in the white sheet of papers, which were seized (by the police) from my residence at P-189B, Suren Sarkar Road at the time of my arrest...."







◀ Sadhan Sarkar



Suniti Ghosh ▶



◀ Asim Chatterjee



## CHAPTER 5

### **The CPI(ML) Leaders Speak for Themselves**

[Revelations from their interrogation reports/statements]

#### **Interrogation Brief** (for recording statements of Naxalites)

[Note : Every officer interrogating a Naxalite should keep a copy of this Brief and follow the given sequence in recording a statement]

[Explanatory Note: This Interrogation Brief was introduced by the DC, Special Branch, Calcutta some time during early 1971, initially for the use of the SB officers who were required to interrogate Naxalites arrested by SB or any other unit. Later other units of Calcutta and West Bengal Police also adopted this Brief and subsequently the Intelligence Bureau of the Union Home Ministry recommended it for use by the other State Police forces. This format was introduced primarily for systematic questioning in a given sequence and for uniformity of approach instead of random questioning, which quite often led to unprofessional and unethical methods during interrogation. These apart, this Brief also aimed at bringing out the motivations, socio-economic profiles and the depth of understanding of Marxism-Maoism of the questioned persons. Proper analysis of these aspects, it was hoped, could lead to devising appropriate counter-measures.]

1. Name, with aliases, if any
2. Father's name and profession
3. Address (present and permanent)
4. Year and place of birth
5. Descriptive Roll (DR), with particular reference to distinguishing marks, deformity or other physical handicap
6. Whether photograph and finger-impressions taken or being taken
7. Reference of the Case in which arrested
8. Date and place of arrest
9. Articles recovered from his possession



10. Relations in India
11. Contacts in India
12. Contacts in foreign countries, if any
13. Statement in details, which should include -
  - (i) short biographical sketch
  - (ii) whether migrated from East Pakistan - year of migration - place of stay in India - financial condition of family - whether they have a home/land of their own and how acquired
  - (iii) educational and professional background
  - (iv) which newspapers and periodicals he generally reads
  - (v) extent of study of Marxist and Maoist literature
  - (vi) what attracted him towards Naxalite ideology and how was he taken into the party fold - who gave him lessons on Maoism - who recruited him and how - his present status in the party
  - (vii) his knowledge about the party structure, local units and their members etc. - possible sources of finance and who keeps the money and accounts
  - (viii) his knowledge about the sources of supply of arms, ammunitions and explosives in the hands of party workers - names of persons dealing with such matters including purchase and manufacture - probable places of storage/manufacture of such articles
  - (ix) his knowledge about the means of communication (couriers etc.) between party cadres themselves, between unit leaders and higher leaders and so on
  - (x) his knowledge about places of shelter of party cadres and higher leaders
  - (xi) his knowledge about places of printing of party organs and leaflets etc. - persons in charge of such printing, distribution - mode of distribution of unauthorised party organs and leaflets etc.
  - (xii) what he plans to do in the event of his release on bail or otherwise
  - (xiii) whether he or any of his relations was ever assaulted, humiliated or arrested by police, and some details thereof
  - (xiv) if he was arrested from any hostel, to note room no., floor and particulars of other residents of the room/rooms
14. Specimen hand-writing (5-6 lines) both in English and in Bengali (or his mother tongue)

15. Names of 3-4 police officers and men who can identify the subject in the event of his release on bail or otherwise
16. Date, place and duration of interrogation
17. Interrogating officer's assessment about the subject:
  - (i) Intelligence
  - (ii) Personality
  - (iii) Appeared to be secretive or frank
  - (iv) Is he likely to co-operate?
  - (v) Any interesting aspect not covered by the above points
18. Interrogating officer's rank, full name with date.

**STATEMENT OF PROF. NISITH BHATTACHARJI**

Name, with aliases if any : Nisith Ranjan Bhattacharji alias Nimai alias Naresh alias Nakul.

Father's Name & Profession : S/o Late Amulayaratan Bhattacharji  
He was a muktear (died in 1942).

Address (Present & Permanent) : 9/D, Chandra Nath Roy Road, Calcutta - 39 and of Vill. - Kundasi Narail, P.S.- Lohagara, Jessore (East Pakistan).

Year & Place of birth : 1934, Narail (East Pakistan).

Descriptive Roll with particular reference to distinguishing marks, deformity or any other physical handicap : Age - 36 years / Height - 5' 9" / Build : Medium / Complexion - Black / Hair - Black, side brushed / Eyes - Normal / Face - Long / Identification mark - A big mole on the right corner of the forehead. One cut mark on the left eye brow. One cut mark on the right toe (Having trouble in right hand and cannot write properly by right hand - smokes cigarette 'Charminar').

Whether Photograph and finger impressions have been taken or are being taken : Taken

Reference of the cases in which arrested (1) Amherst St. PS C/No. 96 dt. 8/4/70 u/s 148/149/337/436 IPC and 3 & 5 E. S. Act. (2) Beliaghata PS C/No. 313 dt. 18.5.70 u/s 148/149/332/307 IPC and 3 & 5 E S Act. (3) Ballygunge PS C/No. 181 dated 26/5/70 u/s 147/148/324 IPC and 3 & 5 E. S. Act. (4) Muchipara PS C/No. 319 dt. 3.6.70 u/s 396 IPC.

Date and place of arrest : 11-6-70 from 13/B, Buddhu Ostagar Lane (house of Ranjit Chanda).

Articles recovered from his possession : (Many of the document names etc. not being of any relevance now have been deleted).

Relations in India :

- (i) Sm. Nanibala Bhattacharji (60) Mother.
- (ii) Sm. Anjali Bhattacharji (26) Wife.

(Names/ addresses of brothers/sisters and other relations deleted).

Contacts in India : (All the names are known on record and hence deleted).

Contact in foreign country :

- (i) Dilip Bose - London.
- (ii) Aninda Dey - do.
- (iii) Rathin Mukharji - Belgium.

**Statement**

I was born at Narail, Jessore, East Pakistan in 1934. I read upto Class VIII at Narail Sub-Divisional H. E. School. Then I came to West Bengal in 1948 and read in Taltola H. E. School. I passed Matriculation in 1950 from that School, I.Sc. from Bangabasi College in 1952, B.Sc. (Hons) from St. Xaviers College in 1955 and M.Tech in 1963 from the Institute of Radio Physics and Electronics, Calcutta University, Acharya Profulla Chandra Road. I had my practical training in the Tollygunge West Bengal Police Wireless for several months. I was a school teacher in Srish Chandra High School, Ethora (Burdwan dist.) from 1957 to 1959 and Joypur Fakir Das School, Amta from 1959 to 1960 I am now attached to Bangabasi College as a Lecturer in Physics. My basic pay is Rs. 300/- I get College DA. of Rs. 98/- and Government D.A. of Rs. 100/-. I am also attached to the Evening Section of the Bangabasi College for which I get Rs. 125/-. In all, I get Rs. 623/- per month. I joined this job in 1963. I have been staying at 9/D, Chandra Nath Roy Road since the end of 1964. Before that, I put up at Bediadanga 2nd Lane. I stay with my sister and brother-in-law at Chandra Nath Roy Road. My wife, one year old son and my brother stay with me.

While a student of M.Sc., I was a supporter of undivided CPI. When the CPI(M) was formed I started supporting the party. From 1967, I became critical of the CPI(M) for their laying too much stress on parliamentarianism. The same year, I withdrew my support from the CPI(M). In 1966-67, I made intensive study of Marxism-Leninism. I also read a few volumes of Mao's books and other books of Lin Piao. In the middle of 1967, I was gradually attracted to Naxalite line of politics and started reading *Deshabrati* regularly. Gopal Mazumdar used to stay in our locality and I occasionally visited him and discussed with him about Naxalbari politics and thereby became very much wedded to the ideology of Naxalism. In the year 1968, a local unit of the Co-ordination Committee of the Communist Revolutionaries was formed in our locality. With the creation of CCCR, I joined its local unit in that year. I represented the local unit in the District Committee of the CCCR. All the present leaders of the CPI(ML) were in the CCCR then. When I was in the CCCR, I used to distribute *Deshabrati*, other leaflets and booklets of the party, published from 'Deshabrati' press to the rank and file of the organization and to the local people. On 1st May 1969, with the creation of CPI(ML), CCCR ceased to exist. While in the CCCR, I



was the Convenor of the Local Organising Committee in the Tiljala area. The following persons were in my unit : Ashit of Picnic Garden Road./Santi of Chandra Nath Roy Road /Nitai of Picnic Garden Road (now a Headmaster in some School of Burdwan District)/Dwijen of Picnic Garden Road/Tapan (Local Secretary) of Sridhar Roy Road – (He owns a poultry)/Subir of Sridhar Roy Road/Surya Singh of Picnic Garden Road (a compositor by profession).

(Serial Nos. 1-4 did not join CPI(ML) whereas the rest did join the party. Serial No. 1-4 to the best of my knowledge are associated with "Dakshindesh").

In the early part of 1969, Appu and Ramanathan of Tamil Nadu took shelter in my house at 9/D, Chandra Nath Roy Road. Later, on one occasion Venkateswar Rao of Andhra stayed in my house.

Since my joining CPI(ML), I became D.O.C. (District Organising Committee) member. I worked for some time in Tiljala area (Picnic Garden and Pump House area). Thereafter in the month of March 1970, I took charge of Central Calcutta having its physical jurisdiction from Vidyasagar Street at the North to Taltala in the South. I organized a new team in Central Calcutta comprising (1) Sanat of Ram Banarji Lane, (2) Tapan @ Bablu of Sankharitola Street, (3) Pankaj of Akhil Mistri Lane, (4) Akhtar of Patwar Bagan and Rajani Gupta Row, (5) Bhaskar of European Asylum Lane, (6) Pradip of College Street area, (7) Sankar of Vidyasagar Street (some details deleted). Their work was to politicalise the people and activate them through posters, wall writings and literature. They were to do individual preaching about the ideology of armed struggle propagated by CPI(ML). My job was to explain and reply to their political questions and also to settle organizational disputes. Since Sankar was to work in village and also because of his sick health, Sunil @ Kajal of Jagannath Dutta Lane was organizing the party work in Vidyasagar unit. From time to time I met the local organizing committees to preach amongst the cadres of the units. I met Sanat in his house. He is more politically developed. I sat with Tapan and Daw at Bablu's place. I met the cadres of Akhil Mistri Lane and Sraddhanada Park area along with Pankaj and Bablu of Rajani Gupta Row in the room of Bhunia (a Naxalite of Sraddhananda Park area) at Ripon Hostel. I met Akhtar in his house at Patwar Bagan and his cadres Ali and Phoken. About one and half months back Akhtar has gone to work in the village. I came to know from Sushital Roy Choudhuri that Akhtar had gone to certain village in West Dinajpur. In his absence, Phoken is looking

after the unit in Patwar Bagan. I met the unit of Taltala in the house of B. Das Gupta at European Asylum Lane and in the house of Subhra who had been arrested in Purulia with Mandal about 3-4 months back.

I met the College Street Unit twice in a four-storied house at Haridas Pal Lane. As per direction of the party, the local units were asked to counter the anti-Chinese propaganda. In following the party directive, the local units took action against Gandhism and Gandhian literature. Following the same path, the local units took action against the screening of the film 'Prem Pujari' in Central Calcutta.

I know Sushital Roy Choudhuri (SRC) since the publication of Deshabrati. I met him on several occasions at Deshabrati office on Keshab Chandra Sen Street and also in his house at Ultadanga Housing Estate. I used to meet him to receive instructions on political-organizational matters. Sushital Babu is the Secretary of the State Committee of the CPI(ML). While CCCR was in existence, I met Charu Majumdar (CM) in the house of SRC. Then again, I met CM in a house opposite 'Sabir Restaurant' in Princep Street. This arrangement of meeting was made by Shyamal Nandi, the then convenor of the Calcutta Co-ordination Committee of the CCCR. Once again I met CM in the house of Dr. A. K. Bose at Ballygunge Place. Here CM met the trade union workers arranged by Sadhan Sarkar, Secretary, Calcutta District Committee of the CPI(ML). Sushital Babu met me twice in my house to discuss political and organizational work.

Besides above, the following persons are in the Calcutta District Organising Committee of the CPI(ML) representing the areas noted against them (some details regarding identity deleted) : Dilip @ Kalyan (25/27) (ex-employee of Cossipore Gun & Shell Factory) of Gouribari-North East Calcutta.// Pratip (one Gautam Bose S/o Biswanath of 8, Nirode Behari Mullick Road is his neighbour) – North Calcutta. He is aged about 25/27 years.//Asit – Tiljala.// Satish (33/34) of Behala and working at J. Stone & Company, Taratala.// Kamal Sanyal (40) – Behala (He works as a clerk in Cal Port Commissioners)//Parui – Paharpur Road, Metiabruz.//Nani Gopal (34) – Jadavpur – Tollygunge.//Pabitra (32) @ Paresch Datta – Bhowanipur – (works in some Pharmaceutical Works in North Calcutta).//Roy Chaudhuri – Dalhousie (An employee of India Steamship Co., Marine Dept. and of 46 R. K. Chattarji Road, Kasba). Sadhan Sarkar is the Secretary of the Calcutta District Committee.

The following are the LCs under the Calcutta DOC of the CPI (ML) :

1. North Calcutta L.C. - Pratip in charge of the unit (Area bounded by Vivekananda Road in the South, Bidhan Sarani in the East, Galiff Street in the North and Strand Road in the West).
2. North East Calcutta - Dilip is in charge of this LC (Area bounded by Vivekananda Road on the South, Cornwallis Street on the West, Rajabazar on the South extends along Narkeldanga Main Road, Canal Circular Road bordering West Bengal Police, on the West extends upto Dum Dum Road and Khagen Chatterjee Road) of Gouribari Lane.
3. Kalighat - Bhowanipore L. C. - (1) Pabitra is In-charge assisted by Jogen Gain (Lower Circular Road on the North, Lansdowne Road on the East, Tolly's Nallah on the West, Sahpore Road on the South).
4. Taratala L.C. - Satish of Behala (New Alipore, Taratala, Alipore, Hyde Road areas).
5. Behala L.C. - Kamal (entire Behala P.S. area) (Incharge).
6. Beliaghata L.C. - Ashit (Incharge) (Narikeldanga Main on the North, Upper and Lower Circular Road upto Moulali crossing, CIT (Entally) Road, Convent Bridge, Palmer Bazar Road, Beliaghata Circular Canal on the South, Kadapara and Circular Canal on the East).
7. Tiljala L.C. - (1) Tapan - Secretary of the Unit, assisted by (2) Subir of Pump House Road and (3) Barun of Pump House Road. (From No. 4 Rly Bridge on the North, Bediadanga (Girish Bose Road) on the South, Ram Tikaria Gate area on the East, Rly. Lines on the West.
8. Jadavpur - Tollygunge L.C. (entire Jadavpur P.S. area) : (1) Nani Gopal (Incharge), assisted by (2) Dalim, (3) Meghranjan, (4) Kartick (of Bijoygarh) and (5) Roy.
9. Metiabruz L.C. - Anukul (Incharge) (entire Metiabruz P S area)

In addition to the above, the CPI(ML) teams (Action Squads) are also functioning in the following areas :

1. Entally Team : North - CIT Road, Convent Road, West - Lower Circular Road, South - Beckbagan Road and Samsul Huda Road, East - Rly. Lines upto the Bridge No. 4, Tiljala Road and Circular Canal: Asit, assisted by Tapan, Barun of Pump House, Subir of Pump House, Khoka of Dehi Srirampore Road and Chandan of Park Circus.

2. Dhakuria Team : (Kashba and Dhakuria areas) : Nani Gopal assisted by Prof. Dalim, Meghranjan and Kartick of Bejoygarh.
3. Central Calcutta Team :  
South - Ripon Street  
East - Circular Road  
North - Kailash Bose Street  
West - Central Avenue  
Prof. Nisith Bhattacharji (Incharge)
- (a) Taltala (area bounded by Ripon Street in South Lenin Sarani in North, and C. Road in East and Wellesly Street in West) Bhaskar (Convener) assisted by Gopi, Chandan Singh, Kajal Banerjee (son of a footballer).
- (b) Sankharitola - (area bounded by Lenin Sarani in South, Nirmal Chander Street in West, B. B. Ganguli Street in North and L C Road in West) - Tapan (Convener), assisted by Subrata @ Basu of Sankaritola.
- (c) Amherst Street - Pankaj (Convener) assisted by Bablu, Asim-Sanat-Rabin of Ripon Hostel, Bablu (Junior), Rana and Bhola.
- (d) Pataldanga - Baithakkhana area bounded by M. G. Road on South, Amherst Street in West, Keshab Sen Street in North and Upper Circular Road in East. - Sekhar @ Ali assisted by Phoken of Baithakkhana Road, Akhtar of Patwar Bagan.
- (e) Sreegopal Mullick Lane - (area bounded by Bowbazar Street in South, College Street in West, Mirzapore Street in North and Amherst Street in East) - Modak of 11 Ram Banarji Lane (Convener) assisted by Tamal of Arpuli Lane, Dilip and Tushar of Thakurbari.
- (f) Bhowani Dutta Lane - (area bounded by M. G. Road in North, Colootola - Mirzapore St. in South, Amherst St. in East and C. R. Avenue in West) : Pradip assisted by Aloke, Dhurjati of Presidency, Dipak, Saheb @ Dilip, Amlan, Bishu of Haridas Paul Lane, Santi, Manik and Ashoke.
- (g) Vidyasagar Unit - (area bounded by Sukia St. - Kailash Bose St. in North, Keshab Sen St. in South, Upper Circular Road in East and Bidhan Sarani in West) : Bhattacharjee (Convener) assisted by Kajal, Saibal, Subol, Dipu of Upper Circular Road and of Jadavpur University, Phelu, Kashinath of P.G. Hostel. The following persons are the members of the State Committee (Deleted, as all 12 are known on records already.)



The following persons are the members of the Central Organising Committee of the CPI(ML) : (Deleted, as all 7 names are already known on records).

- (h) On 8th March '70 the Calcutta District Committee met in a conference at the Music School at Rai Bahadur Road, Behala (near Clyde Fan Bus stop of route No. 14) : The following persons attended the conference : Sadhan Sarkar (Secretary) and six others (all known on records). Sushital Roy Choudhury was present as an observer. He explained the party programme enunciated in the draft programme formulated by the central organizing committee. The draft programme containing 41 clauses was printed in a booklet form about 5 months ago in *Deshabrati* Press and distributed amongst the rank and file of the party. The programme has been published in the last issue of the *Deshabrati* after being adopted with certain amendments by the All India Congress of CPI(ML).

The State Congress of CPI(ML) was held at Behala on a date just prior to 22nd April (first anniversary date of the CPI(ML) '70). The following state leaders attended the conference : Jangal Santhal, Khokan Mazumdar, Kadam Mullick, Kanu Sanyal (all of Naxalbari), Mahadeb Mukharji of Burdwan, Kali Prasad Chaudhuri of 24 Parganas, Shyam Sundar of Murshidabad, Ashim Chattarji of Midnapore, Santosh Rana of Midnapore and SRC (Secretary).

The conference was convened by SRC. CM (in the capacity of Secretary, Central Organising Committee), Nagbhusan Patnaik from Srikakulam and Satyanarain Singh of Bihar, all of Central Organising Committee) attended the conference as observers. The conference also dwelt on the same draft programme discussed earlier at the Calcutta District Committee. After due deliberations, it adopted the draft programme with minor amendments. A political report as well as an organizational report were prepared at the conference incorporating the work of State party since its inception.

The All India Congress of the CPI(ML) was held at Behala on 15-16 May '70. The exact location of the Congress is known to Satish, Sadhan Sarkar (Rabindra Nagar Colony, Behala) and Kalyan @ Dilip (residing somewhere near the crossing of Raja Dinendra Street and Sahitya Parishad Street). I learnt about this Congress from Sadhan Sarkar. Approximately 30 CPI(ML) leaders from different parts of India including the following attended the Congress (all names and other details already known and hence deleted from

this). Kanu Sanyal of West Bengal presided over the Congress and Charu Majumdar acted as its Organizing Secretary.

The draft programme containing 40/41 clauses formulated 5 months ago by the COC for the acceptance of rank and file of the party was discussed in the Congress. It was adopted finally with some amendments. The adopted programme would be published in *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* shortly. Sadhan Sarkar and Kalyan Banarji @ Dilip would make arrangements for its publication in *Deshabrati* and in *Liberation*, Bengali and English mouthpieces of the CPI(ML).

Regarding the incidents of assault on and killing of policemen, I did not give any specific suggestions to the local cadres of Central Calcutta. The party cadres of Central Calcutta often sought suggestions from me as to how they would counteract the police oppression meted out to the Naxalites in Calcutta. I asked them to follow party directions published in *Deshabrati* from time to time. In *Deshabrati*, Charu Majumdar wrote "Pratiti Akramaner Badla Nin" (Avenge every attack). I presume the cadres of Central Calcutta have been inspired by this call of Charu Majumdar as well as by the incident of Prasanta Sen Neogi (a police officer of Cossipur PS. killed by throwing of bombs by the miscreants) which is reported to be the act of the Naxalites of that locality (Cossipore). I did not know that Pankaj Chakraborty and others, of Akhil Mistry Lane – Rajani Gupta Row had planned to kill the police officer Amitava Singha Roy. I learnt of the incident after its commission. [Intelligence reports were clear that this first brutal murder of a police officer in Calcutta was organised by Nisith.]. I did not meet Pankaj before or after the incident. I heard from Dilip Ghose who is also a Naxalite cadre of Sradhananda Park area that Pankaj after the incident of murder had given him a revolver and fled away from Calcutta to an undisclosed destination. Dilip Ghose, who resided somewhere near Sradhananda Park, told me that Pankaj had reported the act of killing Amitava Singha Roy, an officer of Special Branch. I do not know whether the firearm given to Dilip Ghosh by Pankaj was the same snatched away by him from the deceased police officer (S. I. Amitava Singha Roy of SB). Pankaj and Rana went to the residence of Kajal Bose after the murder of Amitava Singha Roy for shelter. Mondal Congress sign board being hung in front of his house, Kajal was not there. Pankaj had with him the revolver taken from Shri Singha Roy. Seeing the revolver Kajal's father and sister became frightened and asked Pankaj to leave their residence immediately. Pankaj then wrote

a letter to Kajal and left the place by a taxi called by Kajal's father. Pankaj is a fast friend of Ananda Mazumdar of Chaulpatty Road, Beliaghata. Pankaj's house is located at a place called Krishna Madhab Dutta Lane or Brojo Madhab Dutta Lane or Madhab Dutta Lane, near the crossing of Narkeldanga Main Road and CIT Road. I can point out the house. Pankaj has also a cousin brother in Madhyamgram. He has a girl friend somewhere in Barrackpore or Madhyamgram.

My party has got link with Pakistani (ML) party in East Pakistan. Some party cadres numbering about 6/7 of Pakistani (ML) party came from East Pakistan to India to meet our leaders. I do not know their names, nor do I know when and where they met our leaders. But I know that some Pakistani comrades came to India and met our leaders.

I arranged shelter for Sushital Roy Choudhuri occasionally. I also arranged his shelter at my elder brother's residence in May 1970 at Beniapukur Lane. Charu Majumdar earlier used to stay at Sushital Roy Choudhuri's flat at CIT Road. Charu Babu once stayed at a house at Bijoygarh Colony 2/3 months back. Sadhan Sarkar of Rabindranagar, Behala, Secretary of the Calcutta D. C. of the CPI(ML), does not stay in his house. He is now in charge of the publication of *Deshabrati*.

Since the press at Keshab Chandra Sen Street was sealed by the police, *Deshabrati* is being printed in different presses in the city of Calcutta and distributed through party cadres secretly. Kalyan @ Dilip and Sadhan Sarkar are now looking after the work of *Deshabrati*. Till my arrest, it was being printed in a press of one Gopali at Sikdar Bagan Street in North Calcutta. Now ten to fifteen thousand copies are being printed. Sankar of L.O.C. Vidyasagar Street area (residing in a house (No. probably 5 or 6 off Vidyasagar Street, opposite P. G. Hospital) now distributes the entire number of *Deshabrati* to the rank and file of the party. I have seen those papers two or three times in the house of Shankar. The printing of *Deshabrati* may be done somewhere near Nazrul Pathagar at the crossing of Upper Circular Road and Mirzapore Street and one Shyamal (30 years, tall, thin) may be working in that press. The circulation of *Deshabrati* in terms of number of copies is given below: 1st issue 10,000, 2nd issue 22,000, 3rd issue 22,000, 4th issue 20,000. The circulation of the last legal issue came up to 27,000 (highest) (Certain other details deleted, not being of much relevance now)

The circulation of *Liberation* was between 27,000 and 28,000 while that of *Lok Yuddha* was 2,000. The publication of *Lok Yuddha* and *Awami Jung* has since been discarded. *Liberation* was to come out on 20.6.70, part of which was being printed in Gopali's press. Jana Sharma of Sinthi was attached to *Lok Yuddha*. Hamid (28) of G. K. W. (Shibpore, Howrah) was attached to *Awami Jung* and it was published from Shibpore.

Letters meant for Sadhan Sarkar are generally sent to Abhijit of Hindusthan Building (LIC, P.F. Section) and also to one Mahapatra of S. E. Rly. Esplanade office. Dilip generally receives letters of SRC. Sadhan Sarkar maintains contact with other important party members through (1) Abhijit of LIC, (2) Satish of Behala (since arrested), (3) Dilip of Gouribari (His brother Goutam was arrested in Deshabrati raid), (4) Kamal of Sarsuna, Behala, (5) Parui of Paharpur, (6) Mahapatra of S. E. Rly. I met Sadhan Sarkar once at a house at Ballygunge Place. I can locate the house but I cannot say its number. I also met Sadhan Sarkar and SRC in a CIT flat near Kankurgachi Railway line, I can point out the flat.

Saroj Dutta is living in Chetla area by the side of Tolly's nullah. His wife is working in some Government office. Siraj is his son. I can point out his house.

Dilip (26/27) of Gouribari and Mukharji @ Shibu of 16/B Ram Ratan Bose Lane (near the crossing of Upper Circular Road and Shyambazar five-point crossing) are in charge of procuring arms for supplying to CPI(ML) cadres in villages. Shibu is working in S. E. Rly. Garden Reach. Dilip and P. Ghosh (Pratip or Prabir) of North Calcutta are also in charge of arranging shelters for party leaders.

The following are the important CPI(ML) members :

Bangabasi College : Kalyan - B.Sc. Part I (Chemistry), Dipak - Patipukur - B.Sc. Part I (Physics), Sital - B. Sc. Part I (Pass Course)

Surendra Nath College : Bhunia and Sanat of Ripon Hostel and Prof. Bidyut Dutta of Maniktolla C.I.T. Qrs (S. N. College Co-operative Housing Society).

Vidyasagar College : Prof. Suniti Ghosh (45) of Vidyasagar CIT Co-operative Housing Society at Raja Raj Krishna St. He is the financier of *Liberation*. Shyamal Ghosh is close to him.

About finances of the CPI(ML) : I have no knowledge about external financial help. Sadhan Sarkar is in charge of funds of the Calcutta DC and SRC is in charge of the funds of the C. C. from subscriptions; the amount of Rs. 10,000 is collected for Calcutta



D. C. Before Deshabrati office was raided by the police I used to meet Sadhan Sarkar, Dilip Banarji and Sushital Roy Choudhuri at Keshab Chandra Sen St. (Deshabrati office). After the raid there, almost all the leaders went underground.

I used to keep contact with Sadhan Sarkar through Tapan (Pump House Road). There was another contact in between me and Sadhan Sarkar. His name was Abhijit of LIC (4, CR Av.).

On 11.6.70 I was asked by Phoken to go to Ranjit's house at Buddhu Ostagar Lane. At this place Phokan, Sekhar @ Ali, Dilip of Rajani Gupta Row, Bhaskar of Taltola also met me and had left before the police raided the house. Kajal Bose, who gave his name to the police as Sunil Bose is an important party member. Khokan, who was also arrested by the police along with me is an important cadre of the party. Ranjit is a party sympathiser.

I was never arrested or assaulted by the police earlier.

### STATEMENT OF NAGBHUSAN PATNAIK

Name : Nagbhusan Patnaik.

Father's name : Shri Ramamurti Patnaik.

Address : Gunupur - Village/PO and PS, District Koraput (Orissa).

Family background : My father is connected with agriculture but I cannot say how much land he holds. I have three brothers (28 years, 23 yrs. and 20 yrs.), all younger to me, the first one is in Govt. service, may be an overseer. I have three sisters (32, 30, 23 yrs. respectively); the first sister is married to a govt. officer in Orissa, the second one married to a munsiff magistrate of Andhra Pradesh govt and the third sister is yet unmarried and stays at our native village.

Date and place of birth : 1934-35, in village Padmapur, dist. Koraput (Orissa).

Descriptive Roll : Height about 5' 6", medium build, dark complexion; other details not recorded. (NB ; can speak and understand Hindi and English besides Oriya and Telugu).

Date and place of arrest : Arrested in the early hours (03.00-04.00 hrs.) of 24.7.1970 from the Nursing Home of Dr. S.Basu at P-12/B, Madanmohantala Street, PS, Calcutta, (along with another top Naxalite leader of Srikakulam (A.P.) named Mamidi Appalasuri., both also Central Committee members of the CPI(ML). NB also became a Politburo Member).

Photograph and fingerprints taken? Both taken.

Case references : Both were wanted in a number of cases of Andhra Pradesh (Srikakulam/Parvatipuram) but till then not in any specific case of West Bengal. (The general conspiracy case against the Naxalite leaders was registered about a month later, namely, Amherst Street PS case no. 249 dt 22.8.70 u/ss 120B/121/109 etc. of IPC and sec. 25(a) Arms Act.).

[Special note : On the same day of arrest (24.7.70) and after the two arrested persons were brought to the Special Branch office (14, Lord Sinha Road, Calcutta), the DC, SB-I, who led the raiding party, contacted over phone around 5.30 AM a very senior officer of the CID Spl. Branch of AP(Hyderabad) with two requests : to intimate urgently by wireless message the case references in which these two Naxalite leaders were wanted in AP and, secondly, to send as early as possible a knowledgeable officer who can assist SB officers in the interrogation of these two persons, especially because Appalasuri could converse only in the tribal dialect of Srikakulam as

could be ascertained from Patnaik. AP wanted to take both the persons straight to their State for which they could send the same day a special team in a special plane of AP Govt. and 'desired' that their arrest in WB/Calcutta need not be shown on record. The DC, SB-I immediately realised that there was something grossly irregular in such an unusual request and his impromptu response over phone was: "Sorry, Sir, both these persons' arrests have already been noted not only in the Special Branch record but also in the record of the local police station", whereas their arrests were yet to be recorded! Why did the DC, SB-I took such a 'peculiar' stand? According to him, "It occurred to me like a flash that surely they wanted to bump off these two leaders, as they had allegedly done in regard to some other well-known Naxalite leaders under the guise of 'armed encounter'; otherwise such palpably illegal and irregular request could not have been made, and we did not want to be a party to such wrong-doings." Only on 30th July 1970, these two arrested persons were allowed to be sent to AP against proper custody/production warrant of their local magistrate. Along with these documents, the AP State Police also sent an escort party under a senior officer in a special plane but the Special Branch, Calcutta insisted on sending their escort party also to reach the two arrested persons before the magistrate who issued the production warrants. Many of their comrades later admitted that this firm stand of the Calcutta Special Branch Deputy Commissioner saved the lives of these two important Naxalite leaders from 'imminent liquidation'.]

#### Statement

I am aged about 35 years now. I was born in village Padmapur (PS Padmapur, Dist. Koraput in Orissa). Later my father shifted residence to Gunupur, at a distance of about 10-12 miles from Padmapur. I read in the Gunupur High School from which I passed my Matriculation exam. (2nd. Div.) in 1951, did my BA (Pass Course) from Parlakemedi College in Ganjam district in 1955, joined Benaras Hindu University in 1955 for doing MA in Mathematics but gave up after one year as I had decided by then to join the legal profession. Passed LL.B. (2nd Class) in 1961 from Madhusudan Law College of Cuttack. I never indulged in politics during my student days. However, I read a number of known books on Marxism when I was a college student.

When I was practising as an Advocate, I came in contact with Bhuban Mohan Pattanayak, my brother-in-law (cousin sister's

husband) who also was an advocate. He was also a PC Member of CPI(M) in Orissa and later joined CPI(ML).

In 1957 I was married to Sm. Sitama, daughter of Dr. Appala Narasia of village and PS - Salur, district Srikakulam (AP). He was an allopath doctor and quite well-to-do. Later I fell out with my father-in-law because of his reactionary ideas. My wife also very much disliked my politics and ultimately she left me around 1968 and started living permanently with her parents. I had one daughter (Jayanti/10-12 yrs) and one son (Bablu/6-7 yrs.) who continued to live with their mother.

I was once arrested in 1965 under DIR (released along with others in April 1966) and again arrested by Orissa Police on some specific charges for participating in trade union activity. I was a member of the Gunupur Local Committee of the CPI(M) of which Bhuban Mohan was the LC Secy.

In January 1969 I gave up my legal practice and joined the extremist wing of the CPI(M). By then I was aware of the Naxalbari movement and felt that this was the correct path to revolution for the emancipation of the people. Gradually I came to know of Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri and many other important leaders of the movement. In July 1969, I was arrested in a case of Vishakhapatnam on charges of armed struggle and was lodged in Vishakhapatnam Jail. Some of us decided to escape from the jail to continue our revolutionary activities. Thus, after about three months' stay in the jail, one night 11 of us could escape by cutting the iron bars of the windows and thereafter scaling the wall when the guards were asleep. The jail escape was planned mainly by Adibatla Kailasam (AK). Finally Kailasam took me via many other places (Vijaywada, Tirupati etc.) to Madras to the house of one Dr. M.L.Naraina and from there to one Murty's house. Madhavan took me from there to a house where Charu Majumdar was staying and we discussed the situation with him in the Agency area including Srikakulam.

After spending about a week in Madras, we (some of the jail escapees) went to Mahendragiri area of Somepeta Agency via Nagpur and Kharagpur (we did not stay at either place). At Mahendragiri we received information that Ch. Bhaskar Rao and T.Ganapati were killed in an encounter with the police during which Appalasuri was also present along with CTR but both escaped being killed. Appalasuri (MAS) met us at Mahendragiri. From there, A K (Kailasam), A.Nageswar Rao, myself and others went to Parbatipuram area to meet Vempatapu Satyanarayan(VSN).



In April 1970, a State Conference was held in Mysore which was attended, among others, by VSN, AK, MAS, Dr. Mallikarjundu, MYR, Smt. Ram Sita, Mukhalingam, myself and one Girijan of Warangal. Charu Majumdar also attended this State Conference but he came late. It continued for three days and about 30-40 delegates attended. I had some differences with VSN and AK who wanted to give almost exclusive emphasis on annihilation programmes whereas I wanted a good combination between politicisation of the masses along with annihilation. I also wanted that the cadres should be allowed to take part in discussions and in decisions. But AK, particularly VSN, was always in favour of individual decision and he did so in the matter of selection of targets also. When I tried to argue with them about the need for the cadres' role in decision-making instead of imposing it from above, both VSN and AK ridiculed me by saying that study of books and literature was of no use for revolutionary actions. In the State Conference, the following were elected as State Committee members : AK as Secy., VSN, MAS, Sk.Bade, Ravoof, CK, KS, KG Satyamurthy and myself.

I came to Calcutta in the month of May 1970 to attend the party conference. We came by train via Nagpur in two or three groups to Howrah. Myself, AK, VSN, Raja and Sambasiwa Rao came in one batch and we were to wait near the station's Book Stall. Raju went out for a while and came back with a Bengali gentleman. Myself along with VSN and another comrade were taken by the local gentleman to a shelter by taxi which was in Calcutta itself and not in the outskirts.

I cannot say exactly where the Party Congress was held. Besides myself, about 5-6 others came from Andhra Pradesh; Vempatapu Satyanarayan and Adibatla Kailasam were two of the prominent Naxalite leaders from Srikakulam. [Other details of the Party Congress as could be recollected by Nagbhusan Patnaik have been deleted from this Statement since more details are available from the subsequent statements of Souren Bose, Sadhan Sarkar and others.]

We returned to Parbatipuram area after the party Congress in Calcutta. I was present in an operation in the Agency area where five killings took place.

Around 3rd. or 4th. July 1970, I along with Raja, Chindam Naidu (CN), Nageswar Rao, Sambasiva Rao and Appalasuri came to Howrah station from where a Bengali courier took us to a shelter. We stayed there for some days and thereafter Appalasuri and myself were taken

to another shelter (a Doctor's Nursing Home). The two of us were arrested from this place in the late night of 23-24 July 1970 by a raiding party led by the Dy. Commissioner of Calcutta Special Branch and taken straight to their office at Lord Sinha Road around 4-4.30 AM.

### STATEMENT OF KRISHNA KUMAR SANYAL ALIAS KANU SANYAL

Son of Late Ananda Gobinda Sanyal of Siliguri Town, P.S. - Siliguri,  
Dist. - Darjeeling.

[Recorded by Darjeeling District Police]

Arrested on 19.8.1970 in Phansidewa P.S. Case No. 3 dated 19.8.70  
u/s 5 Explosive Substances Act/25 and 27 Arms Act and 120B/399/  
402/121 IPC.

Date and place of birth : Born in or about 1929 in Kurseong (Dist.  
Darjeeling).

Educational background: Passed Matriculation Examination in 1947  
from Pushparani H.E.School, Kurseong. Read upto I.A. at Ananda  
Chandra College, Jalpaiguri (WB).

Political background ; He was associated with Left politics and the  
undivided CPI since his student days (1950) and started taking active  
part in matters relating to peasants and tea garden workers, mainly  
in Siliguri sub-division. He attended the All India Kisan Sabha/AIKS  
(CPI) Conference at Cannanore (Malabar/Kerala) in 1953, the  
conferences of the West Bengal Kisan Sabha (WBKS) in Malda during  
June 1954 and again in 1955 in Hooghly district. All through these  
years, he continued to take active part in the movements of the  
peasants and tea garden workers in Siliguri sub-division. In 1956 he  
was elected Secretary of the Darjeeling District Krishak Samiti (CPI)  
and was taken as the member of the WB Provincial Kisan Sabha  
Council in 1957. He was detained under the PD Act on 17.8.1959  
for his 'prejudicial activities' connected with the food movement  
during the year and was released on 13.9.59. He was again detained  
under D.I.Rules from 5.12.1962 to 22.1.1964 in the wake of the  
Chinese aggression. He became a member of the 7-member  
secretariat of the Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI(Left)  
during the latter part of 1964 and joined the newly formed CPI(M)  
the same year. He was again detained under DIR on 30.10.1964 and  
was released later along with other CPI(M) leaders. His active  
participation in peasants' and tea garden workers' movements in  
Siliguri sub-division continued till the outbreak of Naxalbari movement  
of 1967-68.

Home address : Babupara / Milanpara, Siliguri Town (Dist. Darjeeling)

[Now he generally lives in a mud hut in Hatighisa village,  
P.S.Naxalbari (Dist. Darjeeling).]

Descriptive Roll : Age - 42 years (1970) / Height - 5' 3" / Build -  
Thin/ Hair - Thin; Black & scanty; receding forehead / Complexion  
- Dark / Eyes - Small / Face - Long / Nose - Long & pointed.

#### Statement

1. I had come to the village Baira Bustee, P.S. Phansidewa 2/3  
days before 19.8.70 to meet my partymen there. Kadam Mullik  
and Khudan Mullik also came with me. I would not say from  
where I came. I did not carry any arms with me. The arms,  
explosives seized by Police were kept at that place by my party  
workers. I will not tell from where the arms and explosives  
were procured or by whom.
2. I did not visit Andhra or Debra after my release from jail last  
year. Sometimes I might have visited Goalpara (Assam). I was  
all along in this area including Kishengunj (Dist. Purnea/Bihar).  
Sometimes I went to Calcutta. I never visited Nepal or East  
Pakistan. It is not a fact that I visited China as was published in  
the newspapers earlier. I would rather like to visit China if I get  
an opportunity.  
[Charu Majumdar had been spreading the rumour during 1968-  
70 that he had sent a team to China under Kanu Sanyal and that  
they had met Mao Tse-tung there, and now Kanu Sanyal himself  
repudiates such gossips !]
3. The mortar shells were collected by party workers as those  
were found lying on the road side. We have no cannons to fire  
the mortar shells.
4. As I was asleep during the police raid at the hideout on the  
night of 19.8.70, I could not offer any resistance. If I was not  
sleeping, I would have organised a resistance. I think somebody  
betrayed my presence to the Police. The agitation of CPI(ML)  
will not be adversely affected by my arrest.
5. Satyananda Bhattacharjee and Asit Sen have no connection with  
CPI(ML). There is no group in CPI(ML). Bir Singh Dewan is  
a worker of our party CPI(ML) I do not know about Ran Bahadur  
Khatiwara and Budhiman Bantwa as I could not meet them  
since after my release in April 1969.
6. *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* are the only two mouthpieces of  
CPI(ML). These papers are still published clandestinely after  
the closure of Deshabrati Press from some hidden place which  
I will not disclose. But from the get up of the journals and nice  
printing, one can draw his own conclusion that such printing



is not possible in rural areas of this district and cannot be printed by hand printing machine.

7. No direction was given by our party to the students to burn the educational institutions or to hoist red flags atop educational buildings. Our party did not issue any direction to the followers of our party to destroy the portraits/statues of national leaders. But some students are doing all these things in order to express their outburst against the present setup of administration. Hence we support all such actions. Our party directive to the students in the urban areas is to lend their support for peasants' movement in rural areas by organising such movement, staying in villages. It may be that some anti-social elements have mixed up with our followers. It is a fact that there are some anti-social elements in all political parties.
8. I was not at the place of occurrence (Barajharujote, PS Naxalbari) when Inspr. Sonam Wangdi was killed on 24.5.1967. I was at that time at Ambani (P.S. Phansidewa). I heard about the incident from Khokan Mazumdar in the same afternoon. I do not know why Inspr. Samar Sengupta was assaulted. I also do not know why an attempt was made to kill the Manager of Singbuli T.E. However, these are acts of commission by infuriated people who are against those who act as the henchmen of present Government. The police became target of attacks by CPI(ML) because police is the machinery directly involved in suppressing our movement. There is no particular police officer or men whom we earmarked for murder but in our movement it is inevitable that we have to confront and kill police personnel of whatever rank he may be. There are other Govt. officers who are also trying to suppress our movement but their time will come when we will directly confront them. We directed killing of Jotedars because this landed gentry is the direct representative of the present Govt. (feudal and bourgeois in his language) and are responsible for helping every Govt. in suppressing any popular movement.
9. Police officers and constables were killed by our followers. You have also killed us. Though I was arrested by police on two occasions in the recent past, I was not ill-treated nor was any attempt made to kill me.
10. I am an admirer of Laldenga of Mizo Hills. I never supported the ideology of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

11. It is not the proper time to arouse consciousness amongst the police and the Army men to lend support for our movement. The hatred of the police and the army men against us will be bitter gradually when some police officer and men will be killed by us. But ultimately there will be a common understanding between the police and the army men and our followers and then they will leave to join our revolution.
12. I am aged about 42 years. We are five brothers and one sister. Even before the death of my mother in February 1970, I used to live underground. I do not possess any share in any Tea garden of West Bengal. Most probably my father possessed some shares in some Tea Garden which were sold during his life time.
13. For the first time I met Kishan Chatterjee after my release from jail in April 1969. It is not a fact that I used to stay in the students' Hostel of North Bengal University during Naxalbari disturbances in 1967. There is still our influence amongst some of the present students of North Bengal University, though it may not be like 1967.
14. Our party Congress was already held. I did not attend that Party Congress, as I was not a delegate from this district.
15. I do not support the present land grabbing movement launched by CPI and other parties, as it is nothing but a hoax, because this movement is only meant for distribution of land which will be grabbed. In 1967 when we started such land grabbing movement our aim was to seize lands from the jotedars to start liberation of the area and establish peasants' Govt. in the area. Our comrades had instructions to run the revolutionary Govt. in a liberated area and after the formation of a peasant's government, lands were to be distributed to the peasants. [When it was pointed out that in 1967 Naxalbari movement, the Naxalites did the same as is being done by the CPI in their present land grabbing movement by distributing lands amongst the followers who accompanied the procession in Bijoynagar T.E. and Baramoniramjote (P.S. Naxalbari) after seizure forcefully and after fixing red flags along the boundaries of the lands seized, Kanu Sanyal replied that there might be some instances].
16. At present we are trying to arouse the peasants to start bloody revolution. Gradually the workers in Mills will become

conscious of our ideology and join the revolution. In the end the Armed forces of the country will also join us. At present the Govt. of India is trying to brainwash the lower ranks of the Army and CRP against CPI(ML) but we too have our methods of counteracting such brainwashing. I am unable to disclose the method. CPI(ML) fully supports the agitation of Naga and Mizo rebels although they are not Communists. (He had no explanation for supporting this except for the obvious fact that it keeps a large force of Army and Police busy in the area).

17. In one respect CPI(M) is also termed by us as 'class enemy'. Though they say that their ultimate object is to capture power through revolution, but they have faith in Parliamentary democracy.
18. Hare Krishna Konar [CPI(M)] said before he became a Minister that land reforms cannot be achieved unless there is a change in the present set up of administration. But when he became a Minister of the Govt. of West Bengal, he had forgotten those remarks and had to work under the present set up of administration dictated by the bourgeois and big landlords of the country.
19. Our party supported the last Railway strike. It is also a fact that a circular in cyclostyled copies was distributed amongst the public.
20. I believe Mao Tse-tung as the greatest Marxist in the world. Jyoti Basu, Konar, Dasgupta etc., though swear in the name of Karl Marx, are not true Marxists as they believe in Parliamentary form of Govt. There is no possibility of amalgamation of CPI(M) and CPI(ML). Our party supports all the violent revolutionary movements though some innocent people suffer, as it ultimately furthers the cause of revolution. We do not support communal riots although it might tie up a large number of police and Military forces.
21. I have nothing further to say as the views of my party are well known. I believe that though it may take 20/30 years to bring about a revolution in this country, we shall win ultimately.

### STATEMENT OF SOUREN BOSE

Name with aliases, if any : Souren Bose alias Soumen alias Bhadu alias Sagar alias Joy Singh.

Father's Name : Late Bijay Basanta Bose.

Address : Present – P-189B, Suren Sarkar Road, Calcutta - 10  
Permanent – Mahanandapara, Siliguri, Darjeeling.

Year & place of birth : 22.6.1924, Majdia, Nadia.

Descriptive Roll : Age - 47 years / Height - 5' 6" / Complexion - dark/  
Build - Medium/Face - Oval/ Nose - Prominent / Forehead - Broad  
(receding)/Hair - Mixed black & grey, back brushed, clean shaved/  
normally wears trousers and Hawaian shirt. Distinguishing mark -  
one black mole just on the middle of the chin (very prominent).

Photo & F.P. : Both taken.

Reference of the case : Amherst Street P.S. C/No. 249 dated 22.8.70,  
u/s120B/109/302/147/148/396/395/392/379/121 IPC and 25 (a) Arms  
Act.

Date & and place of arrest : He was picked up on 7.3.71 early hours  
from his wife's residence at P-189B, Suren Sarkar Road, Calcutta-  
10 and detained for 24 hours under provisions of Sec 3(1) of Bengal  
(Suppression of Terrorist Outrages) Act, 1932. He was arrested in  
the above-mentioned case on 8.3.71 and remanded to police custody  
till 22.3.71. Thereafter, he was remanded to judicial custody till 6.5.71.

Articles seized/recovered :

- (i) One Indian Passport No I/987082 dated 3rd August, 1970  
issued from Calcutta to Soumen Bose, s/o Late Bijoybhusan  
Bose of 27, Lansdowne Place, Calcutta.
- (ii) A copy of *Deshabrati* (special issue) dated 10.2.71.
- (iii) One Bengali manuscript letter addressed to Secy., Provincial  
Committee, CPI(ML) written on 27.1.71 by Pranab Mukherji  
of Hooghly D.C.M. in which he has criticised one Nandi (Secy.,  
Hooghly Dist Com) for the latter's pro- Sushital attitude and  
activities.
- (iv) One Bengali manuscript letter dated 5.2.71 addressed to Secy.,  
W.B. State Committee by one Com. Ansar Ali (Shankar)  
alleging that he has been wrongly expelled from the party by  
the Dist. Committee Secy. Comrade Nandi.
- (v) One Bengali manuscript letter addressed to the Secretary,  
Provincial Committee, CPI(ML) written by Pranab Mukherji  
of Hooghly D.C.M. containing background materials about



the writer and his allegations against the Secy of the Dist. Committee (Com. Nandi).

- (vi) One English manuscript note of different aspects of the party, including points raised in discussions at London (enclosed as an Appendix) [It transpired later that this related to the viewpoints of the Communist Party of Great Britain/CPGB(ML) and the Communist Party of China/CPC, vide enclosed supplementary statement of Souren Bose.]
- (vii) One Air India International certificate of vaccination in the name of Soumen Bose.
- (viii) One Bengali manuscript letter dated 4.3.71, addressed to one Sagar Babu and written by one Soumya, asking the former to meet him in the Palm Place house with Andhra report where Com. Sarat may also come.
- (x) One postcard size photograph of Souren Bose and Sutapa Bose.
- (xi) One slip of paper containing a report of CPI(ML) action at Kaliagunge on 31.5.70.
- (xii) One letter addressed to Arabinda-da written by Com. Prabir, Secy, W. Dinajpur Local Committee dated 14.6. giving reports of action on 23rd/30th May at Panchbhaya Village, P.S.-Raigunge, West Dinajpur for publication in *Deshabrati*.
- (xiii) One piece of paper containing a manuscript note in English dt. 14.1.71.

#### Relations in India :

- (i) \*Parents : Dead.
- (ii) Brothers : (i) Nripen Bose (52) of Mahanandapara, Siliguri, Staff correspondent in Siliguri for *Jugantar* and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, (ii) Souren Bose (47), (iii) Biren Bose (44) of Mahanandapara, Siliguri, a wholtimeer and District leader of the CPI(M) in Darjeeling District.

Sister : (i) Sm. Himani Biswas (44), w/o Ajit Biswas of Dhakuria (exact address not known).

Contacts in India : [a long list, deleted as most of the names etc. were known to us by the time Souren was arrested]

#### Contacts in foreign countries :

- (i) Bill Ash, Vice-Chairman, CPGB (ML), (ii) Sm. Ranjana Ash, w/o Bill Ash (D/o late Prof. Nirmal Kumar Siddhanta, ex-Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University), member of the Politburo of the CPGB (ML) and editor of the organ of the Party, (iii) Mr. Taylor,

Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand, (iv) Mr. Lobo Abazi, 86, Rae-de-La Federation, Paris, 15C (France), (v) The Secretary, Post Box 1785, Auckland, New Zealand, (vi) H. Fossick of 1, Lake Close, Walltall, Staffs, (vii) F. Smith of 25, St. George Road, Lemington Spa, Midland (Near Birmingham), (viii) Rezberg, Chairman, CPGB(ML).

#### Statement

I was born at Majdia, Nadia. I was brought up at Siliguri where we have got our own house which we inherited after the death of my father in 1951. My father was the Manager of a tea-garden. My mother predeceased my father while I was aged about 4 years. I have got two brothers and one sister. I had my schooling in Siliguri H.E. School wherefrom I passed Matriculation examination in 1941. I also attended Ripon College, Calcutta for three months. Thereafter I discontinued my studies.

In 1945 I took up a job under the Rationing Deptt, Govt of West Bengal. In 1948 I was retrenched on account of my political leanings. In 1945, I got inclined towards the CPI and became its member at the instance of Satyendra Narayan Majumdar. In 1949 I was arrested in Siliguri (as the party was then declared illegal). I was imprisoned for about 8 months and was lodged in Jalpaiguri Jail. Towards the end of 1949 I was released on bail.

Immediately after my release from jail, I was attacked with T.B. In 1951, I was admitted in Kanchrapara T.B. Hospital for treatment. In March, 1952, I was discharged from the hospital. I then took up my party work. In 1953, the disease relapsed. At the beginning of 1954 I was admitted to the Kurseong T.B. Sanatorium. Towards the end of 1954, I was discharged from the Sanatorium.

In 1957, I took up a job in a motor repairing garage at Siliguri on a monthly salary of Rs. 150.00 (approx); I worked there till 1964 as a head-clerk. By this time, I became a member of the Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI. In November, 1962 I was arrested again in Siliguri (during Sino-Indian border conflict). I was released in the beginning of 1964. When CPI was divided and CPI(M) came into existence, I joined the CPI(M). In the beginning of 1965 I was again arrested as a member of the CPI(M) under DIR and was lodged partly in Alipore Central Jail and partly in Berhampore Central Jail. In April '66, I was released. In 1967 I contested the Siliguri Assembly seat as a CPI(M) candidate but I was defeated by the Congress candidate by a margin of about 7000 votes.

Towards the end of May or in the beginning of June, 1970, I had a chance meeting with Sutapa in a cinema hall at Calcutta (Lighthouse) and we got to know each other better during the following fortnight. At that time I was staying in the house of Prof. Suniti Ghosh at Goabagan. Charu Majumdar used to tell us (myself, Kanu Sanyal and others) that a man cannot attain full sense of responsibility without being married. Finally I decided to marry her and she agreed after some initial hesitation. On 26th June, 1970 our marriage was registered in the Marriage Registration office at Nirmal Chunder Street near the crossing of Dharamtola Street. The following persons were the witnesses : Subhash Ghosh, brother-in-law; Guruprosad Ghosh, brother-in-law; Prof. Shyamal Ghosh. My wife Sutapa Bose nee Ghosh is a Senior Professor of Physics in Sarojini Naidu College, Dum Dum and she earns about Rs. 875/- per month.

I generally read the *Statesman*, *Jugantar*, *Anandabazar Patrika* according to availability. I also read *Darpan*, *Frontier* and *Desh*.

I was brought into the Communist Party in 1945 by Late Satyendra Narayan Majumdar who was then a prominent leader of the CPI in Darjeeling District. He used to take classes on fundamentals of Marxism from which I had some understanding in Marxism. Afterwards when I was in jail in 1949, I read some books written by Lenin and Stalin. First I came in contact with the works of Mao-Tse-Tung in the '50s while I was lying ill. I read some books written by Marx and Lenin such as *Selected works of Karl Marx* and *Collected works of Lenin* etc. During the years 1965-66 when I was lodged in Berhampore Central Jail, I had the occasion to read further books written by Lenin (*Collected Works*) and we [CPI(M) detainees] used to have collective readings and exchange of views.

After coming out of the Jail in 1966, I had occasion to read some of the Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung and Quotations of Mao Tse-Tung. Most of these books were purchased by me from National Book Agency Ltd, Calcutta. By this time, I read the book *Long live the victory of Peoples war* by Lin Piao. It may be mentioned here that a Bengali translation of this book *Jana Yudheyer Joy Dirghajibi Hauk* published in the Puja issue of *Nandan* [monthly Bengali periodical of the CPI(M)] attracted my attention to this book. Afterwards I purchased the English edition of the original book from National Book Agency in 1966 and went through the same.

From the beginning of my political life I along with other members of the then CPI was taught that without a bloody revolution, India

cannot be liberated from foreign and domestic reactionary rules. After the party (CPI) started taking part in elections, party cadres were told that our party (CPI) was taking part in the election only to expose the hollowness of Parliamentary Democracy before the masses. In 1962 while in jail, a serious controversy cropped up in the CPI and I heard from leaders like B.T. Ranadive, P. Sundarayya, Basav Punniyah, Promode Das Gupta and others that the leaders of the CPI like S.A.Dange, P.C.Joshi, Rajeswar Rao, Bhabani Sen and others had dragged the party into the Parliamentary myth and had betrayed the cause of revolution in India. Inside the jail (Dum Dum Central Jail) it was decided by an overwhelming majority of the CPI detainees that a new party would be formed which would be dedicated to the cause of revolution.

In 1964 November the CPI(M) was formed at a Party Congress in Calcutta to which the Dange group leaders were not invited. I attended the conference as a delegate from Darjeeling District. The resolutions passed in this Congress mentioned that there were other means of struggle than election. Immediately after the said party Congress, the majority of the leaders of the West Bengal CPI(M) including ourselves were imprisoned. While in jail at that time I found a lot of discrepancy between words and deeds of the leaders of the CPI(M), specially of P. Sundarayya, Basavpunniyah, E.M.S. Namboodiripad and others. I was disillusioned as all along I believed in bloody revolution as a path of freedom for my countrymen and not in Parliamentary Democracy.

After coming out of jail, I came across some writings of Charu Majumdar in 1966 which were published in pamphlet form in Siliguri. This attracted me towards the possibility of armed agrarian revolution. Since then I focussed my differences on some points to the CPI(M) leaders (both at District and Provincial levels) supporting the views of Charu Majumdar expressed in those pamphlets. Still I remained in the CPI(M) with my confusions regarding the CPI(M) line of approach towards revolution. Impelled by the idea that a new phase might be ushered in if the UF came into power, I contested the election in 1967. After the UF came to power, its activities failed to impress me, specially with regard to land reformation policy. [This is not borne out by facts. The UF Govt. was formed in West Bengal on 2 March 1967 and the Naxalbari disturbances started from the very next day, i.e. 3 March, 1967].

In the All Bengal Peasants' Conference held in Burdwan in 1966,



Hare Krishna Konar, Secretary of the West Bengal Provincial Krishak Sabha (WBPKS), declared that land reformation was only possible by the peasants themselves and not through the conventional laws neither through the Govt. machinery.

Probably in May 1967, Kanu Sanyal and I met Hare Krishna Konar in Siliguri and after the meeting I was convinced that CPI(M) would not be able to do anything. Meanwhile the Naxalbari movement had started.<sup>1</sup>

The Naxalbari movement was theoretically initiated by Charu Majumdar but Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal gave a practical shape to it. After the movement started (in March, 1967), I was convinced that this was the right track. I like to add that even earlier Charu Majumdar had started expressing the view that the CPI(M) leadership would not be able to do good to the peasants. He expressed his views to Kanu Sanyal and me apart from others. After the election of 1967, it became our conviction that it was of no use being in the CPI(M).

In September, 1967 Charu Majumdar and I were expelled from the CPI(M). I was then a member of the Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI(M).

I joined the Naxalbari movement whole-heartedly in November, 1967. In the meantime I had many occasions to hold discussions with Charu Majumdar. In joining the Naxalbari movement, Kanu Sanyal exercised considerable influence to mould my ideas. It cannot be gainsaid that Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal steered me towards the Naxalbari ideology.

In the middle of November, 1967, I went underground in the Naxalbari area viz Chowpukhuria, Hatighisa, Naxalbari, Buragunj, Kharibari etc. During this period I used to stay in Naxalbari Tea Estate, Phulbari T.E., Azamabad T.E., Thanjhora T.E., Merryview T.E. Sanika Munda and one Goala of Phulbari T.E., Bayer Singh of Thanjhora T.E., Lalshai Kherwar of Merryview T.E., one Lohar of Naxalbari T.E. and Jagmohan of Azamabad T.E. provided me with shelters.

I am now a member of the Central Committee as well as a member of the W.B. State Committee of the CPI(ML).

Knowledge about the party structure (organisational aspect) etc. :

In March-April 1967 the Naxalbari movement started under the guidance of Charu Majumdar. Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik, Khokon

Majumdar, Kesab Sarkar and Jangal Santhal played important role in leading the movement in the field.

Sometime in May or June 1967, a committee styled "Naxalbari-O-Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samity" (NOKSSS) was formed in Calcutta. The Naxalbari movement continued till Oct. 1968. It fizzled out towards the end of Oct. '68 with the arrest of Kanu Sanyal; all other important field leaders and workers were arrested much earlier.<sup>2</sup>

In the first week of Nov. '67, a rally was organised at the foot of the Monument (Calutta) by the NOKS. I did not attend that rally. More or less at the same time, the All India Coordination Committee of the Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) was formed with the following members: Charu Majumdar/ Sushital Ray Choudhury/Saroj Dutta/Parimal Dasgupta/Asit Sen (all of West Bengal) /Satyanarain Singh (Bihar)/Shiv Kumar Mishra and S.N.Tiwari(UP)/Appu(Madras)/Nagi Reddy(Andhra)/Kunikkal Narayan, father of Sm. Ajitha(Kerala) and a few others.

Subsequently the AICCCR met somewhere in Calcutta and made a policy statement on the following lines :

1. That the Committee will discard parliamentary path.
2. That it will take up the path of armed struggle as the only path of liberation.
3. That it will build up Naxalbari type of movement everywhere in India.
4. That it will build a real revolutionary party through armed struggle.

The Committee also decided to publish a mouthpiece in English entitled *Liberation*.

I may recall the two important features concerning the AICCCR differences developed with Parimal Dasgupta and Nagi Reddy mainly on Trade Union movements, mass movements and open mass organisations (this was towards the end of 1968). Both of them were of the same opinion but advocated different ways. Besides, Nagi Reddy opined "we cannot take up the Boycott election slogan as a permanent one. Sometime in course of the struggle, it may be necessary to take part in elections in some areas."

Parimal Dasgupta was also very angry over an editorial published in the *Deshabrati* branding Soviet activities in Czechoslovakia as open aggression. He viewed that this attitude was very wrong.

The two views of Nagi Reddy and Parimal Dasgupta were opposed by other leaders of the AICCCR. Later, both of them dissociated themselves from the AICCCR sometime towards the end of 1968.

Kunikkal Narayan of Kerala also gradually dissociated himself from the Committee though he had no apparent contradictions.

The formation at the lower levels of the Committee at this stage was in the following form : State Coordination Committees /District Coordination Committees /Local Coordination Committees.

Prominent State Committees were of West Bengal, Bihar and U.P. :

The AICCCR last met on 22nd April 1969 between 10 am and 5 pm at Tower Hotel, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. It was an extended meeting and from that date the AICCCR and the lower formations ceased to exist. The following persons, among others, attended this meeting : Charu Majumdar/Sushital Ray Choudhury/Saroj Dutta/Souren Bose/Kanu Sanyal/Asit Sen(all of West Bengal)/Satyanarain Singh(Bihar)/Shiv Kumar Mishra and S.N.Tiwari(UP)/Panchadri Krishnamurti and Tejeswar Rao(Andhra)/Appu(Madras).

Appu presided over the meeting. Charu Majumdar stressed the need for forming a communist party to distinguish itself from the CPI and the CPI(M). This view was endorsed by the members present. Satyanarain Singh suggested that the name of the party should be CPI (Marxist-Leninist). It was approved by all.

It was decided in this meeting that the announcement regarding the formation of the party would be made at a rally at Calcutta Monument Maidan on 1st May 1969.

It may be mentioned here that neither Kanu Sanyal nor myself was a member of the AICCCR. Kanu Sanyal was invited in that extended meeting as a special invitee and I also accompanied Shri Sanyal. We reached Calcutta on 21st April '69 and put up at Tower Hotel, Calcutta where we stayed till 2nd May '69.

The meeting also elected a Central Organising Committee (COC) with the following members : Charu Majumdar/Sushital Ray Choudhury/Kanu Sanyal/Souren Bose/Satyanarain Singh/Shiv Kumar Mishra/Panchadri Krishnamurti/Appu/Saroj Dutta.

Sometime on 26th or 27th April 1969, an extended meeting of the West Bengal State Co-ordination Committee was held near Talla Water Tank in a one-storeyed building. The following persons attended the meeting : Asit Sen/Sadhan Sarkar/Shyamal Nandi/Mahadeb Mukherjee/Souren Bose/Kanu Sanyal/Sushital Roy Choudhury/Saibal Mitra/Dilip Pyne/Asit Chakraborti/Bonbehari Chakraborti/Prof. Suniti Ghosh.

Either Sushital Roy Choudhury or Asit Sen introduced Kanu Sanyal and me to those who attended the meeting. I do not remember who

took me to the meeting place. The meeting took the following decisions :

1. That the formation of the party would be announced at a meeting to be held on 1.5.69 in Calcutta.
2. That Asit Sen would preside.
3. That besides Kanu Sanyal, Satyananda Bhattacharji and Bonbehari Chakraborti would deliver speeches.
4. That a resolution would be moved explaining the significance of May Day.

It may be recalled in this connection that Kanu Sanyal objected to the inclusion of Satyananda Bhattacharji in the list of speakers on the ground that Shri Bhattacharji did not belong to Naxalite group. Sushital Roy Choudhuri explained that Satyananda Bhattacharji was regarded as an exponent of their theories in public meetings and hence he was taken in.

I attended the Maidan meeting on 1st May 1969. Kanu Sanyal, Asit Sen, Satyananda Bhattacharji, Shyamal Nandi (at that time Secy. of the Calcutta DOC) and Bonbehari Chakraborti were present among others.

During this period from 21st April to 2nd May 1969, I visited the houses of Sushital Roy Choudhuri (Maniktola Housing Estate), Saroj Dutta (Chetla Road), Asit Sen (Landsdowne Place). I also visited the office of *Deshabrati* and the house of Tapan Mitra of Clarke Street. I may recall that in the house of Asit Sen, I met Dr. Bejoy Bose, a close associate of Dr. Atal and Dr. Kotnish. Dr. Bose was the youngest member of the Medical Mission which visited China during 1940/42. He has a dispensary on Hazra Road near Lansdowne Place. He is a specialist in needle treatment (Chinese method).

On 2nd May '69 I left Calcutta for Naxalbari area. There I worked for the party with Kanu Sanyal, Jangal Santhal and others. At that time Charu Majumdar met me on several occasions. We discussed about the revival of Naxalbari movement.

Sometime towards the middle of July '69 (probably on 17th or 18th July) Kanu Sanyal and myself came to Calcutta by train. Charu Majumdar came by plane. Initially I put up in the house of my sister, Sm. Himani Biswas, w/o Ajit Biswas on Sarat Ghosh Garden Road, near Dhakuria Rly. Station. Next day I shifted to a two-storeyed building near the crossing of Raja Dinendra Street and R. G. Kar Road and stayed there for 2 days. Shyamal Nandi arranged that house. As far as I remember, Charu Majumdar also stayed in that



house at that time. Meetings were held there on two consecutive days to resolve the difference with Asit Sen. Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Kany Sanyal, Souren Bose, Shyamal Nandi and Dilip Pyne attended those meetings. Asit Sen was conspicuously absent. The crux of the problem was whether guerrilla warfare is the only way to mobilise the masses. Asit Sen's view was something different. We waited for him for another day but the latter did not turn up. Finally Shyamal Nandi opined that both the groups should follow their respective ideology. Thus Asit Sen and his group went out of CPI(ML). The day after the meeting, Kanu Sanyal and myself left Calcutta for Naxalbari.

Towards the middle of Sept. '69 Kanu Sanyal and myself came to Calcutta to attend the meeting of the COC. We put up at Tower Hotel for two days. The meeting was held at the said hotel. Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Souren Bose, Saroj Dutta, Tejeswar Rao, Satyanarain Singh, Shiv Kumar Misra and Appu attended the meeting. I do not remember the nature of discussions which we had in that meeting.

After our two days' stay in Calcutta, Kanu Sanyal and myself left for Vijaywada to attend an extended meeting of the Andhra State Committee. The reservation in the train for our journey was made in the name of "Dasgupta" and "Sen". On reaching Vijaywada we put up in a hotel near the Railway Station. The meeting did not take place. During our stay in Vijaywada, I met Kola Venkaiah (Krishna District) and some representatives from Trichur, Rayalseema, Warangal, Khammam (Telengana Dist.) The original agenda of the meeting was to discuss problems in Andhra and to find out solutions. But as the representatives from Srikakulam District failed to turn up due to close surveillance by police, the main agenda of the meeting could not be taken up. Instead, discussions were held with the aforesaid representatives basing on Kola Vekaiah's doubt about the concept of "boycott election" as a strategic slogan for the whole world. On the 8th day (probably on 29th or 30th Sept '69) of our arrival, we left Vijayawada for Naxalbari. We returned to Naxalbari and stayed there till Dec '69.

Probably in Oct '69 there was a general strike by the workers in all the tea-gardens in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri. All of us (Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik, Keshab Mallik and myself) moved in those areas to organise the workers in support of the strike. At that time I met Rupna Rajgore, Manga Rajgore, Punjab Rao, Kamalakant Singh,

Panchanan Sarkar, Jhora Munda, Sanika Munda, Bharatlal, Premlal Singh, Shibsingh Rajgore, Birsingh Rajgore and others who were prominent cadres of the CPI(ML).

Till Dec '69, I was in those areas and sometimes moved with Kanu Sanyal. More or less, during this period I visited Jorburnglow and Mirik in Darjeeling District for party work. I met Krishnabhakta Sharma, Birsingh Dewan, Raibahadur Rai, D.B. (a Nepali), Dupting (a Nepali), Buddhiman Bantwa, Jal Kumar Chhetri and Shyamlal Bahun, all leading cadres of Darjeeling District. I was there for about seven days.

Towards the middle of Jan '70, I visited Jalpaiguri District (Lataguri, Nagrakata, Banarhat, Malbazar and the rural areas of Alipurduar). There I met Sunil Das, Secretary of the Jalpaiguri DOC, Prabir Mukharji, Ramprosad Chaudhuri @ Ramu, Ajoy Ghatak @ Aju, Mantu Mukharji, David Vengraj, Sukra Oraon, Pabitrarani Saha and others, I was there till 3rd week of Feb '70. Thereafter I returned to Naxalbari area.

While in Jalpaiguri, I came to know, probably from Prabir Mukharji, that the State Conference of the party would be held in Calcutta on 15th March '70. On 11th March '70, I left Naxalbari for Calcutta. Kanu Sanyal accompanied me. We reached Calcutta on 12th March when Prof. Shyamal Ghosh received us at Sealdah Rly. Station. From there, he took us to a double-storeyed house (1st floor) near Lake Market where we stayed for one night. The following day Prof. Ghosh again took us to the Tower Hotel. On our arrival at the hotel, we found Mahadeb Mukharji, Asit Chakraborti and Ashim Chatarji (this was the first time I met Ashim) who were waiting there. A meeting (prior to State Conference) of the West Bengal SOC was held at the Tower Hotel at about 1-30 pm on 13.3.71. Mahadeb Mukharji (Burdwan), Asit Chakraborti (Howrah), Ashim Chatarji (Midnapore), Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Shoven Chatarji @ Nadu (Nadia), Kanu Sanyal, Sadhan Sarkar, Kali Prosad Chaudhuri (24-Pgs) and myself attended. Mahadeb Mukharji probably presided over the meeting. A political resolution drafted by Sushital Roy Choudhuri was accepted with amendments. The resolution contained a review of the position of the party's movement in West Bengal and some directives about the development of armed struggle in West Bengal. The directives were as follows :

1. Without guerrilla actions, purposeless political campaign will not have any effect on the peasant masses.

2. In order to develop guerrilla struggle, mutual doubts in the party must be abolished and firm discipline should be established. (The question of mutual doubt arose as "doubt everything, otherwise you will not learn" — this trend had been developing amongst the party cadres, specially in Calcutta and South Bengal).

3. The resolution guarded against poly-centrism which was manifested in the way of thinking of some that "we accept Charu Majumdar but do not accept the COC" or "accept the COC and not the SOC" and so on.

4. A panel of would-be members of the State Committee to be elected in the conference was finalised as follows : Charu Majumdar/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Saroj Dutta/Ashim Chatarji/Mahadeb Mukharji/Asit Chakraborti/Shoven Chatarji/Kaliprosad Chaudhuri/Souren Bose/Kanu Sanyal/Khokan Mazumdar/Sadhan Sarkar.

The meeting continued till 14.3.70. On 15.3.70 afternoon, we shifted to the venue of the State Conference at Behala (the same house where the party Congress was held in May 1970). We went there by batches in different taxis led by some boys of Calcutta whom I do not know. Of course, Prof. Shyamal Ghosh was one of them. The house was a double-storeyed building. The conference was held at the ground floor in a big room which could accommodate 30 persons easily. It had an attached bathroom. We were asked not to go out during our stay there and in fact we never came out till the conference was over.

The conference started at about 8 pm on 15.3.70 and continued throughout the night. Satyanarain Singh of Bihar attended the conference as a fraternal delegate. The following persons attended the conference : Charu Majumdar @ Chandra @ CM / Sushital Roy Choudhuri @ Purna / Saroj Dutta @ Sasanka @ Surya / Kanu Sanyal @ Raphel / Ashim Chatarji @ Kaka / Mahadeb Mukharji / Asit Chakraborti / Shoven Chatarji @ Nadu / Kadam Mallik / Jangal Santhal / Bir Singh Dewan @ BS / Krishnabhakta Sharma @ KB / Khokan Mazumdar @ Abdul Hamid @ Fagu @ KM / Sadhan Sarkar / Prof. Suniti Ghosh (he was at that time working as the Secretary of the Calcutta DOC) / Kaliprosad Chaudhuri / Tushar Chanda (Burdwan) / Another from Burdwan / One Bhattacharji from Nadia / One Sister of Calcutta / Pankaj Chaudhuri of Burdwan / Another person from Calcutta / One person from Howrah and six others including myself. That means in all 30 persons including Satyanarain Singh attended the Conference.

Discussions were held on the draft programme of the party which was finalised in the COC meeting held prior to the party Congress and the draft resolution adopted earlier. Charu Majumdar was the main speaker, Sushital Roy Choudhuri placed the draft resolution as passed by the SOC meeting prior to the Conference. While explaining things, Charu Majumdar opined that open mass organisation and open mass movement would not develop guerrilla action. He added that purposeless political campaign also cannot develop guerrilla action.

The resolution was passed unanimously. Copies of the resolution, brought by SRC earlier, were distributed in the meeting. I do not like to give details about the political resolution and draft programme of the CPI(ML) as those were published in detail in *Liberation* for the months of May-July, 1970.

In this conference, the word "organising" was deleted and the State Organising Committee since then was named as State Committee. It was felt that the organising phase was over and as such the Committee might be termed as State Committee.

By 11 am. on 16.3.70 we dispersed from that place. Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik, Khokan Mazumdar, Jangal Santhal, Bir Singh Dewan, Krishnabhakta Sharma and myself went straight to Sealdah Rly Station and availed ourselves of Darjeeling Mail for Naxalbari area. While Bir Singh Dewan and Krishnabhakta Sharma left for the Hill area from New Jalpaiguri Rly. Station, rest of us went to Naxalbari area.

Sometime in the first week of April '70 I went to Jalpaiguri and visited Nagrakata, Banarhat, Lataguri and other places. I also went to Naxalbari. In Jalpaiguri I moved with Prabir Mukharji, Ramprosad Chaudhuri @ Ramu, Sunil Das, Secy. of the Jalpaiguri DC, Mantu Mukharji, David Vengraj, Ajoy Ghatak @ Aju of Malbazar and others, briefed them on the party line and conveyed to them the deliberations of the party conference. In Lataguri, I put up in the house of a peasant where I held a meeting with the above-named persons of the Jalpaiguri DC excepting Mantu Mukharji. In Naxalbari I met Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik, Jangal Santhal, Manga Rajgore, Keshab Sarkar, Khokan Mazumdar, at different places in Naxalbari area. In the meeting at Jalpaiguri I said about the party programme and the party Congress. At Darjeeling I met B.S. Dewan at Kalej Valley T.E., P.S. Jorbunglow.

I came to Calcutta along with Kanu Sanyal sometime on 11.5.70 to attend a meeting of the COC and the party Congress. It may be



mentioned here that at that time Charu Majumdar came back after attending State Conferences of Bihar, UP, Andhra and Madras. Satyanarain Singh took him to Bihar. Probably CM also went to Assam as there was a programme like that. From Sealdah Rly. Station, Prof. Shyamal Ghosh took us to Tower Hotel. Till the evening of 14th May '70 Kanu Sanyal, Shiv Kumar Misra, Satyanarain Singh, Appu, Nagbhusan Patnaik, Appalasuri, R. P. Shroff, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Charu Majumdar and myself stayed in the said hotel for taking part in the COC meeting.

The COC meeting was held at the Tower hotel from 12.5.70 to 14.5.70. Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Satyanarain Singh, Shiv Kumar Misra, Appu, R.P. Shroff, Nagbhusan Patnaik, Appalasuri, Sushital Roy Choudhuri and Saroj Dutta attended the meeting. The meeting finalised the draft programme and the draft constitution of the party. Appu presided, Charu Majumdar and Sushital Roy Choudhuri placed the draft programme and Satyanarain Singh the draft Constitution. Discussions continued till 14.5.70 (with break for tea, lunch etc.) centering round the draft programme. It was decided that the draft programme would be placed before the party Congress by me and Satyanarain Singh and the draft constitution by Shiv Kumar Misra and R. P. Shroff. As there was no time for drafting the political resolution, it was decided that CM would place a draft political resolution before the party Congress.

On 14.5.70 evening, we left the hotel in batches for the venue of the party Congress at Behala. The party Congress was held in a double-storeyed building. It was the same house where the State Conference was held on 15.3.70. I am not in a position to locate the house though I had been there on two occasions. There were clear instructions to us not to go out of the place of the meeting till it was over. We strictly adhered to the instructions. Prof. Shyamal Ghosh and a few other CPI(ML) members of Calcutta (mostly youths) took us to the venue of the Congress in batches.

The party Congress was held there on 15th and 16th May 1970. It started at about 10 am on 15.5.70 and ended in the afternoon of 16.5.70. Probably the officials of the Calcutta DC selected this place. About 60 persons including the following attended the party Congress : Charu Majumdar/Kanu Sanyal/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Souren Bose/Saroj Dutta/Suniti Ghosh/Ashim Chatarji/Mahadeb Mukherjee (all of West Bengal)/Adibatla Kailasam, Nagbhusan Patnaik and Appalasuri (Andhra)/Satyanarain Singh, Vijay, Keshab Routh, (perhaps)

Rajkishore Singh (Bihar)/Shiv Kumar Mishra, S. N. Tiwari, Upadhyay (UP)/R.P.Shroff (J&K)/Barthakur (Assam)/Appu, Nagaraj(Tamil Nadu)/Ambadi with another person (Kerala)/Daya Singh and another person (Punjab)/Rabi Das(Orissa).

Some more delegates from UP, Andhra and Bihar attended the party Congress but I do not remember their names now. Sadhan Sarkar and Prof. Shyamal Ghosh supervised the arrangements and looked after the delegates.

The main agenda of the Conference was as follows :

1. To pass the programme drafted by the COC.
2. To accept the draft constitution prepared by the COC.
3. To pass a political resolution drafted by Charu Majumdar.
4. Election of the Central Committee members.
5. Miscellaneous.

Item No. 1 was moved by Satyanarain Singh and myself.

Item No. 2 was moved by Shiv Kumar Misra and Ram Piara Shroff and item no. 3 which was drafted by CM was moved by him.

The following controversial points were raised in the conference :

1. Analysis of the present Indian society - whether it is semi-feudal or semi-colonial? (According to Upadhyay of UP this part of the programme was not correctly analysed. He, however, later withdrew his amendment).
2. Formation of the Democratic Front - Upadhyay brought an amendment that it should be termed as Democratic Council. He, however, withdrew the amendment.
3. Economic development and Industrial development.
4. Detailed narration of the peasants' struggle should find place in the party programme (the amendment was brought by Upadhyay and was accepted).
5. Over the role of Charu Majumdar: practically nothing was mentioned in the political resolution about the role of CM in building up CPI(ML) after the Naxalbari movement. Andhra suggested that it should be clearly mentioned in the political resolution that CM was the revolutionary authority. Kerala did not accept this view and suggested that the role of CM should be mentioned in a separate resolution and not in the political resolution. Ashim Chatarji and Satyanarain Singh viewed that the role of CM should be mentioned in the political resolution but not in so many words. This led to a heated discussion. Among the W.B. delegates,

there was a division. Ashim Chatarji's view was not shared by anybody of the W.B. delegates. Kanu Sanyal and myself endorsed the view of Andhra. Saroj Dutta and Sushital Roy Choudhuri played more or less a neutral role. The discussion on this issue generated such heat that CM was forced to intervene. He stressed that there should not be any further discussion on this score. His suggestion of keeping a para in the political resolution mentioning his role as a leader of the CPI(ML) was finally accepted.

On the 16th morning, the conference elected the following as Cental Committee (CC) members : Charu Majumdar, Souren Bose, Saroj Dutta, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Kanu Sanyal, Ashim Chatarji(WestBengal) /Satyanarain Singh, Vijay(Bihar)/Shiv Kumar Mishra(UP)/R.P.Shroff(J&K)/Nagbhusan Patnaik, Appalasuri (Andhra)/L.Appu(Tamil Nadu)/Ambadi(Kerala)/Daya Singh (Punjab)=13.

The same afternoon (16.5.70) the CC met and elected the following members of the Politburo (PB) : Charu Majumdar/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Satyanarain Singh/RP Shroff/Shiv Kumar Mishra =5.

There was a proposal to take 7-9 members in the PB and a suggestion came that one person from Andhra should be taken in the PB. It was then decided that there would be a provision to take 7-9 members in the PB but for the time being the PB should not comprise of more than 5 members as elected. In this connection, CM pointed out that there was a difference of opinion amongst the Andhra delegates over the selection of their representative in the PB. As such, CM opined that it would not be wise to take anybody from Andhra at this stage till the issue was decided by the Andhra members themselves.

It may be mentioned here that in this party Congress, the COC was converted into CC and a directive was issued to name the lower Committees (from State level downwards) as SC, DC & LC. Units remained as units.

I may recall in this connection that there was a provision in the party constitution that the District and Local Committees would be termed as Regional and Area Committees respectively. It was presumed that after the party Congress, the DCs and LCs would be renamed as such. Uptil now, some DCs and LCs have been renamed as Regional Committees and Area Committees respectively, but there are many left to be renamed as such. This provision found a place in the constitution as the problem of working in contiguous parts of

different districts or States raised the problem of the name "District Committee" to be given to such working areas. This problem was particularly noticed in the bordering areas of W. Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Initially the cadres of these three bordering areas were controlled by the Midnapore District Committee. Subsequently it was felt that since the cadres belonged to three different States, the name "District Committee" may remain in most cases but in certain areas, it was to be renamed as "Area Committees".

In the CC meeting held on 16.5.70 just after the party Congress, the problem of holding CC meetings with so many members was raised by almost all the members. So it was suggested, probably by Shiv Kumar Misra, that the CC be divided into Zonal Bureaux. He added that the whole of India could be divided into different Zones such as Eastern Zone, Southern Zone, Northern Zone etc. Considering the contiguity of the States, it was decided that the CC members working in those Zones would form such Zonal Bureaux. These Zonal Bureaux would meet from time to time and would report developments of their respective Zones to the PB.

Since the party Congress, I continued to stay in Calcutta at the following places : [all the names, addresses and other details omitted so as not to disclose their identities.]

Either on 30th.June 1970 or 1st. July, my wife Sutapa and I went to Delhi to meet my sister-in-law who could not attend our marriage. We left Delhi probably on the 12th July and returned to Calcutta on the 14th and stayed at 6 Chaltabagan Lane till 22nd July when we shifted to our new flat at P-189B Suren Sarkar Road, Beliaghata, Cal-10. The flat is in the name of my wife, Sm. Sutapa Bose (nee Ghosh) on a monthly rent of Rs. 200/-. I may mention here that in the meantime I told my wife about my involvement in the CPI(ML).

On 18th August 1970 I attended a meeting of the leading members of the State Committee at the residence of Shibangsu Mukharji in North Calcutta. The meeting which continued till 10 pm was attended by Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh and myself. In this meeting Sushital Roy Choudhuri first raised some differences about the management of *Deshabrati* paper and the actions in the city. He pointed out that for the last four months he was not being consulted about the publication of some items of news and articles in *Deshabrati* though he was the Editor-in-Chief. CM and Saroj Dutta pointed out that sometimes in might have happened but this should not recur. SRC also pointed out that



in a particular issue his name as the Editor-in-Chief was not printed. He expressed his displeasure over this and viewed that there had been a tendency to ignore him; CM replied that there was no such intention. Besides, SRC also wanted to have clarification on the following points :

1. City movement/actions.
2. Students' movement/actions.
3. Damaging statues of national leaders.

As regards city movements and students' movements, SRC thought that the party should take up urgent and immediate demands to rouse the people with the students behind the party. He added that it seemed to him that the present actions in the city were rather isolating the party from the general masses. As regards the damage of the statues of national leaders, he thought that the party should assess properly before damaging the statues of the personalities like Rabindranath etc. CM did not agree on this, expressed that detailed discussion was not possible in this meeting and asked SRC to submit a written version of his opinion which would be circulated amongst the party-cadres for opinion. SRC agreed to this and observed that it seemed to him that he was holding views different from those of the other leaders present. So he (SRC) gave out that so long the differences were not resolved, he should not remain as the Chief-Editor of *Deshabarti* and should not also remain as the Secretary of the State Committee of the party. Charu Majumdar agreed that he (SRC) would no longer be the Chief-Editor of *Deshabarti* (It may be mentioned here that since then the name of SRC did not appear in *Deshabarti* as Editor-in-Chief). As regards the State Committee Secretaryship, CM said that it would be decided later on. This was the first indication of the differences between CM and SRC.

I left Calcutta for North Bengal on 6th Dec '70, and visited Naxalbari and Jalpaiguri areas for party work. On 20th Dec '70, I returned to Calcutta and put up at Suren Sarkar Road residence.

On 21st or 22nd Dec '70, I attended a meeting of the State Committee at Basirhat. I went to Barrackpore by train from Sealdah. I availed myself of a bus and reached Basirhat towards the evening. I had to walk some distance. The name of the place where the meeting was held ended with a word "gunge". It was a village. I was informed about this meeting by a courier who had been to my Beliaghata residence.

It was a thatched house probably 3 miles off from Basirhat town.

It was a house of a middle class peasant. I found Charu Majumdar there who had reached earlier. Besides CM, Saroj Dutta, Ashim Chatarji and myself attended the meeting. Some local boys were also present there. Perhaps, Somnath Ghosh of Calcutta or 24-Parganas also attended. In the meeting, Charu Majumdar contended that the peasants' guerrilla squads in different places were to be converted into PLA. He also said that Peoples' Revolutionary Committees should also be formed simultaneously. The responsibility of the Revolutionary Committees would be to distribute the landlords' land amongst the landless peasants and distribution of paddy after harvesting amongst the landless and poor peasants, holding of peoples' courts where possible, formation of village militia to defend the rights of the peasants. To go through the programme, the peasants would feel the need to defend themselves from attacks by the class enemies and through this process PLA units would develop. It was given out that this process was adopted to create a mass-basis for the formation and development of PLA. It was pointed out that the PLA units would be responsible to the Revolutionary Committees which in turn would be responsible to the Area Committees. In this meeting, so far I remember, either Ashim Chatarji or myself raised the question about the all-India position of the party after the document of SRC and Satyanarain Singh were circulated amongst the party cadres and also the question of formation of the PLA. I pointed out that these two issues were not taken up in any CC meeting. CM replied that there had been some adverse effect on the party in different States other than West Bengal after the circulation of the documents of SRC and Satyanarain Singh. On the question of formation of PLA, CM opined that it needed explanation to the party cadres of different States and that was why he himself would visit South and North India in the early part of 1971.

On 23rd Dec '70, I left for Burdwan by a morning train. I went to Howrah Rly. Station and met a courier (age-25/28 yrs., complexion-wheatish, towards dark, height medium, built-medium, hair back brushed, wearing dhuti and punjabi) near the Enquiry Office of the S.E. Rly. The code word was "Dada Naki? Dada ki Burdwan Local-e jaben?" I accompanied him. It may be mentioned that it was decided in the Basirhat meeting that I would have to attend a meeting of the Burdwan District Committee at Burdwan. The meeting in question was held on 23rd Dec '70 in a single-storeyed building near

Burdwan University (at a distance of 50 yds. from Burdwan University). Mahadeb Mukharji, Tushar Chanda, Pankaj Chowdhuri, Kuikar (a student - 23/25 yrs), myself and 3 other youths attended the meeting. Discussions were held on the formation of PLA and PRC. I reproduced the talks which we had in the meeting of the State Committee at Basirhat. I suggested that the units should be converted into PLA and that PRC would comprise of 5/7 persons.

On 24th Dec '70, I returned to Calcutta and stayed at Beliaghata flat. I continued to stay in Calcutta till I was arrested on 7.3.71. During this period, I attended my wife at N R S Hospital from 5th January to 25th January 1971 where she was admitted for hernia operation.<sup>3</sup>

I may mention here that on 4.3.71 a courier (age 17/20 yrs, fair complexion, medium height, thin built, wearing shirt and trouser) brought a letter from one Soumya. The letter was addressed to Sagar which is one of my tech names. It was an intimation that I was to attend a meeting at Palm Place after 6 pm the same day (4.3.71). I was also asked to bring the Andhra report. The courier told me to wait at the crossing of Gurusaday Road and Amir Ali Avenue at 6 pm to be picked up by a courier who would lead me to the meeting place.

During my stay in Beliaghata residence, Prof. Suniti Ghosh came to my place sometime in the middle of Jan '71. By the by he told me that the leading cadres of the party in and around Calcutta are being advised not to stay in this area for about 20 days from 1.3.71 to avoid the chances of detection as it was apprehended that members of different political parties, in course of their approaches to the voters from house to house, might detect the presence of the leaders of the CPL(ML). Shri Ghosh wanted to know from me what I would do. I replied that I did not run the risk of being detected as being a man of North Bengal, was not known to the local cadres of the political parties; my presence in Calcutta house was essential owing to the illness of my wife. Moreover, this shelter is not known to the police.

While I was abroad, some of the members of the CC met somewhere in Central India (probably near Delhi) during Sept '70. That was a partial meeting of the CC. Charu Majumdar, Saroj Dutta, Shiv Kumar Misra and Satyanarain Singh attended the meeting. At that meeting, Satyanarain Singh placed a document of difference with C M. The differences were on the following points :

1. The party programme was not being properly followed by CM.
2. The city movements were not correctly led.
3. Attitude towards the rich peasants was not correct.
4. As the main political trend in the world now is the trend of revolution, in India we must try to achieve maximum unity against US Imperialism. So, the struggle should be planned in such a way that this unity is not hampered.

It was decided that Satyanarain Singh would place the document before the CC which would circulate the same among different units along with a note from CM.

I may mention here that both Sushital Ray Choudhury and Satyanarain Singh are in the party though there were differences. I have no information about the dissolution of Bihar State Committee.

I may recall here that in the early stage there was controversy over the definition of class-enemy. A question arose whether police would be treated as class enemy. This controversy was resolved with the consensus that police did not fall in the category of class-enemy. This controversy was raised in the party on the issue of resisting police repression in some areas of West Bengal and Bihar. It was discussed that though police force was acting on the orders of the reactionary State power, the members of the police force do not come in the category of exploiting class. Officially, the party had no decision either at CC level or SC level to annihilate policemen. There was, however a general understanding from the very beginning that when the secrecy of the organisation was at stake through leakage by police agents, care should be taken against them.

I give below my opinion on the following issues :

(a) Damage of Statues : Damaging the statues first started with the statues of Gandhi. This took place spontaneously first in Calcutta followed by many places in India towards the end of 1969. Our party [CPI(ML)] not only did not oppose this act of damage but also supported it as we thought that Gandhi had totally betrayed the struggle of Indian people for freedom against the British Imperialists. It was a belief among the Communist circles even when I was in the CPI since 1948 that the Communist movement can progress in India by fighting the reactionary ideology of the ruling class, namely Gandhism, which was actually propagating non-violence against the violent oppression and repression of the British Imperialists. It is true that a reactionary ideology cannot be uprooted only by damaging statues. A long-drawn political and ideological explanation is required



for this but at a certain stage of the movement such damage of statues expresses popular hatred and draws attention of the general people towards the issue. Afterwards, damaging statues of Vidyasagar, Asutosh Mukharji, Acharya P. C. Roy, Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore took place. This also started spontaneously which revealed a popular wrath against these persons. When these took place there was a thinking in the party about the cause of this and the party came to the opinion that most of these persons had in some way or other helped the British Imperialists to establish their rule firmly, specially in Bengal. Subsequent events i.e. different articles, letters and books written by mainly non-party persons in *Desh Patrika*, *Statesman* and such other publications have proved that our reading is correct about these personalities.

Of course, as in Gandhi's case, damaging of statues does not serve the purpose. The total assessment of the roles of these personalities and explanation on them is required for their complete exposure.

As the history which we read is directly or indirectly written by the British Imperialists, so at present the required material is insufficient. The damage of statues has definitely done one important thing that a total rethinking has come among the intellectual circle of West Bengal with regard to the real history and the backgrounds of these personalities. Ample evidence of such rethinking can be cited from the recent publications on Indian History in different presses. In one word I can say that the damage of statue has served the purpose of throwing stone to a bee-hive in this respect.

(b) Attacks on educational institutions : Attacks on the educational institutions, foiling examinations etc. had been taking place since 1965/66. In the history of militant movements in W. Bengal it was seen that whenever there was a youth and students' upsurge against the British or the Congress rule, attacks on educational institutions had taken place. This phenomenon is inherent in educational system itself....

(c) Policy towards the working class : From the beginning, the party thought that the working-class as a whole was a very important force for revolution. The party faced the difficulty in approaching the working-class as because almost all the workers of all industries are organised in some sort of Trade Unions which have developed a legal method of movement which is a great hindrance to imbue the workers with the revolutionary ideology....

Almost one year after its formation, the party has no declared policy about the working-class. Only sometime in April '70, Charu Majumdar defined the above policy which became the policy of the party towards the working class.

In the present phase of our revolution, the programme of the party is to liquidate feudalism and Imperialism and not capitalism. So nowhere party took any decision to kill owner or Director of any industry; of course, there had been some cases of such killings which I think were performed by over-enthusiastic squads for which probably some directions were issued subsequently not to indulge in killing of the members of industrial management indiscriminately.

(e) Policy towards Businessmen : The party thinks that those businessmen who have not got direct link with any imperialist power are also oppressed by the Govt. and the big businessmen who at some stage of the revolution will sympathise with our cause. As such, the party regards those big capitalists and big businessmen as class-enemies who have direct links with imperialist powers.

(f) Significance of Magurjan : Magurjan is a railway station in Purnea district of Bihar. But it falls on the railway route of Darjeeling Mail from Siliguri to Khejuriaghat. It is adjacent to Islampur subdivision of West Dinajpur district. It is about 40 miles south of Naxalbari. So far as I have heard, some six rifles were snatched from the police at Magurjan probably in the month of Sept '70. This snatching was done by peasants' guerrilla squads when leaders like Kanu Sanyal, Kadam Mallik and others were in jail. Our party thinks that in absence of almost all the prominent leaders, this act of the peasants at their own initiative is a matter of great significance.<sup>4</sup>

(h) Radio Liberation : The CPI(ML) has never decided from any of its higher committees to establish any sort of Radio Liberation broadcasting station because, as I understand, at this stage of armed struggle in India, the decision of Radio broadcasting station would have been a mere paper proposal and nothing else. It is true that sometime in the month of April 1970 there was an announcement in the *Deshabrati* paper that there would be a Radio Liberation broadcast on 1st of May 1970 and also sometime in May '70 it was announced in the said *Deshabrati* paper that the aforesaid broadcast had taken place. But I had not found anyone to have listened to such broadcast.

In the meantime, during this period, the entire party [CPI(ML)] being seriously engaged in discussing the party programme and the party constitution vis-à-vis the party Congress, this Radio Liberation

issue was practically not thought of seriously by anybody of the party.<sup>5</sup>

(i) Election : From the very beginning of the formation of the party, the CPI(ML) advocated rejection of parliamentary path and adoption of seizure of political power by means of armed revolution.

Before the 1969 election, the AICCCR [CPI(ML) was not formed at that time] gave a call to boycott election. The committee regarded the slogan as a permanent one as it thought that forming government through ballot boxes was a revisionist means to divert the people from the path of revolution and to help the imperialists and the reactionaries to carry on exploitation of the Indian people. The outcome was not much in favour of the slogan, as was realised after the election.

On the eve of 1971 election, the party, CPI(ML), modified the earlier slogan (boycott election) and advocated disruption of election. The party thinks that the peoples' acceptance of this slogan will depend upon how far the party will be able to make the people understand that the party's alternate path of armed struggle is stronger than election i.e. parliamentary path. The party also thinks that it is a long-drawn process of a continuous struggle between these two paths. The party has the experience that although a considerable number of people in the Naxalbari and Jalpaiguri areas took part in 1969 elections, it did not hamper the party's development in struggle in those areas after the election. There were instances when the supporters of the party [CPI(ML)] who gave shelter to the party leaders [CPI(ML)] also did cast vote to avoid suspicion by the members of other political parties. My attention has been drawn to the posters issued in the name of CPI(ML) in the city (Cal.) urging people to burn booths to foil election. In this context I would like to say that the party's permanent call to boycott election might have been interpreted by the lower units in that fashion. I may again point out that the party [CPI(ML)] never directed to kill the candidates of the election. I personally feel that the concept of foiling election by killing the candidates is a lunatic's conception.

The peculiarity of the election of 1971 is that two alternatives were left with the ruling class of India. One was to declare emergency all over India and form at least a semi-military rule; the other was to hold election anyhow. The disadvantages of the emergency i.e. military rule in India are two-fold: First, it might rouse popular revolt all over India immediately after the rule was introduced, and secondly,

to do away with the show of democracy in India, which was the only means of survival of all the political parties favouring parliamentary path, may not be to the liking of the latter.

The CPI(ML) thinks that inspite of the murders of many candidates, election would have definitely taken place as in the opinion of the party, the ruling circles in India think that it is possible to manoeuvre the people for a pretty long time to come, with the help of parliamentary democracy. So, the attempts to foil the election by killing the candidates cannot be the party's slogan to boycott election. The party feels that the end of the President's Rule with the formation of a new Govt. in West Bengal will have better effect on the CPI(ML) and its struggles for the following reasons :

(i) whoever forms the Govt. will have to pledge much more benefit than the former Governments.

(ii) The existence (posting) of military in West Bengal is a permanent feature as designed by the central ruling circles. The parties which will form the new Govt. will be put in a very difficult position to explain to the people about the existence of the military in the State.

(iii) The general idea, so far as I understand, of the ruling circles will be not to form any direct Congress Government in West Bengal. Even if they are compelled to form any Govt. in West Bengal, by their activities they will accentuate different kinds of mass movements in West Bengal which will ultimately help the CPI(ML).

Those in the CPI(ML) who hold the view that election can be foiled will be disillusioned and an atmosphere of frustration may develop in those areas where foiling election was taken as a programme.

The striking feature in this election (1971) is that where the CPI(ML) has positive influence, the Cong(R) candidates achieved victory. It is difficult for me to explain the reason of the success of Cong(R) in general. So far as Phansidewa constituency is concerned, I give below the reasons for the same :

(i) The seat has been retained by the Congress since the first general election.

(ii) The constituency is composed in such a way that the tea garden workers are the majority voters.

(iii) In this constituency, Congress is always fully backed by the Christian Missionaries who have tremendous religious influence on the Christian tea-garden workers who constitute an overwhelming majority of the gardens in that constituency. That is why even in the



elections of 1967 and 1969 when Congress was defeated everywhere, it could retain the Phansidewa constituency seat.

The CPI(ML) party suffered two set-backs at all-India level. The first set-back which was due to the Police action in Naxalbari area had an impact on the party for almost the whole of 1968; further developments in Naxalbari and in other places were arrested as a result of this.<sup>6</sup>

Since the end of 1968, it was evident that peasants' armed struggle developed in Bihar, UP, Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and a portion of Punjab on the basis of the guerrilla method as reported and discussed in the meeting of the AICCCR held on 22.4.69.

The second set-back started since the beginning of 1970 with the death and arrests of Andhra leaders, differences of CM with SRC and Satyanarain Singh. It was felt that this set-back retarded the progress of the struggle all over India.

Immediately after this set-back, some important leaders of the CC, viz Nagabhusan Patnaik, Appalasuri, Shiv Kumar Misra, Ambadi (Kerala) and Kanu Sanyal were arrested. Besides, different leaders of the State Committees including Asit Chakraborti, Mahadeb Mukharji, Shoven Chatarji (W. Bengal) and Rajkishore Singh (Bihar) were arrested. I have not also heard about Appu of Madras for quite some months. Appu was a very close friend of Ambadi of Kerala who has since left CPI(ML) and is alleged to have joined Congress. It raises some doubt as to whether Appu is also thinking of leaving CPI(ML). It also may be that Appu has been arrested. Appu was once arrested in Madras previously but was released subsequently. It is not known to me whether his release was due to wrong identification or otherwise. These arrests had also adverse reaction in the party in the State level. This set-back is still on.

Our reading of this problem is: the guerrilla method which was adopted to overcome the first set-back after the Naxalbari movement is insufficient to combat the onslaught of the Government forces. Since the latter part of 1969, all over India the party cadres had to come face to face with the Government armed forces in different forms, and in the face of this onslaught, it had become impossible to retain the party forces in the rural areas. The result was arrests, killing of leading personnel of the party etc. all over India which had a very damaging effect on the party organisation.

It was felt that without formation of some sort of armed forces of the party, the set-back could not be overcome. Hence, the question

of forming the PLA was taken up. Transforming the existing peasants' guerrilla squads into PLA and where armed struggle had developed considerably by forming the peoples' Revolutionary Committees. The Peoples' Revolutionary Committees are entrusted to develop a mass movement of the peasants by distributing lands, forcibly harvesting landlord's crop, confiscating landlord's properties etc. In this process, the people will be eager to retain the gains of this movement and automatically feel the necessity of the PLA to defend themselves. Simultaneously, when there will be cases of attacks from police or reactionary elements, the PRCs are to form village Resistance Committees which will help the PLA. The commanders of the PLA squads must be chosen from poor and landless peasants. The work of the commanders will be to command the squads under the direction of the PRCs and the party units. We think this method will be able, on the one hand, to overcome the set-back and on the other to develop the movement.

In the West Bengal State level, Charu Majumdar has also developed a difference with Kaliprosad Chaudhuri of 24-Parganas, besides Sushital Roy Choudhuri. It is true that Kaliprosad Chaudhuri is the main organiser of the Naxalite movement in 24-Parganas since the stage of Coordination Committee. In the beginning of 1970, I was given to understand that the State leaders looking after the work of South Bengal were having difficulties with Kaliprosad Chaudhuri and that he was vilifying the State leadership and pursuing a line of his own which was termed as "putting prominence on actions and not on politics." I heard that Kaliprosad Chaudhuri was organising actions in the villages with boys from cities and using fire-arms contrary to the directions of the party. The difference was going on and it was very difficult to remove Kaliprosad Chaudhuri from the leadership of 24-Parganas RC or the S C as he is one of the founders of CPI(ML) movement in 24-Parganas. In the meeting of some of the leading members of the State Committee held at Basirhat on 21st/22nd Dec '70, I learnt that efforts were being made to send some cadres to different areas in 24-Parganas to fight the erroneous trend of Kaliprosad Chaudhuri at the grass-roots level. It was decided that by this way he will gradually be displaced from the leadership.

My personal feeling is that it is very difficult to displace an active person like Kaliprosad Chaudhuri who has left his family for about 2 years and who used to enjoy very good respect among his own cadres with whom he developed the CPI(ML) movement in 24-

Parganas. Though at present there is a strained relation between Kaliprosad Chaudhuri and the State Committee, Kaliprosad still retains the sole leadership of 24-Parganas.

So far as I understand the disagreements between Satyanarain Singh and Charu Majumdar and between SRC and CM and also between Kaliprosad Chaudhuri and CM will have some adverse effects both within and outside West Bengal. Amongst other reasons, the most important factor relates to the mobility of these leaders in question in comparison with CM's ill-health. So far as I know, Satyanarain Singh is very active and mobile, possessing a very sound health. So far, SRC was also considerably mobile and Kaliprosad Chaudhuri is equally active and mobile like Satyanarain Singh in his own sphere. On the other hand, Charu Majumdar is fully handicapped in mobility with his permanent ill-health. I have heard that Satyanarain Singh had already had a tour of the whole of India except West Bengal (of course I do not know whether he came to West Bengal too) propagating his own line and explaining from his side the difference with CM. It is very natural that a person with his capacity and mobility will easily be able to gather around him a good number of supporters as against CM. I am sure that Satyanarain Singh will try to utilise the death of Sushital Roy Choudhuri to discredit Charu Majumdar.

It is my opinion it was easier to displace SRC than to displace Kaliprosad mainly because of the fact that the former was, in spite of his acknowledged goodness, somewhat clumsy in expressing his views forcefully. Kaliprosad Chaudhuri also, so far I have heard, has gathered a good number of supporters around him, specially in 24-Parganas and after the death of SRC, with the aid of the supporters of SRC, he will be able to propagate his line in West Bengal as a whole, utilising the death of SRC. I may be wrong in assessing the exact extent of damage to be caused in this way to the party, but it is no doubt that there will be some damage.

So far as the reaction in the party over the death of SRC is concerned, it may be recalled that though SRC ceased to be the Secretary of the State Committee of the party following the difference with CM, yet he continued to be CC and PB member. He had a very good image amongst the cadres of West Bengal. As he enjoyed respect in the party ranks and had a tremendous contribution (it was he who actually brought Satyanarain Singh, Appu, Mahadeb Mukharji, Asit Chakraborty and Shoven Chatterji in the party-fold) in building up the

CPI(ML) and the way he met his death, uncared for and perhaps not even properly medically treated, would have a serious adverse effect in the party, specially amongst the cadres with whom he had close contacts.

The following questions are likely to be raised by the cadres before the party leaders :

1. Whether SRC was really driven out of the party and why the lower party units were not informed of that.

2. Rumour of attempted physical attacks on SRC by the party.

The party will have to face all these questions and it is not known how the party will meet this.

As regards the finance of the CPI(ML), the party is financed from the contribution collected from the people. Every unit from the lower level up to the State Committee has to raise a quota of funds per month. Usually the procedure is that a unit has to pay a quota of Rs. 20/- to Rs. 25/- per month to its immediate higher committee i.e. the Local Committee. The LC in its turn is expected to contribute a sum of Rs. 50/- per month to the DC and the DC is supposed to contribute a sum of Rs. 200/- per month to the SC. The quota of the SC has not yet been finalised but according to the procedure the SC has to pay a certain amount in its turn to the CC. But the expenses incurred towards the visit of the central leaders to or from a State are shown as contributions of the respective State Committees towards the CC Fund. Besides, the State Committees have to pay an amount (not fixed) to the central fund from time to time.

There is no connection of the party fund with the expenses incurred by the party organs like *Deshabrati* and *Liberation*. They are more or less self-sufficient.

(viii) Knowledge of sources of supply of arms and ammunitions and explosives :

The policy of my party [CPI(ML)] is to be self-reliant on the question of all kinds of arms and ammunitions. At the present stage the party's struggle is solely dependent on traditional arms used by the peasants of this country like sickles, knives, bows and arrows etc. and also muzzle-loading guns as and when used by the peasants themselves. The party thinks that firearms are very necessary weapons to fight against the armed forces of the government. So the party has given a call to snatch firearms from the landlords and the police. According to the party, this revolution being the armed revolution of the peasant masses, the criteria of what kind of arms is



to be used depends upon the understanding of the peasants. It is usually found that the peasants regard their own weapons, may be sickles, bows and arrows or muzzle-loading guns, very powerful. Only when they realise that their traditional weapons are practically ineffective against the armed enemy-forces, then only they will feel the necessity of fire-arms. So the party thinks that no amount of arms supplied from outside will help the peasants as long as their realisation about the same is not developed.

So far as I know, the party has not declared any policy to purchase arms or to cache it at any level of the party from the higher committees to the units.

Regarding explosives, the CPI (ML) has never given any call for the manufacture and procurement of bombs etc. I have never heard of any use of explosive in the rural areas. The party holds the same view with regard to the explosives as in the case of fire-arms. I do not think that the use of explosives in Calcutta (which I presume is much more exaggerated by the newspapers) is not on the basis of any directive of our party.

(ix) Means of communication and courier services: Courier system is very important in a secret organisation and unexposed people are generally used as couriers. There is always the risk of leakage through these couriers. Generally, couriers are selected by party leaders in their individual capacity and also by the local party organisation. I am of the opinion that my party CPI(ML) has not yet been able to evolve a correct courier system. As a result, it led to the arrest of responsible party cadres, mismanagement of party meetings and uneven distribution of party organs.

Prof. Shyamal Ghosh was selected as a courier by Prof. Suniti Ghosh. He was more or less a courier of the West Bengal State Committee. Since he is now known to the Police, he is no longer utilised as a courier. Shibangsu Mukharji also worked as a courier.

(x) Knowledge about the shelter of leaders and cadres: It is the directive of the party that underground leaders of all levels must stay in rural areas and take shelter among the peasants.<sup>7</sup> Sometimes for meetings and contacts it may be required for the leaders or cadres (underground) to come to the cities. In that case the respective party higher committee, either SC or RC, is to arrange for the shelters. The general policy is that the places of shelter should be selected which are least suspected viz. hotels, houses of apparently non-political persons etc.

In Calcutta, I used the following places as my shelter : [deleted]

(xi) Knowledge about the printing and publication of party organs : [deleted]

(xii) What he plans to do in the event of his release on bail or otherwise.

Our party has not defined any specific policy towards the party members released on bail or otherwise. Those who are arrested by the police are regarded as no longer in the party. So when they are released from police/jail custody on bail or otherwise, they are to prove the genuineness of such release to the party because the party thinks that the arrested party man might have shown some weaknesses to earn his release. When the party would be convinced about the genuineness of his release on bail or otherwise, the party may direct him about what he is to do - remain open or to go underground. The party's direction in this respect depends upon whether the concerned party member is accepted in the party by his immediate higher committee after his release on bail or otherwise. In my case, after my release, if I am taken back to the party, I will be informed to the above effect by the West Bengal SC of the CPI(ML). In case of party Committees' refusal (SC, CC, PB) to take me back, it will fall upon me to prove myself worthy of being taken back in the party. After my release, I may not be taken in the same position which I held prior to my arrest and may be placed in a lower Committee. So it will entirely depend on the decision of the party as to what I will do after my release.

(xiii) Whether he or any of his relatives was ever assaulted or humiliated by police : As mentioned earlier, I was arrested in 1949, in Nov. 1962 and in early 1965. I was not assaulted or humiliated by Police on any such occasion nor after my arrest this time.

My younger brother Biren Bose is at present a member of the CPI(M) (Darjeeling District Committee). He was arrested in 1949 and also later. To the best of my knowledge, he was also not assaulted or humiliated by police.

(xv) As regards MMG, our information goes that a group was formed by Ananta Singh with some young boys of Calcutta sometime in 1968 in the name of Men-Money-Gun (MMG). The declared motto of the group was that they would collect a large amount of money by looting from banks, post offices etc., purchase arms, raise an army in Calcutta and liberate Calcutta. I was given to understand that young people of this group later infiltrated in our organisation in Burdwan, Purulia, 24-Parganas and Nadia.

(xvi) Controversy over the book captioned *Naxalbarir Kastipathare Biplabi Kara* : This book was first written by Sadhan Sarkar, now Secretary of the Calcutta DC of CPI(ML), probably in 1968 and published from Deshabrati Prakasani. In the beginning of 1969, there was a criticism from all sides in the party that the book contained many wrong formulations. Subsequently it was re-printed after deleting the portions criticised and it was also somewhat re-written. It was being told from the Deshabrati office (so far as I have heard) that the book was re-written by CM himself in consultation with Sadhan Sarkar. Subsequently a severe criticism, postering etc. were done by the Presidency Consolidation Group and since then the book has been withdrawn from publication.

(xvii) Other factions of Naxalites: [deleted, as of no relevance now].

(xviii) Impact on the party in the event of improvement of relation between India and China : [deleted, as of no relevance now].

(xix) Passport particulars and visit to Europe/China : Passport No. I 987082 dated Calcutta, 3rd August 1970 issued by the Regional Passport Officer, Calcutta in the name of Soumen Bose S/O Late Bijoy Bhusan Bose of 27 Lansdowne Place, Calcutta with the endorsement to visit the following countries : [deleted, as of no relevance now].

Before 1969 there was a discussion in the party level that the leaders should have international passports ready at hand to go abroad, if situation permitted. Pursuant to the decision, I submitted a petition to the Regional Passport Authority in Calcutta in the beginning of June '70 in the name of Soumen Bose of 27 Lansdowne Place (a fictitious address). I was told by the office (passport) that some time would be required for the verification and it would take about 3 months. Meanwhile, I got married and I came to know that my brother-in-law was in England.... [Thereafter Souren Bose obviously fabricated a long story – his purpose of visit to London and some other European cities 'for sight-seeing' and so on and has accordingly been deleted. It was only during his subsequent interrogations that he gradually came out with the real purpose of the visit to London etc., the destination being China. How he went there and what happened in China will come out in the latter part of this interrogation report.]

While in London, I met (a) Bill Ash, Vice-chairman of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist); (b) Mrs. Ranjana Ash (D/O Late Prof. Nirmal Kumar Siddhanta, ex-V.C. of Calcutta

University), wife of Bill Ash. Ranjana Ash is a member of the Politburo of the CPB(ML). (c) Mr. Taylor, Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand. I met him at the office of the CPB(ML) in London at 25 Eden Street, Central London. Either Bill Ash or Ranjana Ash introduced me to Mr. Taylor. (d) I also met Mr. Rezberg, Chairman of the CPB (ML) in London.

14. Specimen handwriting - attached

15. Names of police officers who can identify : [deleted]

16. Date, place and duration of interrogation : 7.3.71 to 21.3.71

17. Interrogating officer's assessment :

(i) Intelligence - highly intelligent

(ii) Personality - strong but of amiable disposition

(iii) Secretive or frank - secretive

(iv) Likely to cooperate or not - No

(v) Interesting aspect -

(a) does not maintain any diary. Developed this habit since 1948 when he first went underground.

(b) occasionally keeps notes on his impressions on important talks or events and destroys those at the earliest opportunity.

(c) habituated in taking strong cigarette (preferably "Vazir") and in chewing raw tobacco (Khaini).

(d) likes shaving on alternate days though he has scanty growth of beard.

18. Interrogating officers' rank and full name : [deleted]

#### Further statement of Souren Bose (dt. 5.4.71)

As regards expenditures incurred by me for my journey abroad, I like to mention that my previous statement was incorrect. The correct state of affairs is that I incurred expenses to the tune of Rs. 10,000 (approx) in this journey. The major expenses were borne by Sushital Roy Choudhuri. SRC gave me a sum of Rs 6000 from the party fund which was lying with him as the Secretary of the State Committee of the party and wanted me to meet Bill Ash, Ranjana Ash, w/o Bill Ash and Rezberg, all leading members of the CPB (ML) in London. He also gave me their address at 25, Eden Street, Central London (probably the office address of the CPB(ML)). The remaining amount of Rs. 4000 was arranged by me. Out of this amount, I had already in my hand an amount of Rs. 1500 (approx) which I got as cash gifts during my marriage. It is a fact that a portion of my expenses in London was borne by my said brother-in-law, Parthasarathi Ghosh, 83, Rodenhurst Road, London SW-4.



While discussing with the leading members of the CPB(ML) and the Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand, I found that their criticism was more or less in the line of SRC. It gave me the feeling that those members of the fraternal parties were possibly briefed earlier in details about the activities of the CPI(ML); otherwise it would not have been possible for them to continue the discussion with such details. Moreover, the attitude of Mr. Taylor, Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand, seemed somewhat surprising. Apparently he looked very intelligent amongst the participants of the discussion. But instead of being vocal in the discussion, most of the time he remained silent. As I think back now, I wonder whether he was the man through whom the CPC had sent words to the members of the CPB(ML).

**Further statements of Souren Bose Dated 11.4.72, 20.4.72, and 24.4.72**

[Note: Souren Bose was produced in the Court of Additional Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta on 11.4.72 in connection with Amherst Street P.S., Calcutta conspiracy case. On a prior occasion, Souren Bose had expressed a desire to meet Shri A. P. Mukherjee (former SP, Darjeeling and now, DC, SB-I) whom he knew from the Siliguri days. Hence on his way back to the Presidency Jail he was brought to SB office for the purpose of meeting Shri Mukherjee and also for recording his further statement to obtain clarifications on certain aspects. He was examined on the day and subsequently on 20.4.72 at the Presidency Jail.]

II. Over the question of his visit to China, he was again assured by Shri Mukherjee that if he came out with truthful details about his visit and discussions there, the disclosure would not go against him in any way whatsoever and the same will be treated as a closely guarded secret for as long as he wished. Moreover, it was pointed out to him that at this stage when he himself reiterated that he had been completely disillusioned about the CPI(ML) politics and was ready to give up politics if he was allowed to live a normal life and also when the Government had taken a humanitarian approach towards the extremists, there was no reason for him to hide facts.

At this stage of discussion with Souren Bose, Shri Mukherjee as the DC, SB-I gave an assurance, the 'gentleman's word' to Souren that absolute secrecy would be maintained in regard to this part of his statement re. visit to China and details of discussions with the

two CPC leaders. It was mutually agreed that since Souren was already wanted in some of the Srikakulam cases, known as the Parbatipuram Conspiracy Case of Andhra Pradesh for which warrants were pending with them, total secrecy would be maintained for nearly a fortnight after he was lodged in the Vizag Jail on being sent from West Bengal, under Calcutta Police escort, to Andhra Pradesh, so that no harm could be caused to him in transit or while in the custody of AP Police. This 14-day gap was thought of so that Souren could hold detailed discussions with the AP and other important comrades lodged in the same Vizag jail regarding the points of criticism by the CPC leadership and the other fraternal parties. Souren was confident that after such a discussion, all or most of the leading comrades would come out with a document/inner-party statement bringing out the factual position as pointed out by the CPC and others. Since they would immediately arrange to circulate such document outside the jail, any leakage, if at all, thereafter would not be able to put the entire blame on him. The DC, SB-I saw to it that his word of honour and commitment to Souren were fully honoured, and there was no leakage at all from their side till a joint statement by the party leaders lodged in Vizag jail did actually come out to party circles. The criticisms of CM and the CPI(ML) by the top leadership of the CPC and other fraternal parties came to public knowledge only after the Document of the leading comrades of CPI(ML) in Vizag Jail could be smuggled out by them.

III. Eventually, he admitted that he had visited China and gave the following back-ground materials and other details of his journey/discussions :

Towards the end of 1969, Mrs. Ranjana Ash w/o Bill Ash, a Secretariat member of the CPB(ML) came to India and met either Charu Majumdar or Sushital Roy Choudhuri or Saroj Dutta and gave out that the Communist Party of China (CPC) and some other fraternal parties were critical about the role of the CPI(ML).

The party leadership, particularly Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta and myself could sense that the CPC might not have been seeing eye to eye with the CPI(ML) activities. We discussed the issue amongst ourselves when it was decided that the important leaders of the party should try to secure international passports for visiting abroad so that he or they may contact the leaders of the CPC and the fraternal parties to get their views about the CPI(ML) and also to put across CPI(ML) viewpoints. Sushital

Roy Choudhuri and Saroj Dutta declined to make any such attempt to secure passport as they were very much known. A question arose that Suniti Ghosh was already holding a passport and whether he could go for the mission. Charu Majumdar did not agree to Suniti Ghosh's going abroad on the ground that he might not be able to convince the leaders of the fraternal parties about the stand of the CPI(ML) and he selected me (Souren) for the purpose. It may be pointed out here that the above discussion was held on 16th May, 1970 i.e. the last day of our party congress at the same venue at Garden Reach Railway Quarters and four persons (CM, SRC, SD and myself) were present. Finally I (Souren Bose) agreed to go abroad, but requested that somebody should accompany me at least up to England because I had no previous experience of visiting abroad. I suggested the name of Prof. Suniti Ghosh to accompany me up to England as Prof. SG was already in possession of an international passport. Though CM was in favour of sending me alone, yet at my insistence, supported by SRC, CM agreed to send Prof. SG with me up to England.

Immediately thereafter, I filled in the application form for an international passport and handed over the same to Prof. Suniti Ghosh for the rest of the job. Towards the end of July 1970 I got the passport from Prof. Suniti Ghosh. He handed over the same to me possibly through a messenger at my father-in-law's house.

On 18th August, 1970 the leaders of the State Committee (CM, Souren Bose, Prof. Suniti Ghosh, Sadhan Sarkar, SRC and Saroj Dutta) met at the residence of Shibangsu Mukharji where SRC paid me a sum of Rs. 10,000/- (all GP notes in Rs. 100/- and Rs. 10/- denominations) for the expense towards my journey. SRC also gave me three letters of introduction - one addressed to the General Secretary, Albanian Party of Labour, the second to the Member-in-Charge of the Central Committee of the CPC and the last one to the Secretary General of the CPB(ML). The letters more or less contained the same thing which was "We are sending one of our important members of the Central Committee to discuss matters of importance relating to the activities of our party. Hope you would be good enough to discuss and exchange opinions with him." The letters were written in plain ordinary sheet of papers and were signed by Sushital Roy Choudhuri as Secretary, State Committee and member of the Politburo of the CPI(ML).<sup>8</sup>

On 20th August, 1970 I purchased return ticket for England for Rs. 6470/- from the office of the Air India International. I took a 100 dollar (Rs. 750/-) traveller's cheque from American Express Bank the same day. Rest of the amount I carried with me. Meanwhile the Calcutta Special Branch got scent of Prof. Ghosh's plan of going abroad and when this became known to us at a late stage, Prof. Ghosh had to abandon his trip and I had to travel alone.

I left Dum Dum Airport for Bombay on 25th August, 1970 evening flight by an IAC plane and reached Bombay around 10 pm. I left Bombay Airport by Air India International at 3 pm on 26.8.70. Route of the journey was Cairo and Paris. I halted at Paris till 8 AM (Paris time) of 27.8.70 from 2 pm of 26.8.70 the previous day when I reached Paris. I left Paris at 8 AM on 27.8.79 for Stuttgart (West Germany) and London by British European Airways (BEA) plane and reached London at 1.30 PM on 27.8.70 (London time). I halted at Paris just for sight-seeing. The expense of food and lodging was borne by Air India International. I made the break-journey at Paris to get an endorsement on the passport so that some sort of confusion may arise if the passport is scrutinised by the police (as he thought that more endorsements in the passport might help him in creating stories and keeping his destination secret. Moreover, he had a keen desire for sight-seeing in Paris).

I stayed in London from 27.8.70 to 12.9.70. During the stay I put up at the following places :

- (1) Residence of Partha Sarathi Ghosh at 83 Rodenburst Road, London SW-4 (8½ days).
- (2) Residence of Swaran Singh Bains at 14 Masters Road, Lemington Spa, Warwickshire, a Punjabi gentleman who is also a foreign contact of the CPI(ML) (8½ days).

During my stay in London I visited British Museum, High Gate (graveyard of Karl Marx), Buckingham Palace, Piccadilly Circus Bookstalls, Midlands, Birmingham, Lemington, Manchester, Shakespeare Town and Liverpool.

I also met Bill Ash, Vice-Chairman of the CPGB(ML), Ranjana Ash, Mr. Taylor, Chairman of the Communist Party of New Zealand and Mr. Rezberg, Chairman of the CPGB(ML) at the office of the CPGB(ML) at 25 Eden Street, Central London. I held discussions with them on the following points :

- (1) Allegiance of the CPI(ML) to the CPC : The leaders of the fraternal parties did not endorse the idea of allegiance of a



revolutionary communist party to another fraternal party as a matter of policy.

(2) City action and annihilation : They decried both the programmes and the ways in which those were being carried out.

(3) Absence of mass movement and trade union activities in the policy programme of the CPI(ML) was also criticised.

(4) CPI(ML) slogan 'China's Chairman is our Chairman' was trenchantly criticised by them.

(5) They felt that a lot of revolutionary fervour was being in the urban area actions.

(6) They also opined that whatever was being achieved in the rural areas could not be sustained without a properly organised armed force of the revolutionary people.

(7) They stated that the CPI(ML) did not appear to have developed any agrarian policy to fit in with the struggles of the peasants in rural areas.

(8) They offered strong criticism against some of the writings of Charu Majumdar, especially the following : (a) "Fight against the concrete manifestations of revisionism".... "The ways of doing things which were created and developed so far by the communist movement in India have become wholly and entirely useless in the present era" (*Liberation*, Sept. 1969, pp. 8-9). According to them, the style of work of the people of every country grows through struggle. The style of work which was developed by the Indian people cannot be brushed aside so peremptorily simply because the struggles were led by wrong leaders. Such sweeping generalisations, they felt, should be avoided.

(b) A portion of CM's thesis that every deviation in the party is to be regarded as 'revisionism' was, according to the fraternal parties, a type of sectarianism. They felt that deviation should be construed as mistake, and mistake may be committed by anybody including people at leadership level but the same should not be branded as 'revisionism'. Mistakes can be rectified only through discussions and research.

(c) They also strongly criticised CM's dictum that "One who has not smeared his hands with the blood of a class enemy is not fit to be called a communist" (CM's *Few words regarding guerrilla actions*, published in Bengali by Deshabrati Prakashani, Calcutta in April 1970). They said that this cannot be a Marxist norm. At one stage, either Rezberg or Bill Ash commented that "we have not come across

such sweeping remarks from the leader of any communist party in the world."

[It was quite apparent during conversations with Souren Bose that CPGB(ML) leaders made it abundantly clear to him that the above 'views of the fraternal parties' were also the viewpoints of the leaders of the CPC though Souren was not quite convinced. But after meeting and listening to Chou-en-lai and Kang-Sheng, the two topmost CPC leaders in Peking on 29 Oct. 1970, he had no scope for having any doubt. In fact, according to Souren, on certain points Chou-en-Lai was even more emphatic than the CPGB(ML) leaders. For example, he (and Kang-Sheng) strongly denounced the CPI(ML) slogan "China's Chairman is our Chairman" and Charu Majumdar's dictum that "one who has not smeared his hands red with the blood of the class enemy is not fit to be called a 'communist'." Chou mentioned that most of them, even their Chairman Mao could not be called a 'communist' according to such a dictum and that was obviously absurd and "totally 'unacceptable as the norm for a communist.'" Souren further made it clear, though he did not like this to be put down clearly in his recorded 'Statement', that in addition to Charu Majumdar's aforesaid dictum, the CPC leaders were extremely critical about killing of policemen as part of CPI(ML)'s programme of 'annihilation of class enemies'. He (Chou-en-Lai) made it clear that this was nothing short of 'anarchism' and 'adventurism' and should not be regarded as part of a 'revolutionary programme'. Souren further stated that Chou, in fact, "admitted that it did not take him long after similar initial 'mistakes' by him in Shanghai to realise that such acts of anarchism and adventurism would only damage the prospect of revolution."]

During one of our meetings with the CPGB(ML) leaders, I expressed my desire to go to China via Albania and sought their assistance for this. They, however, pointed out that the CPC was also critical of the activities of the CPI(ML). They advised me to meet the Italian Ambassador at London and suggested that I should go to Rome first for a flight to Albania. Mr. Rezberg, President of the CPGB(ML) gave me a letter of introduction addressed to the General Secretary of the Albanian Party of Labour, introducing me as an important member of the Central Committee of the CPI(ML). Accordingly, I saw the Italian Ambassador at London and obtained a transit visa for Rome. I purchased a return ticket from London to Tirana (Albania) via Rome and paid £98 (Rs. 1764/-) for the

ticket. [Souren could not explain as to how in the absence of a direct flight from London to Albania, tickets for Albania via Rome could be issued from London when England had no diplomatic relation with Albania. He could not explain this satisfactorily.

I left London on 13th Sept '70 and reached Rome the same day by an Italian plane. There I contacted the Albanian Embassy the same day (13th Sept '70) and expressed my desire to visit Albania. The Embassy staff wanted to know from me the purpose of my visit to Albania when I gave out that I was a member of the Central Committee of the CPI(ML) and that I had been authorised to hold political discussions with the leaders of Albania. I was asked by the Embassy staff to report to the Embassy again. Accordingly I paid a second visit to the Albanian Embassy when they gave out that they had a talk with the Albanian Govt. and they were ready to allow me to visit Albania. They wanted my passport to give an endorsement to visit Albania. I pointed out that if the endorsement was given in the passport, I would be caught by the Indian Airport staff or the police about my visit to Albania. Accordingly, the Albanian Embassy gave me a visa to visit Albania in a separate sheet of paper. By virtue of this visa I reached Tirana Airport (Albania) on 16th Sept '70 by an Italian plane. Two gentlemen – one is probably Mr. Pirro of Albanian Communist Party's Foreign Affairs Deptt, came to receive me at Tirana Airport (Tirana is the capital of Albania). They took me to a bungalow near the sea-coast. That area is known as DURRES. One of the two gentlemen acted as an English interpreter. I stayed there for 6-7 days and was provided with a car and an interpreter. During the stay I witnessed cinemas (Japanese, Yugoslavian and Albanian) and ballets. After 2-3 days of my stay there, Beharstyulla, a member of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour, saw me at the bungalow and wanted to ascertain the purpose of my visiting Albania. I explained that I wanted to go to China to meet the Chinese leaders. With him I saw the Chinese Ambassador in Albania and showed him the letters of introduction. The Chinese Ambassador heard me and asked me to visit the Embassy again. Accordingly, I again called on the Chinese Embassy on the third day of my first visit when the Chinese Ambassador informed that the Govt of China had no objection to my visiting China. As usual there, too, I was given a visa on a separate sheet of paper on the same ground.

On 23rd September 1970, I left Tirana Airport (Albania) at 1 pm (Albanian time) by Pakistan International Airways for China. The

plane reached Shanghai at 3.30 pm on 24th Sept '70 (Chinese time). The route of the journey where the PIA plane touched was Cairo, Karachi, Dacca, Canton and Shanghai.. At Shanghai Airport, I waited till 6 pm (24th Sept '70) and then availed of a Chinese Inland Service plane. The plane reached Peking airport at 8-30 pm (Chinese time) on 24th Sept '70. It took me roughly 33 hours to reach Peking from Tirana.

At the Peking airport two Chinese gentlemen – one is Mr. LEE and the other a Chinese-knowing Bengali received me. The Bengali-knowing Chinese gentleman acted as an interpreter. From Peking airport I was taken to a Guest House in the Western side of Peking where I was accommodated. In the area where I was put up there were several guest houses and 5 or 6 such guest-houses were bounded by enclosure. There were armed guards for each guest-house. The guards were in olive-green uniform. Once I attempted to go out of the enclosure alone when I was stopped by the cook of the bungalow. I could feel that the persons accommodated there were under constant surveillance by the Chinese Police. Later, on one occasion I referred to this incident to the interpreter who explained that this was done on the ground of security of the persons accommodated. (Souren could not clarify this point. What he felt was that he being a member of a secret organisation was not allowed to go of his own lest some harm might come to him!)

From 24th Sept '70 to 2nd Oct. '70 I had a very dull time as during that period no leader met me. On expressing my desire to witness the '1st October Day' celebration in Peking, I was taken there. On 3rd Oct. '70, Cheng-Sheng-Shan, a gentleman of the CPC Foreign Affairs Deptt., saw me and wanted to know the exact purpose of my visit to China, when I explained that I would like to hold political discussions with the leaders of the CPC to clarify the following points :

- (a) Why the Peking Radio, which was full of support initially for the CPI(ML) activities, had all of a sudden become silent?
- (b) Whether the criticism of the CPI(ML) led by Charu Majumdar made by the leaders of the CPB(ML) quoting the attitude of the CPC was correct.

Till 28th Oct '70 I did not receive any message that the CPC leaders would meet me. Meanwhile, I was, however, taken to some places for the purpose of sight-seeing. Besides the three occupants in the rear-seat of the car (SB, LI & the interpreter), there was the



presence of another man in blue uniform who used to sit by the side of the driver. [Souren suspected that the man in blue uniform must have been from Chinese Security police.]

Even then, I felt bored apprehending that I might have to go back without having any chance to meet the CPC leaders.

On 29th Oct '70 evening I was taken to the Great Hall of the People's Culture by Mr. LI and the interpreter. While I waited in waiting-room, Mr. Cheng-Sheng-Shan came in and took me to an inside room. There both Chou-En-Lai and Kang-Sheng were present. This was at about 6 pm (Chinese time). Mr. Chang-Sheng-Shan introduced me to them when all of us sat around a table. While Chou-En-Lai, Kang-Sheng and Chang-Sheng-Shan sat on one side of the table, I and a Chinese lady who acted as an English interpreter sat facing them.

Chou En-lai initiated the discussion and the details of his viewpoints were :

- (1) that the CPC congratulated the formation of the CPI(ML);
- (2) that the Chinese revolution was victorious because of three things : the Party(CPC), formation of the United Fronts and successful raising of armed forces(PLA);
- (3) that the CPC did not believe in international association of Communists. He quoted examples from history and stated that such international association of Communists breeds "Big-Brotherism" which the CPC detested very much;
- (4) [Souren felt that this was an indirect criticism against the CPI(ML)'s policy of full allegiance to the CPC and of the experience of the CPC vis-à-vis the CPSU.]
- (5) that the calling of the Chairman of one country as the chairman of another country goes against the national sentiments of its peoples;
- (6) that the CPI(ML) had negated the role of national bourgeoisie in the armed struggle by the peasants. In 1928 China made the same mistake;
- (7) that united front means unity of the exploited classes with even some of the exploiting classes. The stage of revolution at present in India is a people's Democratic Revolution in which the principal task is to overthrow feudalism and the dominance of imperialism and to distribute land among the peasants i.e. it is not a revolution to abolish private property. As such, excepting those classes against whom the revolution is to be done, there

are other classes such as the capitalists (mill-owners, industrialists, hotel-owners etc.) who are also exploiters. But they are not to be eliminated at this stage. Hence this question of United Front of the exploited classes with these exploiting classes;

- (8) that in 1927, Mr. Chou himself was responsible for the city action in Shanghai. City action included killing of police personnel and distribution of illegal pamphlets which was ultimately found as nothing but adventurism;
- (9) the thinking that open trade unionism and open mass movement is obsolete and that secret assassination is the only way of bringing in revolution need rethinking. The CPI(ML) 'guerrilla squads' were nothing but secret assassination groups which do not serve the cause of revolution at any stage;
- (10) that the idea to die for adventurism is not self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice and self-preservation have to go side by side; otherwise revolution's prospect suffers;
- (11) that the assassination of individual policemen is anarchism. Even hoisting of flags on 1st October (by people in another country) is also a manifestation of the same and not the correct thing to do.

Besides the above, Chou-En-Lai also made comments on some other points which I cannot remember. All those were the major viewpoints of the CPC as pointed out by Chou-En-lai, which was interpreted by the Chinese interpreter into English. This lasted for about two hours when Chou left as he had some other important engagement.

After Chou's departure, Kang-Sheng referred to the following two articles which were not broadcast from Peking Radio :

- (1) "Chiner Chairman Amader Chairman" (China's Chairman is our Chairman) by Charu Majumdar;
- (2) "Bharater Biplaber Sar Sankalam Kare Egiye Chalo" (Advance by summing up the experiences of Indian revolution) by Charu Majumdar.

As regards the articles, Kang-Sheng pointed out that the CPC did not accept the caption of the first article and the contents of both. He said that the CPC completely differed with the entire idea conveyed in those articles. According to them, Naxalbari struggle was not for capturing state-power but for land. Without mass organisation and mass struggle, no movement could be sustained. The CPI(ML) lacked

in depicting its agrarian policy. Initially, the CPC misunderstood the annihilation programme of the CPI(ML). Later it could realise that this annihilation programme was nothing but secret assassinations and it had nothing to do with People's War or revolution.

With this Kang-Sheng continued for half-an-hour more. After they spoke, Kang-Sheng asked me about my opinion on their (Chinese leaders') views. In reply I said that my long-standing conviction seemed to have been shattered by the opinion of the Chinese leaders and that I would have to think a lot to come to a positive conclusion. The entire discussion lasted for approximately two and a half-hours.

I had an exercise book in which I noted down all the points raised by both the aforesaid leaders. Seeing the exercise-book, I was advised not to carry the same with me to India. In the guest-house there were some white sheets of paper. I noted those points in the white sheet of papers, which were seized from my residence at P-189B, Suren Sarkar Road at the time of my arrest.

I left Peking on 31.10.70 at about 9 am (Chinese time) and reached Shanghai at about 11-30 am the same day by a Chinese Inland Service plane. I left Shanghai at about 3-30 pm (Chinese time) on 31.10.70 by PIA (Pakistan International Airways) plane; the plane touched at Canton, Dacca (8 pm on 31.10.70 - East Pakistan time), Karachi (10-30 pm West Pakistan time). The plane was delayed at Karachi due to strict search by the police. The plane left Karachi and reached Cairo in the early hours of 1.11.70. The plane did not touch Tirana due to fog and it was diverted to Rome. It reached Rome at 7 am (Italian time) on 1.11.70. After three hours waiting in the airport of Rome, the plane resumed its flight and reached Tirana airport at 12 noon on 1.11.70 (Albanian time). The same set of people received me at the Tirana airport. They were earlier intimated about my arrival by the CPC.

From the airport, I was taken to the DURRES guest-house and kept in quarantine as Cholera broke out in epidemic form in Balkan Peninsula. Doctors used to visit me regularly. I stayed there till 8th Nov. '70. In the morning of 9th Nov '70 I was taken to the Tirana Town where I was accommodated till 17th Nov '70. During this period once I met the Chinese Ambassador at the Chinese Embassy when the Ambassador asked me about the persons whom I had met in China.

On 16th or 17th Nov '70 I returned to Rome from Tirana by an Italian plane and the same day left Rome for London at 7-30 pm

(Italian time). I stayed in London till 26th Nov '70 and on the same day (26.11.70) left London. I reached Dum Dum Airport at 12-30 pm on 27th Nov '70.

[When asked to comment on the people and the city of Peking, Souren gave out that Peking was a clean city. The road-cleaning arrangement was very much looked after. The system was better than that of London. Road cleaning in London was done with a machine fitted with a car and the road watering is done by another car while in Peking both the work is done simultaneously with two machines fitted in car. People's dress is simple, neat and clean; young people wear full pant and typical Chinese coat. There was no unusual curiosity amongst the commoners. They were well-disciplined. Foreigners like Souren Bose were kept under strict surveillance.]

(IV) During my stay in China once Mr. LI handed over to me copy of a cyclostyled document asking me to go through the same. Mr. LI also said that it was delivered to me as per the instruction of the leaders of the CPC. The document was on a request made by some District committee of the CPC to the Central Committee to depute a leader to inaugurate and unveil a statue of Mao-Tse-Tung on his birthday. The document also contained the reply of Mao in this connection which read as follows :

- (1) According to the decision of the CPC, the birthday celebration of the leaders of the CPC has been negated.
- (2) Prestige and Authority of a leader grows and cannot be established.

In the beginning I could not catch the underlying meaning of making me go through the document. Later I could realise that it was nothing but an indirect criticism made against those leaders of the CPI-ML who were anxious to bestow the revolutionary authority on Charu Majumdar.

(V) I did not visit West Germany at all. On way to London from Paris airport our plane, however, touched at Stuttgart (W. Germany) on 27.8.70 (In his earlier statement he mentioned that he had visited West Germany).

(VI) During this journey abroad I had to incur a total expenditure of Rs. 9000/- (approx). I got Rs. 10000/- from Sushital Roy Choudhuri (since dead) from the party fund. On my return to India, I handed over the unspent amount (Rs. 1000/-) to Charu Majumdar. Roughly the expenses were like this :

Return ticket from India to England - Rs. 6470.00



Ticket from London to Albania -	Rs. 1764.00
Personal expense in Paris -	Rs. 150.00
Personal expense in Rome -	Rs. 300.00
Personal expense in Peking - (Not remembered)	
(for purchasing a terylene shirt and one gas lighter)	Rs. 8684.00
(Roughly Rs. 9000.00)	

(VII) I had practically no occasion to spend anything in China and Albania. Expenses there were borne by the parties of those countries. I had also very little expense in London as besides my brother-in-law (Partha Sarathi Ghosh), one CPI(ML) contact Swaran Singh Bains of 14 Masters Road, Lemington Spa, Warwickshire, England, a Punjabi gentleman, bore the major part of my expenses in England.

[Souren Bose was again brought to SB office at his request on 24.4.72 on his way back to jail after production in the court. He was further examined in the light of the notes kept by him in the white sheets of paper (seized by us during his arrest) over the conversations between him and the Chinese leaders but nothing new came to light.

However, Souren Bose stated that earlier he was hesitant to come out with the full facts on the following grounds:

- (a) any leakage of his disclosure was sure to endanger his life,
- (b) the government might utilise this piece of information to damage our image, especially of Charu Majumdar by quoting the criticisms of the CPC against Charu Majumdar's politics which in turn was likely to tarnish his own (Souren) political image and even pose serious threat to his security from his own party circle.
- (c) other Naxalite factions, particularly Ashim Chatarji's group which is equally dangerous, might capitalise on this issue to consolidate their position at his cost.]

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. A secret meeting between Kanu Sanyal, who had gone underground by then, and Harekrishna Konar could take place in Siliguri area on 17 May 1967 late night in which Souren Bose was also present. This was followed by a meeting between the SP, Darjeeling and Kanu Sanyal at Sukna Forest Bungalow on 18.5.67 morning at the instance of Shri Konar. Souren Bose was also present in this meeting. May refer to A.P.Mukherjee's "The Lessons of Naxalbari" (written in August-September 1968) as well as to SP, Darjeeling's Note to the Cabinet Committee (June 1967), both included in this publication.

As a matter of fact, it was quite clear from subsequent developments and writings of Charu Majumdar, Souren Bose and others that the extremist leadership under the influence of Charu Majumdar preempted all possible efforts of all concerned including Harekrishna Konar, Biswanath Mukherjee, Gen. Secy. and President respectively of the WBPKE and UF Cabinet ministers, for implementing land reform measures on emergent basis by starting the violent and lawless incidents in Siliguri sub-division from 3 March 1967.

2. The fact is, as revealed by subsequent developments including writings of Souren Bose and others that the Naxalbari movement virtually collapsed after the organised police operations of 12th. and 13th July 1967 in Hatighisa and Buraganj Anchals respectively. Even the most prominent leader of the movement, namely, Kanu Sanyal had to be 'removed' from the area, vide p.117 of Souren Bose's *Charu Majumdarer Katha*, 1989/2000 reprint.
3. The above version of Souren does not appear to be substantially correct. There were reasons to believe that CM inducted Souren into 24-Parganas for easing out Kaliprosad Roychoudhury who was not seeing eye to eye with CM. on some vital matters. During his work in rural areas of 24-Parganas, Souren was possibly visiting his wife occasionally.
4. A totally distorted picture is given here because later information revealed that this 'action' was by an action squad of West Dinajpur composed of some middle class elements, none of whom could be termed as 'peasants'.
5. Souren Bose suppressed the fact that both Charu Majumdar and Saroj Dutta were keen on having their 'radio station' and that CM had asked Souren on the eve of his departure for China, via UK and Albania, in Aug.1970 to request the Chinese leaders to give them a 'radio station'. The first question which was asked by CM when Souren went to him to report about the China visit was: 'what happened to the radio station matter?' Souren said that the Chinese leaders laughed it out, stating that it was not like a toy which could be carried in the pocket etc. etc. On hearing this, Charubabu broke down and wailed "But couldn't it be sent by ship somewhere along the Madras coast?" Ref: Souren Bose's book titled *Charu Majumdarer Katha*, 1989,p.161
6. Souren admitted that their projection of the Naxalbari movement in "Terai Report" was a distorted one. It transpired later that this Report was in reality written by Charu Mazumdar though it came out in the name of Kanu Sanyal.
7. This does not appear to have been the case with, at least, Charu Majumdar, Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh and many other top leaders. In fact, Souren Bose himself stayed on in Calcutta for long spells after

his marriage. One of the few exceptions was, and continues to be, Kanu Sanyal.

8. Suprisingly, in his statement to police after his arrest in July 1972, Charubabu gave out that it was he who sent Suniti Ghosh to Albania!

### STATEMENT OF PROF. SHYAMAL KUMAR GHOSH

1. Name : Shyamal Kumar Ghosh alias Buchun.
2. Father's name with profession: Prof. Sailendra Kumar Ghosh, (Professor, Gandhi Centenary B. T. College, Habra).
3. Address : 43J, Ultadanga Road, Calcutta -4 (Rented house).
4. Date and place of birth : 26th August 1944 in Calcutta (12B, Mohunbagan Lane, Calcutta - 4).
5. D. R. : Height - 5' 10" (approx.), complexion medium (wheat), Build - stout, Face - oval, Forehead - broad, Hair - curling, scanty hair on the vault, Nose pointed; left hander but takes meal with right hand; Two pock-pits between the eyebrows and one pock-pit on the nose.
6. Photograph & Finger print : Taken.
7. Case reference : Sec. 'F' (Amherst St. P.S.) C/No 249 dt. 22.8.70 u/s 120B/109/147/148/326/302/396/395/392/21 IPC and 25(a) Arms Act. Earlier he was detained for 24 hours under provisions of Bengal (Suppression of Terrorist Outrages) Act of 1932.
8. Date and place of arrest : Arrested from road on 23.5.71.
9. Articles recovered from his possession : Nil
10. Contacts in Foreign Countries : None

#### Statement

I was born in Calcutta. I passed Higher Secondary Examination in 1961 from Sailendra Sarkar Vidyalaya, Shampukur. I passed BA with Hons in Political Science in 1964 from City College, Amherst Street. I got myself admitted in Calcutta University the same year (1964) in LLB course and MA in Political Science. I passed MA in 1966 and stood 2nd class 1st and passed LLB in 1967. I got research scholarship and carried on research work for 2-3 months and then joined Vidyasagar College (Night) on 25.1.68 as a Lecturer in Political Science. I used to draw about Rs. 500/- per month.. In my student life, I was never attracted to politics. In 1967 when Naxalbari incident took place, I was attracted to it somewhat and used to discuss amongst our friends over the issue. I had also some discussions with Somenath Ghosh then. After joining Vidyasagar College I came in contact with Prof. Suniti Ghosh who was then in the Naxalbari-O-Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti (NOKSS).

Though I did not participate actively in political affairs, I had some sympathy for left wing politics. Naturally when Naxalbari movement took place, I got roused. Afterwards I tried to study



political works of great Marxist-Leninists. Throughout 1967, actually I did nothing besides studying those books including Mao Tse-Tung's Hunan Report, Quotations, Three Constantly read Articles, On Contradiction, On Practice etc.

In 1968, when I joined Vidyasagar Evening College, I came in contact with Prof. Suniti Ghosh, who was at that time a well-known Naxalite theoretician. Afterwards I came in contact with some other professors who supported Naxalbari politics. With Suniti Ghosh as its leader, a professors' unit was formed for extending support to Naxalbari peasants' movement. The unit comprised of the following Professors :

Prof. Bidyut Dutta, Surendranath College; Prof. Nishith Bhattacharji of Bangabasi College; Principal Amiya Bhusan Chakraborti of Vijaygarh College; Prof. Provash (probably Roy) of Jadavpur University; Prof. Subas Sinchan Roy of Surendranath College; myself and Prof. Santosh Ghosh of Howrah College and 3/4 others (I cannot remember their names now).

The professors' Unit used to meet at the houses of different professors to discuss over the situation and the role of the professors vis-à-vis agrarian revolution. We also contested election of the WBCUTA as a different group but we miserably failed. We also participated in the mass movement of the professors.

Afterwards when all India Co-ordination Committee of the Communist Revolutionaries was formed the same year (1968), we supported the resolutions of the Committee. So far as I know, the Committee was composed of the following members :

Charu Majumdar / Sushital Roy Choudhuri / Saroj Dutta / Prof. Suniti Ghosh (as he was given charge of publishing *Liberation*, he was taken in the all India body) / Appu of Madras / Shew Kumar Misra of UP / Kunikalanarayan of Kerala / Souren Bose / Chaudhuri Tejeswar Rao / Panchadri Krishnamurti and others.

The State (West Bengal) Co-ordination consisted of the following members : CM / SRC / Saroj Dutta / Suniti Ghosh / Parimal Das Gupta / Asit Sen / Shyamal Nandi / Souren Bose / Kali Roy Chaudhuri and others.

At that time my political activities were confined within the Professors' unit. We (professors) generally met at least once a month. Then at the beginning of 1969, I got a chance to see some leaders like CM, Saroj Dutta, SRC in SRC's house at Manicktala VIP Road through Prof. Suniti Ghosh. When I entered that house, I saw some

other comrades too whose names I did not know. Up to the month of August, 1969, I had no activities besides those mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, CPI (ML) was formed on 22.4.69 and was announced by Kanu Sanyal at the Calcutta Maidan meeting on 1.5.69 which I attended.

In August 1969, I was asked by Prof. Suniti Ghosh to arrange a shelter for CM and accordingly I did it at Guru Prosad Kundu's house at Sikdarbagan. Guru was known to me from 4/5 months earlier. CM was there for three days being brought by Prof. Suniti Ghosh.

From the very beginning of the formation of the CPI(ML), some contradictions arose in the party amongst the leading comrades relating to some fundamental questions regarding mass organisation, forms of struggle etc. According to Asit Sen's group, open mass organisation and open mass movement are necessary to mobilise the people with a view to conducting armed struggle for seizure of political power. On the other hand, CM's political line, which was accepted in the party, was different. He said, quoting Lin Piao that "Guerrilla Warfare is the only way to mobilise and apply the whole strength of the people against the enemy." That is why he was against conducting other forms of struggle and building up mass organisations both in the rural and urban areas. At the primary stage, guerrilla warfare in the rural areas by landless and poor peasants was our party line.

Actually at that time city activities were confined to propaganda work, group meetings, developing underground party units, arrangement of shelters, meeting places and inspiring the developed cadres to go to the rural areas to rouse the peasants (landless and poor) for guerrilla actions against the notorious class enemies.

By acting correctly upon this politics and fighting the revisionist line of Asit Sen, the CPI (ML) developed struggles in some isolated pockets of West Bengal rural areas. But very soon some political weaknesses were noticed. Political work of our party units in the rural areas was so weak that class questions were seriously ignored. In some cases class enemies were not annihilated but only some middle-peasants and petty usurers were liquidated and even that was not done by poor and landless peasants' squad but by urban petty-bourgeois cadres who went to the rural areas. Those cadres forgot that their responsibility in the rural areas was to rouse the poor and landless peasants, develop party-units among them, build up guerrilla

squads among them, and to arouse the initiative of the landless poor peasant masses. Instead, they deliberately tried to impose their leadership upon them and suppress the initiative of the landless poor peasants. As a result, peasants' struggle in 24-Parganas, Hooghly and Howrah districts and in some districts of North Bengal suffered heavily. CM noticed those weaknesses and pointed out in some of his writings how to fight these weaknesses.

In the meantime COC (Central Organising Committee) was formed with the following members : CM / SRC / Saroj Dutta / Kanu Sanyal / Souren Bose / S.N.S. (Satya Narain Singh) of Bihar / Misra (Shew Kumar) of UP / Tejeswar Rao (after his arrest later, Nagbhusan Patnaik was co-opted in his place) / Appalasuri (both of Andhra) / Appu of Madras / R. P. Shroff of J & K.

Under COC different SOC, SOC, SOC and other units were formed. West Bengal SOC comprised of the following members:- CM, Saroj Dutta, Kanu Sanyal, Souren Bose, Suniti Ghosh, Khokan Mazumdar, Kali Roy Chaudhuri, Asit Chakraborti and a few others.

Probably in August 1969, the Presidency Consolidation group led by Ashim Chatarji and Santosh Rana joined CPI (ML) after making a self-critical review of their past activities. Possibly Ashim Chatarji was co-opted in the West Bengal SOC.

The 1st COC meeting was held in the residence of Nripen, a State Government employee near Central Dairy, Belgachia in the last part of 1969 whence I became known to the leading comrades because I escorted CM from Dr Sunil Bose's house to the meeting place. From this COC meeting till the party Congress in May, 1970, I maintained link with party leaders and arranged for some of their shelters. I was never attached to any committee of the CPI (ML) though I was a trusted worker of the leading comrades.

I regularly read *Anandbazar*, *Jugantar*, *Amritabazar* and *Statesman*.

Party structure at present :

Politburo with 11 members

Central Committee with 21 members

State Committees

District Committees

Regional Committees

Area Committees

Units or Cells

Politburo : CM - General Secretary of the CPI (ML) / SRC (since dead) / Saroj Dutta / Souren Bose (Arrested) / Kanu Sanyal (Arrested) /

S. N. Sinha (Singh) / S. K. Misra (Arrested) / R. P. Shroff (Arrested) / Appu / N. B. Patnaik (Arrested) / Appalasuri (Arrested).

Central Committee : All Politburo members plus Suniti Ghosh, Ashim Chatarji, Khokan Majumdar, Vempatapu Satyanarayan (dead), Kailasam (dead), Raj Kishore Singh (Bihar) and four others whose names I cannot recollect.

West Bengal State Committee : CM, SRC, Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal, Ashim Chatarji, Santosh Rana, Khokan Mazumdar and Jangal Santhal of North Bengal, Kali Roy Chaudhuri of 24-Parganas, Asit Chakraborti of Howrah, Mahadeb Mukherji of Burdwan and a few others.

Calcutta District Committee : Besides Sadhan Sarkar and Dilip Banerjee, I do not know any other member of the Committee.

Below this level, I have no idea at all.

COC Meetings : The first COC meeting was held at the residence of Nripen, a State Government employee near Central Dairy, Belgachia in the last part of 1969 and I escorted Charu Majumdar to the meeting from the house of Dr. Bose of Madanmohantala. Besides CM, the following persons attended the meeting : Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Souren Bose, Shew Kumar Misra, Satyanarain Singh, R. P. Shroff, Appalasuri and others (whose names I cannot recollect). I saw Prof. Suniti Ghosh present at the house but I cannot say whether he attended the meeting as he was not a member of the COC. Possibly Kanu Sanyal was absent. I took CM at about 9.30 am to the place and took him back to Dr. Bose's house at 9-9.30 p.m. the same night. I carried him in taxi both ways. After 2-3 days, CM shifted from Dr. Bose's house to Nripen's house and stayed there for 3-4 days. I cannot exactly say where I took him from there.

Possibly in the month of March 1970, the COC again met at the house of Tapan Mitra at 7, Clarke Street. Here also I escorted CM to the meeting place. In this meeting the following persons were seen besides CM: Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal, Shew Kumar Misra, Satyanarain Singh, R. P. Shroff, Appalasuri, Nagbhusan Patnaik, Appu.

In this period a car of Tapan Mitra was used by us for carrying leading comrades. I saw Prof. Suniti Ghosh here also. I also saw Salil Roy there.

No other COC meeting was held to the best of my knowledge.

After the party congress, the word 'Organising' was deleted and



the new Central Committee was formed and it held a meeting immediately after the congress at the same venue. The new Central Committee was formed with 21 members whose names I mentioned earlier. Besides this CC meeting, I do not have any idea of any other meeting held.

I think a meeting of the West Bengal SOC was held in the first part of 1970 but I do not know the venue. Sadhan Sarkar used to fix up venue and other things of SOC meetings. In March '70, another SOC meeting was held but details are not known to me.

Once, possibly in March, 1970, I received Kanu Sanyal and Souren Bose at Sealdah Railway Station and reached them to the house of Madan Chatarji of Ramratan Bose Lane. Therefrom Kanu Sanyal and Souren went to their respective shelters either of their own or taken by somebody. It is not a fact that I took them to Tower Hotel. I had no knowledge about any meeting of our party being held at any hotel whatsoever.

Finance : I have no idea about the party's fund and financial position. I normally used to contribute Rs. 10/- to Rs. 50/- per month to Sushital Roy Choudhuri while I had been earning. I never took a single paise from the party for myself. So far as my idea goes, party fund was raised from the contribution of individual cadres and subscription collected by different cells from the people. I cannot say who is the treasurer of the party or where the money is kept. In this connection, I may mention that once I heard Prof. Suniti Ghosh saying to Saroj Dutta that the former had to pay Rs. 500/- to Rs. 600/- per month towards taxi fare. Shri Dutta asked him not to bother about such expenses and even taxi-fare may go upto Rs. 1000/- (one thousand), if necessary.

Arms cache : I never saw any leading comrade carrying arms or protected by any armed comrades. So far, I have heard the CPI (ML) procured arms through snatching from the policemen, jotedars and others. To my mind it is an absolute lie that China gave arms to CPI (ML). Regarding the question of arms, our party's stand is very clear - arms and weapons can never make revolution; it is the people, politically conscious, who alone can make revolution. Hence, I think if anyone gives much stress upon the question of arms, it is definitely a deviation. I think the petty-bourgeois comrades who have no faith on the masses and who always try to boast of their individual heroism instead of flourishing the heroism of the people give much stress upon arms and make themselves laughing stock to the people and thereby jeopardise the cause of revolution.

Couriers : Generally through couriers contacts are maintained amongst the party leaders. Theoretically, it was the understanding of the party that every leading comrade must have a separate courier. Couriers will maintain links among the leading comrades through post box (contact place of the couriers). But this principle was not maintained strictly as I saw Saroj Dutta, SRC and Prof. Suniti Ghosh used to meet CM personally at the latter's place of shelter. I was, however, a courier of CM from the end of 1969 till July 1970 while CM stayed in Calcutta at intervals. So far as I know, the following persons were other couriers:- Nripen, a State Government employee of a flat near Central Dairy, Belgachita; Sm. Srilekha Basu, an employee of West Bengal Govt. - a courier of Prof. Suniti Ghosh; Guru Prosad Kundu - most probably of Saroj Dutta.

Shelters : I can only mention some previous shelters of the leading comrades like CM, SRC and others. Those are the following :

- (1) House of Tapan Mitra (Tapan Mitra was arrested) at Clarke Street. Here CM, Saroj Dutta, SRC and some outside comrades also stayed. It was a very old shelter. I heard that Co-ordination also met here. Party used it till early 1970.
- (2) House of Bhudeb Batabyal/Malay Batabyal (Bhudeb is since dead and Malay arrested), near Paresh Nath Temple. Many leading comrades stayed here though I saw only CM staying there.
- (3) House of Prof. Nikunja Behari Chaudhuri, Prof. of English of Vidyasagar College (Evening), Upper Circular Road between Science College and Rajabazar. Here only Prof. Suniti Ghosh used to take shelter.
- (4) House of Salil Roy (Salil Roy was arrested earlier). I heard that this house was used as a shelter of many leading comrades upto the formation of the CPI (ML). I heard Kanu Sanyal during his visit to Calcutta in connection with 1st May meeting stayed at this house. I had been to the house once only with Tapan Mitra.
- (5) House of Dr. Sunil Basu of Madanmohantala. CM and Andhra comrades took shelter. Appalasuri and Patnaik were arrested from the place.
- (6) House of Prof. Bidyut Dutta, VIP Road, Manicktola, Professor of Science subject of Surendranath College; many leading comrades including CM stayed here.

- (7) House of Madan Chatarji, of Ram Ratan Bose Lane. Here many leading comrades including CM took shelter.
- (8) House of Nripen near Central Dairy, Belgachia; once CM stayed there for 2-3 days after the COC meeting at the end of 1969.
- (9) House of Prof. Debi Chatarji, Prof. of Belghoria College, Raja Basanta Roy Road. Here CM, SD and Prof. Suniti Ghosh stayed (at different times).
- (10) House of Guru Prosad Ghosh, 6, Chaltabagan Lane; here CM and Souren Bose took shelter.
- (11) House of Jiten Sarkar, a State Government employee, Hare Krishna Seth Lane, where leading comrades including CM stayed.
- (12) House of Maya Chakraborti, 1, Jadu Mitra Lane. Normally important comrades coming from outside States stayed here.
- (13) House of Sushil Chakraborti, Sibdas Bhaduri Street. Here also comrades coming from outside stayed.

Party Organs : I have no idea about printing places of party organs. I never faced any difficulty in getting *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* because of my contact with the leaders. I never distributed any such copy. After August '70 while I had no contact with the leaders, I used to get copies from some local boys of Sikdarbagan area. I have also no idea about the mode of distribution of these copies.

Party Congress: The 1st Party Congress of the CPI (ML) was held at a three-storied building of the South Eastern Railway Colony at Garden Reach. The building was located at 109/6, S. E. Railway Colony, Garden Reach and the building is just by the side of a big water-reservoir. The Congress was held on the 1st floor. The room could accommodate 70-75 people. The Congress started from 8 am on 15.5.70 and continued for three days till 10 p.m. (with a break for three hours each day).

On 16.5.70 the Congress again started at 8 am. and ended by 4 p.m. The delegates took their meals on the ground floor where a kitchen was opened. In the night the delegates slept on the ground floor, 1st floor and on the roof of the building. I presume that Sadhan Sarkar arranged this venue. At the time of party Congress, my responsibility was to look after the delegates coming from Andhra, viz. N. B. Patnaik, Appalasuri, Raman Reddy, a lady (26/27 yrs., Ht. 4'8/9", sweet face, complexion dark), Dr. Mallikarjun Naidu, Vempatapu Satyanarayanan, Adibatla Kailasam and another person whose name I do not know. On the 12th May four of the delegates

reached Howrah Station and the remaining four came on 13.5.70. According to previous arrangement they were first brought to the house of Madan Chatarji at 17A, Ram Ratan Bose Lane by some other person. On 12.5.70, evening, as per arrangement, I visited the house of Madan Chatarji and escorted the 1st four delegates to the residence of Dr. Sunil Basu of Madanmohantala Lane. On 13.5.70 I again visited the said house and escorted two of the delegates to the residence of Sushil Chakraborti at Sibdas Bhaduri Street and the remaining two to the residence of Sm. Maya Chakraborti at 1, Jadu Mitra Lane. This job was entrusted to me by Prof. Suniti Ghosh. On 14.5.70 afternoon I first escorted the delegates who were accommodated at the house of Dr. Basu. After reaching them, I escorted the other delegates (4) to the venue of the party congress. I reached them in taxis. We gave a general impression that the marriage of a non-Bengali gentleman was being solemnised there. As per specific instruction, none (neither the delegates nor the couriers) were allowed to go outside the building excepting a very few who were booked for kitchen job. The cooks were hired. There were four Sreelekha couriers, viz. myself, Dilip Banarji, Guru Prosad Kundu and Sm. Sreelekha Basu.

Besides, Prof. Suniti Ghosh himself escorted some delegates. Over and above, Satish Banarji of Behala with his group (nearly 25 including the cooks numbering about three) were in the building.

About 35 delegates attended the Congress.

In the Congress Charu Majumdar placed his political-organisational report which was passed unanimously after prolonged discussions. The politburo and the Central Committee were also elected in the Congress. The constitution and the party programme were also approved by the delegates of the Congress. As I was not a delegate to the Congress, it is not possible for me to give a vivid picture of the Congress. However, I came to know from some comrades about the deliberations in the Congress.

Contradictions amongst the leading comrades after the Congress :

Between CM and SRC : After the Party Congress, city activities of the party increased. Petty-bourgeois students and youths started attacks upon bourgeois idol and schools and colleges. CM supported the activities of the students and youths. He tried to defend the attacks in terms of Chinese cultural revolution.. He said that the attacks upon the super-structure were essential to fight revisionism. Chairman Mao's campaign 'Fight self, oppose revisionism' is the motto behind



these attacks. But CM told the students and youths that their activities would not be complete unless they go to the workers and peasants in order to encourage them in class struggle. But SRC opposed CM's line and said that by supporting these activities we are actually inviting liquidation of our party. According to him, the line is absolutely against our party programme. He was against all these for other reasons also. According to him, without seizure of political power, any attack upon super-structure is virtually against dialectical materialism. In the history of revolutions in other countries, nothing like this was noticeable. Even in China, after the completion of democratic revolution and socialist transformation, cultural revolution started. According to him, we were actually evading our principal task by encouraging all these things in the city.

In this contradiction, the party rank and file supported CM's line and opposed SRC. But because of their very poor political understanding, they slandered against SRC, branded him as the worst counter-revolutionary and even some of CM's followers went to the extent of trying to annihilate him. Once even Guru Prosad Kundu told me that SRC should be annihilated. Actually political development of the cadres did not take place. Because of that anyone who wanted to criticise the party activities even in the mildest form, was branded as SRC's man, i.e. a worst counter-revolutionary -even more counter-revolutionary than big landlords and jotedars.

To my mind, some of the points raised by SRC were perhaps wrong but the treatment which he got from the party leaders was definitely undesirable. A great revolutionary like him died unnoticed and unobserved. His great services were denied. Definitely it was an injustice done to him.

My activities from August '70 till date : After the party congress, when contradictions between Charu Majumdar and Sushital Roy Choudhuri came into light and as I expressed my reservation to Somenath Ghosh, at the house of Madan Chatarji, I was branded as an SRC-man and I lost all contacts with the leading comrades. Party never arranged for my shelter nor bothered a bit about my security and monetary position. I arranged my own shelters and stayed at the residences of my relations. (Details deleted). Besides, I went to Puri on 2nd August 1970 and stayed at Sagarika Hotel upto 13/14 August. From there I had been to Bhubaneswar and other places one day for sight-seeing.

From September '70 till my arrest, I met Saroj Dutta only once,

possibly in the month of December 1970 at the residence of Jitendra Kumar Sarkar at Harey Krishto Seth Lane on being called by him. I got the information through a letter at the house of Madan Chatarji. Sri Dutta asked me about my activities and also criticised me for not doing anything. He also advised me to go to peasants/workers for party work. He also offered me that he would arrange a meeting with Dilip Banarji if I was willing to go to Labour belt. I told him that I would inform him later. I also met Prof. Suniti Ghosh twice/thrice at the house of Jitendra Kr. Sarkar. He also criticised me and advised me like Saroj Dutta. I met him last in the month of March '71 when he also asked me to do a job for him i.e. to rent a flat at New Alipore area or any other sophisticated area through my friends where he would keep a political family for shelter of party leaders. But I could not arrange this.

Besides, I met Charu Majumdar for the last time in the latter part of July 1970 at the residence of Souren Bose at Suren Sarkar Road. This was an interview for about 15 minutes. He told me that I was relieved of all my party responsibilities and he would keep my service in mind forever and advised me either to arrange for a good job outside Bengal or just to roam about in Delhi, Bombay etc for at least 3-4 months. When I asked for some money from him for this purpose, he said that he would pay later. I also met Guru Prosad Kundu 3-4 times at Sikderbagan and other places. All that he could do was to advise me to take up party work in rural areas.

Either towards the end of January or the first part of February, 1971, once I had been to the house of Souren Bose at Suren Sarkar Road, I requested him to narrate the details of his journey abroad. It may be mentioned here that I knew that Souren Bose had a contemplation to go out of India, particularly to China. I may recall here that I overheard a discussion among Charu Majumdar, Souren Bose and Prof. Suniti Ghosh immediately after the party congress in a shelter of CM (I do not remember exactly the shelter in which CM was accommodated at that particular time). CM was telling Prof. Ghosh that while he (Prof. Ghosh) had already obtained an international passport, because he had contemplation to send both of them to China for some party work. Though I was not aware of his going abroad, I casually asked the question, Souren Bose wanted to know from me as to how I could know about his journey abroad. I told him that I had no knowledge about his journey. Rather it was my feeling that he had visited China. Shri Bose seemed to be very

happy over his unexpected journey abroad and I found him in a good mood to state his experience of the journey. He said that he visited China, Albania, Paris, Italy, London, etc. He only said that he met Chairman Mao only for five minutes in Peking.<sup>1</sup>

He, however, hesitated to give out things in details. I insisted when he said that CPC was supporting CPI(ML) more or less on general issues but it had got some reservations on certain affairs. Shri Bose was very much reluctant to relate the CPC's reservations on certain affairs. On my repeated request he told me that it was the directive of the party not to discuss his experience abroad. I again requested him to state one or two factors on which CPC did not see eye to eye with the CPI(ML). Very reluctantly he mentioned one issue - non-existence of peoples' Liberation Army. Chairman Mao criticised CPI(ML) stating 'How could you launch peoples' war without a peoples' Liberation Army?' I enquired as to how the CPI(ML) could face this criticism. In order to avoid replying further queries, he changed the issue and started telling about his experience of drinking, witnessing of blue films etc. in France and Italy.

I may mention here that very shortly after my aforesaid conversation with Souren Bose, the party announced through *Deshabrati* that PLA was formed with the snatching of rifles at Magurjan. But the incident of Magurjan took place 3-4 months earlier to this. This announcement was just to cover up the scathing criticism by Peking, that is what I think.

I may mention here that towards the end of 1969, Ranjana Ash had visited Calcutta. During her visit, she met Charu Majumdar at the residence of Saibal Mitra. Prof. Suresh (Suniti?) Ghosh, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saibal Mitra and myself were present. She tried to interpret their political line of building up mass organisations and conducting mass movements as the pre-requisite of revolutionary struggle. But CM disagreed with the line and told her that this is neo-revisionism. She fumbled and told him that she would convey CM's opinion to their party leaders. So far I heard that the existing relation between the two parties is bitter.

Comments on the leaders :

During my association with the prominent CPI(ML) leaders for about a year, I came in contact with Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal and Prof. Suniti Ghosh besides others. My assessment about them is given below:

Charu Majumdar : He is aged about 52/53, His height is about

5'11/2", complexion - very fair (reddish). Hairs - black and grey mixed - completely back brushed. His eyes are bright and hypnotizing, at times during conversation his eyes become bigger. He puts on specs of bifocal lens having shell frame-blackish - not very thick. During excitement his whole forehead becomes wrinkled though normally it is not. All his teeth are false, prominent nose. He is clean-shaven, having no moustache. Smokes pipe (straight) with Capstan tobacco and purchases tobacco in pouch and not in tin. But he is a mediocre smoker. He has no special diet and quantity is very meagre. He takes tea excessively though forbidden by doctors. He carries his own medicine and takes Pethidine injection himself when none is available to push the injection needle. I do not know any other medicine that he may use. He puts on trouser and hawaiian shirts, normally of terylene and terrycotton. He normally uses leather slippers but I have seen him using shoes with socks during winter. In '70 winter I saw him with sleeveless sweater and black coat (not prince-coat). I saw him only with one trousers and two shirts; his belongings are very simple. He puts on lungi at shelter. While going from one place to another, he carries a small kit bag of good quality rexin containing his belongings: one shirt, shaving set, medicines, genji, underwear and a fountain pen, some white papers hung from his neck. The kit bag is chained. Normally while going out, he carries detective novels of Agatha Christie or any English book on adventure. Never carries anything political which may divulge his identity. He has no diary book. He puts on wrist watch at the left wrist with a nylon band. The watch is round. He has a ring possibly at the right hand - a ring of silver or stainless steel with a blackish stone. He is very sentimental and touchy.

His education is upto Class IX/X<sup>2</sup>. But he can speak English very fluently. He has versatile knowledge in various subjects. He never writes himself.<sup>3</sup> So far I saw, he dictated and Saroj Dutta wrote out with some editing here and there.

His pain (heart or asthmatic) becomes severe particularly during winter. He told me once that earlier at one stage he was a degenerate man and was addicted to drinking heavily. I, however, never saw him taking drinks.

Regarding his shelters in Calcutta, I may mention that he will never take shelter in known Naxalite areas, rather his shelter would be arranged normally in aristocratic areas like New Alipore, Ballygunge, Watgunge, Kidderpore and Garden Reach in the houses



of upper middle class and socially established people such as doctors, professors, businessmen, engineers, government officers etc. CIT buildings, Govt. Housing Estates, Professors' estates and such buildings consisting of many flats are his probable places of stay.

Saroj Dutta : His height is 5' 1 1/2", medium complexion, thin built - no specs. He is aged about 57/58. His hairs are black and grey mixed and backbrushed. Growth of hair-thin. Clean shaved having no moustache. Eyes are small. Nose not very prominent. Teeth spotted. He puts on normally dhoti and shirt or punjabi, all white shirt, punjabi are normally of white long -cloth of cheap price. He puts on leather slipper. I never saw him carrying any bag whatsoever. He might carry party papers with him, I guess. His appearance is rather unimpressive. He rarely puts on trousers and hawaian shirt. He has no fascination over dress. He smokes but has no specific brand and normally takes from others. He is also fond of taking tea. He has a wrist watch with round dial and nylon band. Possibly he has no ring. He puts the watch in the anterior region of his wrist. He talks much. He is humorous and makes others laugh. He is an M.A. in English. He has extensive study in literature, drama, journalism, history and politics.

Amongst his relatives one is Dr. Sunil Kumar Basu of Madanmohantala. Dr. Basu is his nephew. In the house of Dr. Basu, Charu Majumdar was the first leader of the CPI(ML) to stay in 1970 for two/three months before the arrest of N.B. Patnaik. He stayed there for 16/17 days at a stretch in the same room where Appalasuri and N.B. Patnaik. were accommodated. These leaders were escorted there by me. Saroj Dutta being a journalist, he must have journalist contacts. It is very likely that he may stay in the houses of journalists, fulfilling other criteria of shelters.

Prof. Suniti Ghosh : He is aged about 53/54. His height is about 5' 6". Complexion fair. Good-looking. Hairs - Black, scanty growth, parted at the left, forehead slightly bigger. Prominent nose. He is clean-shaven, having no moustache. Good health, belly slightly bulging out. Normally puts on dhoti and addi punjabi. Occasionally puts on terrycot pant and terrylene shirt, tucked inside the trouser. He has no addiction. Takes tea rarely. Puts on specs, previously of rolled gold frame. Recently he has changed the frame and it is now of shell -blackish and of medium thickness. He speaks softly at a low voice and cannot explain things nicely. He is not a good speaker. Prof. Suniti Ghosh was a member of the Governing Body of Vidyasagar

College (Evening). He being a professor of Vidyasagar College for a long time and having long association with many professors and other sophisticated people, he may take shelter in the houses of such persons. I do not have any correct idea about financial position of Sunitibabu but once while he used to attend college regularly he told me that his funds were exhausted after purchasing the flat. He also expressed his worries about maintenance of his wife and daughters while he would have to go underground. At present, according to my estimation, the monthly expense of Prof. Ghosh's family is about Rs. 700/- to 800/- as they live lavishly.

Political Comments : Though what happened in Naxalbari was very feeble but still its impact upon the different strata of the people was tremendous. Though the revolt was suppressed very soon but it projected the peasants' question to be of utmost importance for the shape of things to come.

From the stage of All India Coördination Committee to the formation of the CPI(ML), our leaders had no uniform ideas. At the primary stage, when Naxalbari revolt had just taken place, there was a hot debate among the leaders as to whether it was a struggle for land or for seizure of political power. Most of the leaders including Promode Sen Gupta, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Kanu Sanyal had the impression that Naxalbari movement was a land-grab movement but Charu Mazumder pointed out that Naxalbari upsurge unlike other peasants' upsurge was a revolt for seizure of political power.

While many leaders were convinced with CM's contention, Promode Sen Gupta and a few others gave up this line of politics and dissociated themselves. Other contradictions also developed. After Promode Sen Gupta, Parimal Das Gupta, Utpal Dutta, Asit Sen, Shyamal Nandi, Satyananda Bhattacharji and many others attacked Charu Majumdar's political line and one by one they dissociated themselves from the organisation.

After the formation of the party, Asit Sen was the first to challenge Charu Majumdar's political line and said that this line is absolutely a sectarian and Guevara line as opposed to Mao line.

In the meantime when Peking supported Charu Majumdar's line, Presidency Consolidation led by Ashim Chatarji joined the party.

But after the party Congress when Party took certain action programme in the cities, Sushital Roy Choudhuri also opposed Charu Mazumder's line. That is why he has been heckled, insulted and despised in the party.

In this connection, I wish now to express my opinion also. Though I was not supporting Charu Mazhumdar's line regarding city activities (individual killings, attack upon super-structures etc.), I was not in a position, being a simple and ordinary sympathiser, to express my opinion boldly, because there was an atmosphere of utmost distrust and suspicion prevailing in the party. It was also due to my timidity that I could not disclose my opinion fully.

In some measure I told Prof. Suniti Ghosh about my reservations about these types of party activities in the cities, possibly in the month of September '70. Soon after this, I was thoroughly isolated in the party. Rumours were spread throughout party-circle that I was an SRC-man. As a consequence, I lost all connections in the party. I was actually hovering hither and thither, searching for my own shelter but getting none. Only my relatives helped me on simple humanitarian grounds.

My experience in the party made me learn the true characters of the leaders. The leaders are not at all concerned about the security of the cadres; on the other hand, they are very much cautious about their own safety and security. They go neither to the workers nor to the peasants but they instruct the cadres to go to the workers and the peasants. They talk of sacrifice for the cause of the people but their own sacrifice is nominal.

Since September 1970, the party has definitely degenerated. I think that is why Peking is not supporting them any longer. Peking Radio and the Chinese Press are completely silent about CPI (ML), possibly due to serious deviations of the party from the programme it placed before the Indian people. To my mind, this degeneration has taken place because some vested interest is definitely there who have 'purchased' some leaders. On the contrary, the cadres and ordinary workers of the party think that what is going on is revolution and naturally they do not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the cause of revolution but the political understanding of the cadres is very weak and as such they are easily being integrated with anti-social lumpens without being integrated with the masses.

15. 23.5.71 to 7.6.71 - Interrogated daily.

16. Interrogating officers' assessment :

- (i) Intelligence - sharp
- (ii) Personality - pleasing personality
- (iii) Secretive or frank - Seems to be frank
- (iv) Likely to cooperate or not - He will not cooperate after release

(v) Interesting aspect - X

17. Interrogating officers rank and full name: (deleted).

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Not true; according to Souren's disclosures, he met only Chou-en-lai and Kang-Sheng.
2. Not quite correct, Charubabu read upto Intermediate when he gave up studies.
3. Not correct. This may be true of the English writings, most of which were reportedly written by Sushital Roy Choudhuri or Suniti Ghosh or Saroj Dutta after getting his Bengali version orally or in writing. But CM was very good in writing letters etc. in Bengali, some of which were seized from Kanu Sanyal's shelters in Darjeeling district and some from CM's shelters in Calcutta at different times.



## STATEMENT OF ASIM CHATTERJEE

1. Name with aliases : Asim Chatterjee, aliases Kaka, Khokan, Bhaiya Das, Shymal.
2. Name of father : Shri Biswanath Chatterjee, President, Birbhum Congress Committee and owner of Birbhum Boarding, Suri.
3. Date of birth : 26.8.1942.  
Descriptive Roll : Height 5-7 1/2"; medium complexion, left eye protruding and cannot close; facial paralysis on the left. Build: thin; hair – long; moustache – full.
4. Permanent Address : Birbhum Boarding, Sonatarpara, PS – Suri, Dist. – Birbhum.
5. Temporary Address : (22) : (Names/addresses deleted to protect identity).
6. Photograph : Taken on 5.11.71 at Deoghar (Bihar).
7. Date & place of arrest : 3.11.71 at 21.30 hrs. at Deoghar (Santhal Parganas/ Bihar) inside O.K. Hotel / Restaurant on Station Road.
8. Reference of the case : Deoghar PS Case No. 1 dt. 3.11.71 u/s 25(A)/26/27 Arms Act.
9. Articles recovered : (1) One Smith & Wesson .38 Revolver No. 859211 made in USA loaded with 6 rounds of ammunition.
10. Relations : Father – Shri Biswanath Chatterjee, Mother – Sm. Sobharani Chatterjee, Brothers – self and five others - (details not shown to protect identity), Sisters – Six (details not shown to protect their identity).
11. Contacts : (in Bihar/12, Baharagora/11, Darbhanga/2, Deoghar/1, Midnapore/12, Bankura/3, Calcutta/12, Nadia/4, Murshidabad/1.... (names and addresses deleted to protect identity).

## Statement

In 1966, I passed the BA with Hons in Economics in 2nd Class. In the early part of 1967, CPI(M) gave a mandate to withdraw the Presidency College movement as the election was getting nearer. The movement was accordingly withdrawn but it gave me a tremendous shock and I searched for alternative politics. The movement in Naxalbari in May 1967 lent inspiration to us. We continued our movement in the name of Presidency Consolidation Committee and thereafter, we were expelled from the BPSF – Left.

In 1968 when Naxalbari-O-Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti was formed, I was taken as a member of the said Samiti. After the Food Movement in 1966, I was expelled from Bidhan Chhatrabas and

stayed at 1, Bhabanath Sen Street in the house of Prof. Sinha. I stayed there for 3 months. Then I shifted to Eden Hindu Hostel and sometimes passed my days in Presidency College compound. The following persons also joined with me in Naxalite politics : (Names/addresses etc deleted to protect identity).

In February 1968, I was introduced to Charu Majumdar by Sushital Roy Choudhuri. I was earlier acquainted with Sushital Roy Chowdhury in the Naxalbari-O-Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samity of which he was the Secretary. I met Charu Majumdar in the flat of Sushital at VIP Rd. I told CM that I am prepared to do work amongst the peasants in villages on the Naxalite line to which CM encouraged me, CM suggested that I work in South Bengal.

I selected Midnapur as the people there are most neglected and poverty stricken. In March 1968, I went to Midnapur and contacted Santosh Rana in Vill – Pitnan in Gopiballavpur. I knew Santosh Rana from before as both of us stayed in Bidhan Chhatrabas (Calcutta). He was then a teacher in Nayabasan School. I stayed there for about a month and moved in different villages in Gopiballavpur area. Santosh accompanied me in all my tours. I started work in Dharampur and Pitnan villages. I used to organise the peasants through open propaganda and meetings on agrarian revolution. In my task, Santosh Rana, his brother Mihir Rana, Kamal Chatterjee of Moulana Azad College and Amal Sanyal, among others, worked with me. I went back to Calcutta and after some days came back to Gopiballavpur.

I may mention here that in April, 1968 I married Rama Sarkar @ Ranu who was wife of Kamal Sarkar, my comrade. Even after my marriage, Kamal remained with me. When I returned to Gopiballavpur in April 1968, I took with me my wife. Our marriage took place in a party meeting at Gopiballavpur. Santosh Rana, Mihir Rana, Meghnad were present. We stayed in Dharampur village Library. We faced opposition from the richer section of the society about our stay in the Library and we shifted to a cycle repairing shop of (names/addresses deleted). Therefrom we shifted to vill – Pitnan in the house of Santosh Rana after 4/5 days. We stayed here for about a month. I established contact with (name/address deleted) of Baharagora through (name deleted) towards the end of 1968. We agreed to work together in border areas.

In the beginning of 1969, (name/address deleted) took me to Jamshedpur at the house of (name and address deleted). There I

met (3 names, deleted). We discussed our politics and they agreed to work in Jamshedpur on our lines. Before I left for Jamshedpur, my wife expressed to me that she would not lead such a hard life and returned to her father's place in Calcutta. I, however, continued my stay in Gopiballavpur area.

Through MC, I started work in Surmohi village, PS – Bahragora. Here RB@ Ajoy, B (Tech name of Pradip Dhar), MM of Dakshineshwar (since dead), B @Prosad Biswas of Bangabasi College (since dead), P. Banerjee @ Ramesh of Taltola, student of B.E.College, AB of Presidency College, PC worked with me. They concentrated in Surmohi, Gopalpur, Rupaskandi villages. Their headquarters was at Bahragora in the house of MC,. Deben, Nagen, Rabindra were their local contacts.

Through NB of Jamshedpur, a meeting was arranged at the house of TM between me and Sushital Roy Choudhuri and Satya Narain Singh. This was immediately after the formation of CPI(ML) in May 1969. Earlier in April 1969, at the instance of Satya Narain Singh, I met Sushital in Calcutta at his house. In Dec/Jan, 1968-69. I visited various areas of Pataka PS with the cooperation of Dharma, Broja and Jagannath of Telco. In our discussion at TM's place, Sushital and Satyanarain agreed that Bahragora unit would work with me and Nripen would organise in Jamshedpur area. Sushital also advised me to contact Bhabadeb Mandal of Midnapure as during coordination time Bhabadeb was its convenor and we worked independently in Gopiballavpur. Later, myself, Bhabadev and Sushital met at Bhabadev's house at Midnapur and went to Debra where a CPI(ML) unit under Bhabadev was formed. At our instance, the following persons were included in the Midnapur Dist Committee of CPI(ML) : Bhababadeb—Convenor (arrested)/ Self/ Santosh Rana/ Gunadhar Murmu (arrested)/ Meghnad (arrested)/ Ranabir Samaddar (arrested)/ Nitai of Debra (arrested)/ Sakti of Debra (arrested)/ Mihir Rana.

By this time, Santosh Rana married Jayasri and both did party work. The first action was organised by Mihir Rana and Santosh Rana and local comrades at Dharampur village in Gopiballavpur in September 1969 when an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of Moti Pal. After that, we met at Surmohi where Santosh, Mihir, MC, Bhabadeb were present. I advised Mihir and Santosh to organise the peasants in Gopiballavpur and we also decided to organise actions in Debra and Bahragora. Santosh and Mihir organised killing of Nagen Senapati in vill – Kancha Amrashole at the end of Sept 1969. In

Barsole village, a dacoity was committed in the house of Baishnab Ghosh in which I was present and command was taken by Deben. Bijon, Murari, Sujoy, MC and 300 others participated in this action. Simultaneously, Bhabadev started actions at Debra.

After Bihar police action, we were disorganised. At that time, I along with Deben moved to different shelters in Bahragora, Midnapur and this continued for some time. Meanwhile, harvesting started in Gopiballavpur and I organised forced paddy cutting along with Santosh Rana. I was called by Sushital to Calcutta. I along with Santosh and Bhabadev went to Sushital's house. Our courier Guru took us somewhere at Jadavpur from Sushital's house. There we met CM. Saroj Dutta, Sunti Ghosh, Sushital were also present. CM asked us to form Bengal-Bihar-Orissa Regional Committee and also told us that a State Conference will be held sometime between Feb/ March 1970.

In March 1970, Bhabadeb organised a Regional meeting at Digha in the house of Monoranjan (arrested). Following persons attended: - Self, Bhabadeb, Santosh, Mihir, Meghnad, Sudeb of Presidency College, Ranabir, Pradip, MC, Gunadhar, Sakti and others. The Bengal-Bihar-Orissa R. C. was formed with the following : Self – Secretary/ Bhabadeb Mondal/ Gunadhar Murmu/Sakti Mondal/Sudeb Chakraborty/Santosh Rana/ Mihir Rana.

It was decided to continue annihilation. Immediately after this, a meeting of the State Organising Committee was held in the house of Prof. Suniti Ghosh in the end of March 1970. CM, Sushital, Saroj, Suniti, K. P. Roy Chowdhury, Shyam, Souren Bose, Ashit Chakraborti (Howrah), Mahadeb Mukherjee, Sadhan Sarkar, Self, Bhabadeb and Santosh attended. It was decided that a State Conference would be held shortly and quota of each Regional Committees was fixed. Our R. C. was asked to send 2 delegates. Meanwhile, Bhabadeb was arrested.

The first state conference was held in April 1970 in Behala. Myself and Santosh represented our R. C. We went to Ranjit's house at S. E. Rly. Qr., Garden Reach. Guru took us to Behala. The following attended:- CM, Saroj Dutta, Sushital Roy Chowdhury, Suniti Ghosh, Kali Prosad Roy Chowdhury, Shyam, Souren, Kanu Sanyal, Khokan Mazumdar, Jangal Santhal, Self, Mahadeb, Santosh, Ashit Chakraborty, Sadhan Sarkar, Nag Bhusan Patnaik, Satyanarain Singh. The State Committee was formed with the following: Sushital Roy Chowdhury/ Saroj Dutta/ Suniti Ghosh/ Sadhan Sarkar/ Ashit



Chakraborty/ Mahadeb Mukherjee/ Shyam of Murshidabad/ Souren Bose / Kanu Sanyal/ Kali Prosad Roy Chaudhury/ Khokan Mazumdar/ Jangal Santhal/ Self / Santosh Rana.

Satyanarain Singh and N. B. Patnaik addressed the meeting. A decision was adopted to send 11 delegates from the above excepting Jangal Santhal, Ashit Chakraborti and Santosh Rana.

Souren Bose proposed that from the State Committee we must raise the slogan 'Long Live CM' which was unanimously adopted. The meeting started in the morning and continued till evening. Myself and Santosh, being escorted by Guru, came back to Ranjit's place. We stayed there overnight and on the following morning left for Kharagpur. We stayed in the house of Falguni. I stayed in Kharagpur at different shelters : (7 names/addresses deleted).

In May 1970, Party Congress was held somewhere at Behala. Myself went to Ranjit Das's house at Garden Reach wherefrom I was picked up by Guru. Party Congress was held for 2 days. A pandal was erected on the roof and it was given the shape of a marriage party. All the party comrades stayed there for 2 days. The following attended: (names deleted as these are already known).

Vempatapu Satyanarayan and N. B. Patnaik raised the question of the contribution of CM towards the (ML) politics which should be placed on record. Satyanarain Singh opposed this on the ground that CM had greater importance than any of us but he cannot be above the Central Committee. He maintained that at this stage by making CM Revolutionary Authority, they would only negate the Central Committee. Shew Kr. Misra and Upadhyay supported Satyanarain Singh. Kanu Sanyal, Souren Bose, Khokan Mazumdar and myself supported Andhra proposal. CM then said that this may be taken up in the C.C. meeting. The programme, constitution etc. were adopted and the C.C. was formed with the following : (names deleted as these are already known).

On the following day, C.C. meeting was held at the same venue and the Politburo was formed with the following : (names deleted as these are already known).

Satyanarain Singh raised the question of Revolutionary Authority. Kanu, Saroj supported CM. Misra and Shroff wanted to know the meaning of Revolutionary Authority. Sushital Roy Choudhury also opposed the idea of giving Revolutionary Authority to CM. He said that Chairman, Party Committee System should be maintained. CM intervened and said that they were dragging this matter unnecessarily

as this was not the way to establish Revolutionary Authority. This was accepted and the matter ended there. CM then proposed and 4 Regional Bureaux were formed as follows :

UP, Bihar and J & K : Satyanarain Singh – Secretary

West Bengal & Assam : Souren Bose – Secretary

Andhra Pradesh : N. B. Patnaik – Secretary

Kerala & Madras : Appu – Secretary

After the meeting of the CC., the Party Congress was again in session. CM reported the CC proceedings to the Congress and the session concluded.

I returned to Kharagpur and convened an R. C. meeting at Kanu's residence at IIT Flat. All the R. C. members attended. I made a reporting of party Congress and C. C. meeting. By June 1970, Gunadhar, Dilip, Ranabir were arrested. Meghnad took the leadership in Debra and at his request, I went there. Before my arrival, Meghnad was arrested. I held a meeting in the house of Aitu. Self, Ganesh, Hembram, Anjan @ Baidyanath and some others were present. It was decided to organize Debra unit. I stayed for about 10 days at different shelters arranged by Anjan. From there, I went to Keshpur, where Nirajan and Gurudas killed one person.

I asked them to organize party units. In Keshpur, I stayed in the house of Gurudas, his father-in-law's house, Nirajan's house for about 10/15 days. From Keshpur, I went to Shalbani where I stayed for 3/4 days in the village-Aima, in the house of a relation of Gurudas.

I came back to Kharagpur and stayed in the house of Kanu. Swaraj was then Secretary of Kharagpur Unit. I placed the following distribution of tasks :

Pradip of Gopiballavpur came to Sankrail, Ashoke became the political leader of Kharagpur, Santosh at Gopiballavpur, Mihir at Jhargram, MC and Sujoy at Bahragora – Chakulia, PB at Salbani, Baidyanath at Debra. During 1970, I made trips on 2/3 occasions to Jamshedpur and contacted the persons mentioned earlier. I held a class at Kadma on agrarian revolution which was attended by 5/6 persons. During that visit, I stayed with TM and I also visited Dipu's house. At Kadma, I went with Ganguli. My last visit to Jamshedpur was in the latter part of May 1970.

In May '70, I was witnessing a cinema show in Jamshedpur with Ganguli and Sikha when police raided the place. We managed to escape and came back to Kharagpur. Meanwhile, actions continued in different areas under the RC and I used to get reports of such

actions. I compiled these reports and sent to Ranjit for publication in *Deshabrati* through Sikha who was my courier. I forbade the RC members to take part in actions because their task was to politicalise cadres. In October 1970 I visited Chakdah and attended a meeting arranged by Nadu; Arun and Nitu were present amongst others and explained that politicalisation was necessary I halted at Ranjit's place on my way to Chakdah and back.

I met Saroj Dutta at Ranjit's house when he told me about contradiction with Satyanarain Singh. In Dec '70 or Jan '71 a meeting of State Committee was held in a flat at Belgachhia Milk Colony. All members of State Committee attended. Nripen brought CM in the meeting. CM was very sick. Saroj opened the discussion highlighting contradictions between SRC and CM. I supported CM and his stand. All members supported CM. Suniti Ghosh attacked SRC fiercely. Suniti and Sadhan demanded expulsion of SRC. CM remained silent. SRC claimed that as he was a member of the CC, he cannot be expelled by the State Committee. CM then reconciled and patted on the shoulder of SRC and said that as SRC was all along with CPI(ML), let him remain in the Committee. The matter ended there. SRC left the meeting then.

In Feb '71 Saroj Dutta undertook a tour in Bihar and visited Dhanbad, Jamshedpur, Muzaffarpur for organising party work in Bihar on CM's line as Satyanarain Singh and other 2 Bihar CC members were expelled by CM. At that time, I did not realize the dictatorial attitude of CM in taking one-sided action because I thought CM to be correct. I met Saroj at Ranjit's place in Calcutta in March 1971 after his Bihar trip. He told me to maintain contact with Dipak (Sanyal) who was selected as Secy. of Bihar Leading Team. He also introduced Dipak to me at that time. On my return to Kharagpur, Dipak and Bhabani (Lahiri) of Tatanagar saw me at Kharagpur at Banerjee's house, in February '71. We went to Dhanbad and from there to Sindri and held a meeting there. Dipak, Bhabani, Kailash (Daroga Rai), Chandra (D. K. Bose) and Deben (?), all members of Bihar Leading Team, were present. I asked them to organize party organization on CM's line. At this meeting, the following organizational arrangements were made :

Dhanbad-Purulia : Dipak (Narayan Sanyal)  
 Ranchi-Palamau : Chandra (D. K. Basu)  
 Jamshedpur-Chakradharpur : Bhabani (S. K. Lahiri)  
 Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga : Daroga Rai @ Kailash  
 Patna-Gaya : Deben.

I visited Calcutta again in February '71 and put up at Ranjit's place. Guru picked me up and took me near Deshbandhu Park. I met Souren Bose there who told me that negation of urban action is the correct line. Combination of legal and illegal activities are to be done. Economic movement is essential. This had an impact on me. I started realizing that CM's line was a left-deviationist line but when I discussed this matter with other members of the RC, I found all were blind to CM's line as CM then glorified Magurjan incident as the foundation of PLA. I also thought at this stage that CM's Magurjan slogan might be a way out in founding PLA. I also tried to emulate a similar Magurjan type action in my region. Gouranga @ Sakti did a recce in Rupaskundi in Chakulia PS. I along with Santosh, Mihir, Gouranga and Santosh's squad sat together at Pitana village in the jungle 2 days before the action and chalked out a plan. I entrusted Mihir to lead the action squad. Myself, Mihir, Santosh, Sakti, Kalapahar, Banshi, Paban and others (in all about 25 persons) left on foot with traditional weapons. We raided the Rupaskundi BMP Camp and looted 9 Rifles and 105 rounds of ammunitions, some uniforms without any resistance. I and Santosh waited in a jungle about ½ mile away from the BMP camp. When the raiding party came back, we went to Kharikashole with the seized arms, ammunitions etc. I determined the policy of distribution of arms and placed the responsibility on Santosh to get them distributed to the guerrillas through Lebachand Tudu @ Lal. I came back to Kharagpur. I learnt, later that with these Rifles, actions were done. I do not know the places where these rifles are kept.

I sent a letter to CM through Ranjit reporting the actions at Rupaskandi and raising my doubts about the correctness of party line for the first time. I did not get any reply. Thereafter, on Bangladesh issue I also differed with CM. On international issue, though the basic proposition put forward by us is the same, CM misled the party while putting forward dubious slogans like "stop Indian interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan", placing tactics over principle thereby.

On national issues, I differed on the question of individual killing as the only form of struggle, negation of base area, negation of mass movement, negation of economic struggle, negation of the necessity of combining legal activities with illegal activities, negation of the policy of winning over the great majority isolating the few and negation of the party committee system. I demanded of Sarat for a



State Committee meeting to discuss the issues and clear out the differences.

Through a letter, I requested CM for a meeting with me over the issue. He turned down all the proposals and asked me to submit two documents on national and international issues. I acted accordingly. Immediately, all organizational links were snapped off with us and unilaterally he began to publish his views only without properly circulating our international document and suppressing our national document. Through a letter, I demanded a CC meeting which was not even accepted by them. As a result of the snapping off of all links, we were put into isolation. We waited vainly for over 3 months and then published our documents captioned "Present party line and summing up of our experiences" in Bengali. This was printed at Midnapur by Kabidas @ Niru, Secy. of Kharagpur-Midnapur Area Committee. CM tried to set up a counter RC in Midnapur with "Barda" of Bankura as its Secretary. Unilaterally, CM termed the revolutionaries as "betrayer-deserter Ashim Clique".

I became frustrated at this attitude. Then I decided to reorganize the party on the correct line with the help of the revolutionaries in our party. For that purpose, I wrote a letter to Satyanarain Singh whom I assumed to be responsive to our line. Meanwhile, our documents were received with great enthusiasm by the people. I felt the need of formulating a correct political line more elaborately and creating a center to implement the new line. While I was moving for the purpose, I left Kharagpur on 2.11.71 with Sikha by train for Calcutta. We got down at Ramrajatala, came to Howrah Maidan by bus and from there in a taxi went to Dipanjan's place at Darga Road on 2.11.71 evening. I stayed there at night and asked him to accompany me to Deoghar. We started for Deoghar by Samastipur Passenger from Sealdah on 3.11.71 morning, got down at Jasidih and took a rickshaw to Deoghar. The purpose of my visit was to restore contact with North Bihar and to take some rest which was necessary physically. Daroga Rai had earlier told me that if ever dislinked with North Bihar comrades, I could easily come to Deoghar and meet Bagchi, posing as a friend of his son-in-law Ramesh @ Sekhar of Darbhanga. I knew Bagchi was the Marketing Officer of FCI. So I went to FCI office, enquired from the darwan of his address, got the address and met him. Bagchi refused to give me shelter.

On my request, Bagchi accompanied me. While we were washing our hands after taking meals at O. K. Restaurant on Station Road, Deoghar, we were accosted by plainclothes policemen. Myself, Dipanjan and Bagchi were brought to Deoghar P.S. under arrest. After the arrest, from the bag that I carried, one .38 revolver with six shots loaded was recovered. I got this revolver from Sadhan Sarkar about a year back. I had no licence for the weapon. The 2 letters seized from my bag were received by me from Souren Bose who signed as Sagar and Jahar. On the basis of the first letter of Souren Bose, our RC printed a leaflet, copy of which was also seized from my bag.

Place of interrogation : Deoghar P.S. Date and time of interrogation 6.11.71 & 7.11.71 from 09-45 hrs to 02.30 hrs. Police officers who can identify the Subject (7 names/designations deleted). Name of interrogating officers : (Names/designations of officers deleted). Assessment : The subject is very shrewd and during the interrogation always tried to disclose only that much which was well-known or about the cadres which were exposed. He seems very bitter towards CM but at the same time, he did not go far out of fear of revenge from CM. He is also very secretive about his own group's hideout or arms dump etc. He is very egoistic.

(Name/designation of recording officer deleted)

7.11.1971

## STATEMENT OF SADHAN SARKAR

1. Name with aliases : Sadhan Sarkar aliases Indra / Santa / Ajay / Rahim / Benu / Ashoke Roy (used in the shelter at 277 Kalighat Road).
2. Father's name : Late Debendra Nath Sarkar (he was an LMS doctor at Barisal. He died in 1959 at Behala).
3. Address : Rabindra Nagar, Behala, Calcutta - 34 (own house - in the name of his wife Sm. Shefali Sarkar).  
Country address : P.S. Banaripara, P.O.- Iluhar, Dist. - Barisal, Bangladesh (the house in Barisal is lying abandoned).
4. Year & date of birth : Age about 50 years, date of birth not remembered.
5. D/R : Height - 5'-9" / Build - strong; complexion - fair; nose - prominent; eye - deep-set ; ears-lobes separated ; face - round; hair - bald-headed, having thin grey and black hair around the head; teeth - white and even Identification mark - a black mole below the small finger on the left hand; a cut mark on the right arm (reverse side).
6. Case reference : Amherst St. PS. C/no. 249 dated 22.8.70 u/s 120B/109/147/148/379/302/392/395/396/121 IPC and 25 Arms Act.
7. Photo & finger print : Both taken.
8. Place, time and date of arrest : Arrested at about 20.45 hrs on 18.1.72 from the vicinity of the Pareshnath Temple, Calcutta.
9. Particulars of articles seized : Letters, booklets, *Deshabrat*i issues etc. not of relevance now and have been deleted, except a few mentioned at the end in Appendix. In addition, the following were also seized :
  - (1) Ten hundred-rupee notes (GC) bearing the following numbers (deleted).
  - (2) One bundle of 5 rupee GC notes containing 100 notes.
10. Relatives : Wife : Sm. Shefali Sarkar (36/37); Son : Babu Sarkar (9) lives with his mother who at present stays at Rabindranagar; Daughters : 3: Bulu Sarkar (13)/Nelly Sarkar (11)/Tuku Sarkar (9 years).
11. Contacts : (Gave 105 names with some details; not being of relevance now, deleted).

## Statement

I was born at Vill. - Iluhar in Dist - Barishal (now in Bangladesh/East

Pakistan) in or about 1922. I got my early education at Iluhar High School and then at Jhalokathi Govt. School wherefrom I passed Matriculation Examination in 1942 in 2nd Division. After that, I was admitted to B.M. College, Barishal in IA class. I passed IA in 1944 in 2nd Division. I continued BA in B.M. College and passed BA (Pass) in 1946.

In the middle of 1946, I came down to Calcutta in search of a job. I put myself up in a hired house at Kalighat Road (number not remembered). The same year (1946), I procured the job of a clerk in the Defence Vehicle Depot at Sodepur, 24-Parganas. I served there for about 3-4 months. I cannot remember how much pay I used to get. While serving there, I continued learning shorthand at Premier Commercial College, Harish Mukherjee Road. After leaving the job of Sodepur, I procured the job of a stenographer at Birla Brothers, 8, Royal Exchange Place. I served there in the Share Department upto 1964. Then I joined the office of the Murphy Radio at Calcutta and worked there as P.A. to the Managing Director. In 1965, as a member of the CPI(M), I became a "wanted person" from police authority for detention under DIR. I managed to escape arrest and during this period I also left my job. Since then, I devoted myself whole-heartedly to party work of the CPI(M).

My marriage ceremony was solemnised in 1953 in Behala with Sm. Shefali Sarkar (nee Aich), D/o Bijay Kr. Aich.

While serving at Birla Brothers in or about 1948 or 1949, I was attracted to politics through the activities of the employees' union in the above concern, then controlled by the CPI. I heard deliberations of different leaders of the above union and gradually I became attracted to the said union though I never became a member of that union. I cannot remember now what was the name of the union then. However, I started reading *Swadhinata* regularly.

In 1948, I shifted to Rabindranagar, Behala after building my own house there. At Behala, I took interest in party work of the CPI and gradually in 1951 became a member of the CPI in Behala area. In 1951, I became a member of the Behala Local Committee of CPI and ultimately in 1962 became the Secretary of the Behala Local Committee. I cannot remember who were the other members of Behala Local Committee then. I continued as Secretary of that Committee upto 1964 when the party was split into CPI and CPI(M). I sided with CPI(M) and the same year (1964) became the Secretary of the Behala Local Committee of CPI(M) and continued upto 1966.



Towards the end of 1966 I was diverted by the Calcutta DC of the CPI(M) as Secretary of the Port Local Committee and accordingly accepted the assignment. I was also appointed as the Convenor of the Education Sub-Committee of the Calcutta DC of CPI(M).

After the General Election in 1967, I supported the CPI(M) in joining the UF Govt. in West Bengal. After the Naxalbari incident in 1967, the role of the leaders of the CPI(M) in the UF Govt. appeared strange to me and it was clear to me that the role of the CPI(M) leaders was antagonistic to revolution, the proclaimed ideology of the party [CPI(M)]. I had several discussions with the other members of the Port Local Committee of the CPI(M) consisting of seven members. Some of them shared views with the policy of the leaders [CPI(M)] in the UF Govt. but Manoranjan Paul, Tarak Chaudhuri and myself could not identify with the actions of the CPI(M) leaders in UF Govt. regarding Naxalbari incident. We vehemently criticised police actions in Naxalbari and the role of the CPI(M) leaders in suppressing the Naxalbari movement. When this was the situation, I decided to cut off connection with the CPI(M) and in or about the middle of 1967, I gave up my activities as the Secretary of the Port LC of the CPI(M) though I did not formally resign from CPI(M) membership. During this period, many leaders and member of CPI(M) became supporters of the Naxalbari movement.

I came to know that Sushital Roy Choudhuri also dissociated himself from CPI(M) because of its policy towards the Naxalbari movement. I knew SRC from before and as such once I met SRC in Calcutta towards the middle of 1967 (house and the area where I met SRC not remembered). I had discussions with SRC who also criticised the CPI(M) and after hearing me, he induced me to work in favour of the Naxalbari movement. He did not give me any particular assignment nor did he indicate the nature of job I was to do. I had several discussions in and around Calcutta with like-minded cadres. I cannot remember the places and the persons with whom I conferred.

I attended the Maidan rally of 11th November, 1967 addressed by Charu Majumdar, organised by the Naxalbari O Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti. I was, however, not a member of the NOKS nor in any way connected with it.

Either towards the end of 1968 or beginning of 1969, Shyamal Nandi, then Secretary of the Calcutta DC of the CCCR, approached me to join the Calcutta DC of the CCCR. I agreed and joined the

Calcutta DC of the CCCR. At that time, Shyamal Nandi, myself, Dilip Pyne, Bishu Das Gupta (N.E. Calcutta - later joined Ashit Sen's Group), Jagadhish Jana of Behala, Prof. Dalim Chakraborti of Tollygunge and Anil Saha of Baghbazar were the members of the Calcutta DC of the CCCR.

The following persons were the members of the State Committee of the CCCR : Shymal Nandi/ SRC/Saroj Dutta/Asit Sen/Bonbehari Chakraborti of Howrah. There were some other members in the State Committee but I cannot remember their names now.

As a member of the Calcutta DC of the CCCR, I attended a number of CCCR meetings in different parts of Calcutta (exact locations not remembered) in the houses of different LIC employees (names not known) as arranged by Shymal Nandi, who was also an LIC employee. Discussions generally centred round organisational activities, problems of organisation etc. I did not hold any portfolio in the Calcutta DC of the CCCR.

As per the decision of the AICCCR on 22.4.69, CPI(ML) was formed and as a member of the Calcutta DC of the CCCR, I came to know of the formation of the CPI(ML) officially from the announcement in the maidan meeting on 1.5.69. Of course, personally I came to know of the formation of the CPI(ML) before the announcement at Maidan on 1.5.69 from Saroj Dutta, who, however, did not tell me details of the proceedings regarding formation of the party.

Later I was informed by Saroj Dutta regarding the structure of the CPI(ML) as follows :

Politburo / Central Organising Committee (COC)/ Its members were (deleted as these are known and of no relevance now)/ State Organising Committee (SOC)/District Organising Committee.

In Calcutta, there was Calcutta DOC of which Shyamal Nandi was the Secretary. Others of the Calcutta DOC were Dilip Pyne/Asit Sinha/Sadhan Sarkar/Bishu Das Gupta/Anil Saha of Baghbazar. The Calcutta DOC was formed after about a month of the announcement of the formation of the party. This was formed at a meeting held at the residence of an LIC staff (locality not remembered). Besides the above members of the Calcutta DOC, SRC was also present in the meeting who announced that the aforesaid members would be the members of the Calcutta DOC. Only the prospective members were invited by the State Organising Committee to attend the meeting and Shyamal Nandi was asked by the SOC to organise this meeting. All

the members present took part in the discussion which centred round organisational affairs. SRC also announced that the party would be secret, conspiratorial, based on Marxism-Leninism and Thoughts of Mao-Tse-Tung. In the meeting, members were allotted areas where they were to work to organise the party. I was entrusted with the task of organising party in the Port area. Other assignments were as follows :

Anil Saha - North Calcutta/Shyamal Nandi - Dalhousie Square/  
Dilip Pyne - South Calcutta/Bishu Das Gupta - N. E. Calcutta/Asit  
Sinha - Beliaghata.

The Calcutta DOC's jurisdiction comprised of the whole of Calcutta and its suburbs - in the south Behala and Jadavpore and in the north Cossipore. There were about 2/3 meetings of the Calcutta DOC in different places in Calcutta (places not remembered) before the same was converted to Calcutta DC. I have no knowledge about other DOCs.

Under Calcutta DOC there were the following Local Organising Committees (LOCs) :

Behala/Jadavpore/Port/Cossipore, Baghbazar etc.: North LOC/  
North East LOC (Maniktola, Sinthee)/Beliaghata LOC.

Cells (Units) : Roughly there were about 200 units under the Calcutta DOC. Possibly, the N.E. Calcutta LOC had the largest number of units. R. G. Kar Medical College was under the N.E. Calcutta LOC.

2 months or so after the formation of the Organising Committees, all the Organising Committees excepting the COC were converted as State Committee, District Committee, Local Committee. COC remained as before.

In or about July '69 the Calcutta DOC was converted to Calcutta District Committee after a short meeting of the DOC in which either SRC or Saroj Dutta was present. After a short discussion, I was appointed Secretary of the Calcutta District Committee of the CPI(ML). The members of the Calcutta DC remained same as in Calcutta DOC. All the LOCs under the Calcutta DOC were similarly converted to LCs and members of those LCs also remained same. No directive was generally issued by the party High Command to change memberships during such conversions. I may add here that during such conversion as per proposal of the higher committees, I also became a member of the State Committee.

As a member of the State Committee, I attended the first State

Committee meeting of the party, known as State Conference, in January 1970 in the house of a Doctor at Panchanantola, Behala (name and details of the doctor not known). In the meantime, as Secretary of the Calcutta DC, I attended several Calcutta DC meetings in and around Calcutta. Places of holding of such meetings were arranged by different Local Committees or couriers engaged by them. I do not remember those places.

In the State Conference at Behala all the members of the SC were present. Though SRC was a SC member also, he attended this conference in the status of a COC member. This State Conference approved the theory and strategy of the party as forwarded and recommended earlier by the COC as under - (a) that the party should be secret in nature; (b) that it should not participate or organise any mass organisation or Trade Union movement; (c) that the party will not participate in elections; (d) that the party will owe its allegiance to the Communist Party of China (CPC).

It may be mentioned here that Asit Sen did not attend this meeting as he differed on the party's policy of not organising mass organisation or Trade Union activities. The agenda of the meeting was circulated earlier and in view of this, Asit Sen did not attend this meeting. Other members who were present accepted the agenda in toto. Shyamal Nandi also left identifying himself with Asit Sen.

After a decision of the COC and about a month before the Party Congress was held, the SCs were informed that the Party Congress would be held in the middle of May 1970 in Calcutta. SRC was entrusted with the task of selecting venue of the Party Congress and SRC in turn requested me to help him in this respect. I selected the S.E. Rly Colony area as the ideal place for holding the Party Congress as I considered the area to be cosmopolitan and would be safe for holding the secret conference. Accordingly, I approached Ranjit Das, an employee of S. E. Rly and also a sympathiser of the CPI(ML). He was known to me from before as a resident of Behala and a member of the CPI(M). I knew him to be an active and reliable man. I had full faith in him and without any hesitation I asked him to select a location in the S.E. Rly Colony for holding the Party Congress. Ranjit Das selected a house inside the S.E. Rly Colony at Garden Reach. I inspected the venue about 15 days before the holding of the Party Congress. I intimated SRC about the location. SRC approved of the place on my report. He did not inspect the site. However, the COC informed the members and made other arrangements of the



Congress. About 7/8 days before, I came to know from SRC that the Party Congress would be held on 15th and 16th May 1970 at my selected place i.e. the house at S.E. Rly Colony at Garden Reach.

The Party Congress was held in the house at S.E. Rly Colony, Garden Reach on 15th and 16th May, 1970 continuously with usual break for food and rest. All the members of the PB, COC and the representatives of the SCs numbering about 40/45 attended the Congress. I was present in the Congress as a member of the State Committee.

Others present were - Charu Majumdar/SRC/Kanu Sanyal/Saroj Dutta/Souren Bose/Satyanarayan Sinha (Bihar)/Nagabhusan Patnaik and Appalasuri (AP)/R. P. Shroff(J&K)/V. Satyanarayanan/Prof. Suniti Ghosh/Asim Chatterji. Besides the above known to me, some others from outside West Bengal and a few peasants from different districts of West Bengal also attended the meeting. I do not know their names. The arrangement of the journey to and from the venue was made by the COC.

In the Party Congress Souren Bose raised a point that CM should be recognised as the 'Revolutionary Authority' in the Indian struggle for liberation. SNS raised an objection to this proposal. Souren Bose insisted on the proposal. CM had apparent support for Souren Bose but he did not say anything. Considering CM's attitude, SNS conceded and thus CM was accepted as the "revolutionary authority".<sup>1</sup>

The Congress also approved a provision of the Party Constitution that for the facility of work, the DCs and LCs would be renamed as Regional Committees and Area Committees respectively. The Party Congress ended towards the evening of 16.5.70. But the participants left the venue during the night.

An interesting incident may be mentioned here. Sm. Sreelekha Bose and the wife of Prof. Suniti Ghosh had been to the venue of the Party Congress. This received criticism from the delegates. But this did not go a long way. I heard that Sm. Sreelekha Bose went there as a courier of a leader (name not known). I do not know why the wife of Prof. Suniti Ghosh went there.

After the Party Congress was over, a meeting of the CC was held on 16.5.70. I did not attend that meeting. Only the CC members were present. I do not know the proceedings of that CC meeting. The Politburo members of the Party were also elected in that CC meeting. I do not know who are the PB members.

As far as I know, after the Party Congress only one meeting of

the SC was held in January 1971 (it was a cold night) at Bangur Colony/Lake Town. The meeting continued from evening till 10 p.m. at night. Persons present in the meeting were : Sadhan Sarkar/ Khokan Mazumdar/Asim Chatterji/ SRC/Saroj Dutta/Charu Majumdar/Prof. Suniti Ghosh/Souren Bose/Santosh Rana.

I doubt whether the meeting was arranged in the flat of Nripen Chakraborti at Lake Town. He was seen in the meeting and was probably looking after CM at that time. It was in this meeting that SRC placed his points of contradictions over the party's programme of damaging statues and ransacking educational institutions in the cities. In fine, he opposed the city actions perpetrated by the party. His proposal was discussed in the meeting but received criticism from all the other members. SRC's proposal was discarded and at the same time the SC took a resolution to oust SRC from the Secretaryship of the SC on the reports of different SCMs that their respective DCs did not endorse SRC's proposal. Asim Chatterji and Khokan Majumdar demanded expulsion of SRC from the party. CM intervened and it was decided that SRC would not be expelled from the party but would be removed from the Secretaryship of SC. It may be mentioned here that during that period, SRC was sick and Saroj Dutta (SD) was working as Acting Secretary of the party. After a resolution, SD was entrusted with Secretaryship of the SC. SRC wanted to work in Hooghly, his home district. SRC, however, remained as a member of SC. In this meeting, SRC was also removed from the editorship of the Deshabrati and in his place SD was entrusted with the editorship of the Deshabrati. SRC wanted a sum of Rs. 100/- or Rs. 150/- from SD as SRC was facing financial difficulties. (As an Acting Secretary, SD was looking after the finance of the SC at that time and as such SRC wanted money from SD); we stayed in the house for the night and left the following morning one by one.

I may mention here that this meeting was earlier arranged in the house of Bhupesh Gupta, MP (CPI) through his nephew (brother's son) who happened to be a friend of Asim Chatterjee. At the last moment the venue was changed to this place as an information reached that Bhupesh Gupta would shortly be returning to his house.

SD took up Secretaryship of the SC in March, 1971. During the period of Secretaryship of SD, I did not attend any meeting of the SC. I cannot say if any meeting of the SC was held at all during his tenure.

'Benu' is my techname. But I have never issued any circular in my techname 'Benu'. But Prof. Suniti Ghosh used to issue circulars in the name of 'Benu' and that was also without my knowledge. Prof. Suniti Ghosh issued circular in my techname 'Benu' and as Secretary of the SC to convene a meeting of the SC. I did not attend any such meeting.

Sometime in March/April 1971, Charu Majumdar was under the care of Asim Chatarji. During that period Charu Majumdar was in a house at Puri, (may be also Bhubaneswar) Orissa. As far as I know that house belonged to Kabiraj Sen family of Calcutta. Sen family was known to Asim. I also heard that wife and the children of CM also visited CM in that house at Puri. I may mention here that CM also stayed earlier in the house of Dr. Bose, probably nephew of Saroj Dutta, at Madanmohantala Lane. This I came to know from Saroj Dutta just after the arrest of Appalasuri and Nagabhusan Patnaik from the said house.

After the death of SD in August 1971, I was asked by Prof. Suniti Ghosh (who informed me through a letter) to see him. Accordingly, during the last week of September '71, I saw Prof. Suniti Ghosh in a house at Park Circus when Com. Ghosh asked me to take over as Secretary of the State Committee of the CPI(ML). (I do not know the house and I will not be able to locate the same now). Prof. Ghosh also told me that my appointment as Secretary of the SC was as per the desire of CM.

However, till my arrest I worked as the Secretary of the SC of the CPI(ML). During my tenure of office as Secretary, SC I could not convene any meeting but was trying to convene one. I did not attend any meeting of the DC or RC.

But one thing I did as Secretary SC. It was the dissolution of Howrah DC. I got several complaints against the Secretary of Howrah DC (whose good name I cannot say, but techname was Sadhya) from rank and file of Howrah concerning women and honesty. As such, I dissolved that DC in December 1971 and was trying to organise a new DC/RC there.

As Secretary of SC, I visited W. Dinajpur in early November '71 to meet the members of W. Dinajpur DC. I met three DC members there of whom I can remember only Pabitrarani Saha. Names of others are not known to me. My purpose of visit to W. Dinajpur was to discuss organisational affairs with the DC members there. I had some discussions but I could not convene any meeting there as the

situation there was very tense "because of an air of war with Pakistan" (I do not believe that Pakistan attacked India but I do believe that India attacked Pakistan in 1971). I came back to Calcutta from West Dinajpur after 5/6 days. I did not submit any report on my visit of West Dinajpur to any higher Committee. In W. Dinajpur I stayed at Raiganj in a house arranged by Pabitrarani Saha. I do not know the name of the owner of the house where I stayed. It is not a fact that I visited W. Dinajpur to give shape to the declared policy of the CPI(ML) that 'Indian expansionism' is to be checked at any cost. So far as my knowledge goes, the above proposal of the party [CPI(ML)] was issued later during the last part of November '71.

About one and a half months back, I had a discussion with two members of the East Pakistan Communist Party/EPCP (ML). I do not know the names of those two members. The discussion was arranged by my courier Ajoy Banarji of Kalighat in a house at Dum Dum area. As far as I came to know, those two members of the EPCP (ML) crossed the border for fear of "Mujib Bahini" (he denied to say "for fear of Pak army") and after vigorous efforts could contact my courier who arranged this discussion. I sat with them for about half an hour. They discussed about the situation in "East Pakistan" (the subject refused to say Bangladesh, not even "East Bengal". He opined that it is still East Pakistan). I asked them to give a written report on the situation there for consideration at our end to print the same and distribute. But I was not in receipt of any report from them. I do not know of their present whereabouts. They appeared to me just cadres of the EPCP (ML), aged about 22-28 years. I came to know from them that the "Mujib Bahini" comprised of the personnel of the police and EPR who revolted and they were with arms.

Details about different committees :

Dalhousie Square Area Committee : I always tried to impress upon the members of Dalhousie Square RC to stress more on politics than on actions. It is not a fact that I instigated the Dalhousie RC to stress on actions. So far I knew that there was no programme of annihilation of any high Govt. Official or businessman in Dalhousie Square area. The annihilation of N. K. Paul, Administrative Officer, Central Excise came to me as a surprise. I cannot say who were the persons responsible for this annihilation. As an explanation of this annihilation I can say that such actions are compatible with the petty bourgeois class character more inclined to actions than politics. After this



annihilation, I could not meet any of the members of the Dalhousie RC. I also like to add here that casually it came to me that N. K. Paul was responsible for a number of dismissals.

It is not a fact that I supplied a revolver to Debdas Chakraborti for actions in Dalhousie Square area. The fact is that Debdas procured the revolver from a comrade of Howrah area (name and details not remembered). This I came to know from the letter of a comrade of Howrah area who wrote to me that he had supplied a revolver to a bank employee of Dalhousie Square area. I presume that "the bank employee" was none but Debdas Chakraborti. After a few days of receipt of this letter, I learnt from a newspaper report that Debdas was arrested along with a revolver in his possession.

On Calcutta DC's split to RCs : Towards the beginning of 1971, the Calcutta DC was dissolved for the facility of party work and instead with parts of 24-Parganas DC and the whole of Calcutta DC, two RCs were formed as follows :

North RC and South RC. : It was comprised of the Central and the Northern part of Calcutta and Baranagar, Sinthee, Dum Dum, Ichhapore etc. It had about 5 members : Dilip Banarji @ Ramu @ Biren - Secretary/Somnath Ghosh/Sachchu Ghosh & 5 others whose names I do not know.

South RC was comprised of the Southern part of Calcutta and Behala, Jadavpur, Tollygunge, South 24-Parganas etc. It had 5/6 members : Kamal Sanyal @ Kumar - Secretary/Jayanta Nandi of Chetla/Gunu of Tiljala/Bhupen Rakshit @ Bipradas of Air Conditioning Corporation, Taratola Road/ Prasanta Roy of Behala (since dead)/ Dalim Chakraborti.

As far as I know there were the following Area Committees under the South RC :

Dhakuria - Jadavpore AC, in-charge: Kamal Sanyal @ Kumar/ 'Barda' of Dhakuria (dead)/ Kartik Roy (arrested)/ Nanigopal Mukharji (arrested).

Tiljala - Ballygunge AC, in-Charge : Gunu of Tiljala. (The subject states that at CCCR stage, he once visited Tiljala with Prof. Nisith Bhattacharji). Dalim Chakraborti is another prominent CPI(ML) leader in this AC.

Behala Area Committee: in-charge : Prosanta Roy (dead)

Workers' Area Committee (comprising the workers' belt at Taratolla Road, Calcutta Port Commissioners and Metiabruz). In-charge: Bhupen Rakshit. (The subject states that this area, being in

close proximity to Behala, the home of the subject, was not visited by him for about last two years and as such he is not in a position to comment on the progress of the above AC or on the existing formation of the same).

Port Area Committee : Satyen Mandal - an employee of Calcutta Port Commissioners attached to K. G. Dock./Manoranjan Paul - a CPC employee attached to K. G. Dock./Tarak Chaudhuri/Chitta Sengupta - a CPC employee attached to Dock Manager's office/ Dilip Manna - a CPC employee attached to No. 8 Workshop/ Kamal Sanyal @ Kumar/ Sukomal Chatarji (once arrested) - an employee of S. E. Rly., Garden Reach.

On different Regional Committees :

Burdwan R.C. : There are 5 members : Prabir Chaudhuri - Secretary/Basu of Mihijam- /Sanat Roy Chaudhuri/Sadhu Singh of Burnpur/Manoranjan Gupta of Katwa/Tushar Chandra @ Nirmal / Mahadev Mukharji - (he was previously the Secretary of the DC and now replaced by Prabir Chaudhuri).

Midnapore R.C. : This R.C. was looked into by the Bangla-Bihar-Orissa Border R.C. led by Asim Chatarji, Santosh Rana and others. After the rift with Asim and CM, a small team of 4 has been entrusted about a month or so back with the responsibility to organise the district. The team was deputed by Prof. Suniti Ghosh. As such, I am not in a position to say who were those 4 persons.

Howrah R.C. : I dissolved this R.C. in the first week of January '72 following a complaint concerning a women against its Secretary Sandhya.

Hooghly R.C. : This R.C., was looked after by SRC. After his death, the party could not make any progress in this District. After I was appointed the SCS, I had a mind to visit this district to organise party work. I cannot say who were the members during the time of SRC. Amar Nandi @ Sanjoy is a member of the erstwhile Hooghly DC. His brother is a police officer.

Birbhum RC : I have no idea about this District. I was given to understand that Ramen Banarji was one of the members of this R.C.

24-Parganas R.C. : Animesh @ Amal Mitra - Secretary-(arrested)/ Dhruba Naskar of Maheshtola. Besides the above two, others I do not know.

Nadia R.C. : Nadu Chatarji was the Secretary. I do not know who became its Secretary after his arrest. Other members are also not known to me.

Jalpaiguri R.C. : There is party organisation in this district and it had connection with the then SCS, Saroj Dutta. I do not know the names of the leaders and the cadres of this R.C.

Tours : I have not undertaken extensive tours for the party work in villages during the CCCR or the organisational stage of the party [CPI(ML)]. As DCS, my centre of work was mainly Calcutta and its suburbs. After I became Secretary of the SC in the last week of September '71, I had been to a village (name not known) about 10 miles away from Durgapur (Burdwan) sometime in October '71. I went to Durgapur by train and therefrom I was taken by a local Comrade to that village (west of Durgapur). I stayed there (name and details not known) and held meetings with local comrades regarding party organisation amongst the peasantry. After two days, I left that village and came back to Calcutta via Durgapur. At Durgapur, I passed one night in the quarter of an employee of HSL at Steel Township. I do not know the name of the employee or his address. The arrangement was made by a comrade of Durgapur (name not known). I had a meeting also at Durgapur with the comrades of Durgapur Steel Plant. There also, discussions centred round organisational affairs.

Earlier, as a member of the SC, I visited Andul, Mouri and Uluberia about 5/6 months back from now. I stayed there for 2/3 days in the houses of local people (details not known). Local comrades arranged that visit. I had discussions with the local comrades over organisational affairs. I do not know the names of those who took part in deliberations. I did not visit any other District excepting West Dinajpur (Raiganj), details of which I have stated earlier.

Extent of study of Marx-Lenin-Mao : During my long association with politics, I have read a number of Marxist literature as and when available to me. I cannot remember the names of books. Towards the end of 1968 I published a book entitled *Naxalbarir Kastipathare Marxbadi Kara?* About 26000 copies of the book were sold out. This book earned a command over the youths who had leanings towards Marxism - Leninism. In fact, the young cadres gave up reading Mao's work, Three writings of Mao, Red Book etc. When the trend of the youth was like this, CM banned my book. I did not object because of party interest.

Arms and Ammunition : Regarding arms and ammunition of the CPI(ML), I have no direct knowledge. The instruction of the party to the cadres was to snatch arms and to send those to the peasantry

to arm the latter. But I cannot say anything about the actual snatching. The lower cadres used to snatch and through channels (not known to me), they used to send those to the village cadres. Once I received a complaint from 24-Parganas. Rural RC to the effect that Somnath Ghosh of North RC had retained two arms (which were kept with him by the North RC) and he refused to give those to the 24-Parganas RC. I asked Animesh @ Amal Mitra of 24-Parganas Rural RC to make enquiry about the same.

Finance and Fund : The party constitution provides that every member or sympathiser is to pay 0.10 paise annually as subscription. But I think, this is not collected and the party is not financed by this subscription. The lower units and Committees are the sources of financing the party. The units and Area Committees collect money from the sympathisers and like minded people in their respective areas and they, in turn, after keeping aside their own amount of expenditure, send the remaining amount to next higher Committee which in turn sends amount to its next higher Committee. Thus the higher Committees get money from the lower units and Committees. The amounts are collected month-wise and in the same way distributed. As the Secretary of the Calcutta DC I used to get Rs. 400/- to Rs. 500/- per month. In Calcutta DC, Dalim Chakraborti used to look after the finance. I never handled money in the Calcutta DC. Under the Calcutta DC, Behala, Jadavpore, Dhakuria and N.E. Calcutta Area Committees were very good collectors. I heard this though I do not know the actual amount they used to collect per month. The amounts were despatched by the lower units to the higher Committees through couriers or selected cadres. As I did not handle money, I was not in a position to know the names of the cadres or couriers through whom Calcutta DC used to get money. As Secretary of the SC, I did not receive any amount so far.

Shelters : The leaders or cadres of the CPI(ML) find out their own shelters themselves. It is the general principle of the party that one's shelter should not be known to another and that nobody should ask about other's places of shelter. I have no knowledge about the shelters of CM, Prof. Suniti Ghosh and other leaders of the CPI(ML).

At different times, I used the following places as my shelter : Residences of Haren Bhattacharji (Reserve Bank)/ Debdas Chakraborti (United Commercial Bank)/ Pampa Roy (an employee of LIC)/ Dwijen Saha at 277, Kalighat Road/ Late Tulsipada Sarkar at Turf Road (wife of Late Tulsipada Sarkar used to look after me while I stayed



there. I called her 'Boudi'. It is a single-storeyed building having 3/4 rooms/ Goutam Ghosh (Central Excise).

For the last one month I was thinking of raising some new shelters in North Calcutta as I was afraid that some of the above shelters had become known to the police on account of arrests of some cadres of South Calcutta who used to know one or two of the above mentioned shelters. Accordingly I asked my courier, Ajoy Banarji @ Anil to raise some new shelters in North Calcutta. A few days before my arrest, Ajoy informed me that he had arranged a new shelter for me somewhere in North Calcutta. I decided to shift to this new shelter on 18.1.72 evening. Following this, I met Ajoy at a point opposite Kalighat Tram Depot who was waiting there with Sraddhamoy Ganguli @ Netai. Ajoy arranged a taxi and handed over the leather bag to Sraddha who in turn handed over the same to me in the taxi. Ajoy then left the place. Myself and Sraddha were arrested on the way to the new shelter.

**Courier System :** The party [CPI(ML)] instructed the leaders to raise couriers of their own choice. A courier must be politically firm, unknown to many people, mobile and at the same time resourceful in the sense that he should be able to successfully raise persons and "post-boxes" to receive and deliver letters, documents etc for and on behalf of the leader for whom he will work. Another important feature of courier system is that the courier of one leader will try his best to remain unexposed, as far as practicable, to the courier of another leader. 'Post-box' system is introduced for keeping the couriers unexposed. But sometimes it is seen that couriers of two leaders come into contact for facility of work.

I have only one courier whose name is Ajoy Banarji @ Anil of Patuapara, Kalighat. Only the courier knows the shelter of the leader under whom he works. As such, I have no knowledge about the shelters and couriers of CM, Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh and other leaders.

As far as my knowledge goes, CM's couriers are completely unexposed. (A leader should normally have one courier, lest he gets exposed for having more than one courier. In case of CM, I think he has more than one courier and extra precautions are taken against exposure).

I get CM's letters and correspondences through Prof. Suniti Ghosh. The system of receipt and delivery is between the couriers. CM's courier keeps his letter to a 'Post-box' (may be a house or a

man) wherefrom Suniti Ghosh's courier collects the same and delivers it to my courier directly or he (S.G.'s courier) may keep it with another 'Post-box' wherefrom my courier may collect the same. The couriers are familiar with these chains and the leaders are not supposed to know that. The same order will prevail in case I intend to send a letter to CM. And this process continues in delivering letters to other leaders. The couriers, for facility of work, may engage persons of their trust and belief to help them and that is also not known to the respective leaders.

Again, there are couriers appointed by the ACs, RCs and other higher Committees who help in the printing and publication of party organs. For example, the text of the *Deshabrati*, approved by the CC, is sent to different SCs through couriers. The SCs, in turn, copy out the text and send the same to different RCs through couriers. The RCs engage one courier to fix a press for printing the organ. After the printing is over, the printer deposits the same with a 'Post-box' wherefrom another courier of the RC collects the same and stores it in a 'dump'. The object behind the engagement of two couriers by the RC is to maintain secrecy so that the one who knows about the printer and the printing press remains unaware of the 'dump' and vice versa. *Deshabrati* and other party organs are not centrally printed (in a particular press or at a particular place). It is printed and published by different RCs at different presses and places. Only the two couriers engaged for the purpose know of this and none else is supposed to ask any question to the courier or to show inquisitiveness about that.

Leaflets on local issues are printed and published by the respective Local Committees/Area Committees with their own resources.

In fine, the couriers play a vital role in a secret organisation like the CPI(ML). And, as discussed, leaders practically remain unaware of the arrangements of shelters, printing and publication of organs etc. At the very early stage, SRC used to look after publication; thereafter it was jointly managed by Saroj Dutta and Prof. Suniti Ghosh, and now by Suniti Ghosh himself.

**Present Policy of the Party:** The main instruction of the CPI(ML) to the petty-bourgeoisie classes in the cities and in rural areas was to integrate themselves with the basic classes. The petty-bourgeoisie classes, by nature, preferred actions than integrating themselves with the basic classes as this task is painstaking and petty-bourgeoisie class is averse to that. As such, we noticed a spurt of violent actions in cities and rural areas (by such type of persons).

I may also mention here that the call of annihilation was given first by CM and Saroj Dutta was entrusted with the task of implementing the same. We had practically no say in the programme and were swept away by the personalities of CM and Saroj Dutta.

Justification of some of the individual annihilations in and around the city of Calcutta :

Mani Khan of Howrah : He was one of the creators of the terrible famine of 1943 in which about 50 lakh people fell victim. Our Howrah comrades did a good job by removing this social evil - an unscrupulous rice merchant.

Harish Chandra Kejriwal : He was a dishonest flour merchant. He was so notorious that in 1962, even the Congress Govt. issued orders against him under DIR on charges of black-marketeering. In the 1966 food crisis, he made a profit of Rs. 70 lacs in about 15 days by selling flour in black-market. His annihilation by our party comrades is justified.

Hemanta Bose : He was a reactionary politician. I am not sure if he was annihilated by our party comrades. As such, our party did not issue any leaflet on this incident.

MMG : I have no clear idea as to the time of the formation of the MMG group of Ananta Singh. But I came to know that after the formation of the CPI(ML), the members of the MMG saw CM and later some of them joined the CPI(ML). I know the following persons belonging to the MMG [now in CPI(ML)]: Pralayesh Misra/Amiya Chatarji/Khokan Bhattacharji (dead)/Leena Misra W/o Pralayesh Misra/Mina Chatarji W/o Amiya Chatarji/Badal Chakraborti - brother of Prof. Dalim Chakraborti/ Pankaj Chaudhuri @ Prabir Chaudhuri - now RCS, Burdwan of CPI(ML)/Krishna Chaudhuri W/o Pankaj @ Prabir Chaudhuri.

I may mention that Leena and Mina mainly work for procuring shelter for the party workers of the CPI(ML).

Whether earlier arrested and humiliated: I was arrested for the first time during the Tram fare increase movement in 1953 from Behala by Behala Police. Then I was attached to the CPI. I was in custody as an undertrial prisoner for about 14/15 days and then I was discharged. Thereafter, I was never arrested by Police. In 1964 I could successfully avoid arrest in DIR, though there was order against me. I was not humiliated or manhandled by police, now or earlier. None of my relatives was ever arrested or humiliated by police.

What he would do in the event of his release : I cannot say at the moment what would be my position in the party on my release. I think that is dependent on the situation how I am released. If I jump bail or can escape from custody, my position in the party will not be hampered but if I am released by the police or Government of its own, then the party may not take my release easily and my position in the party is bound to be hampered. But one thing is sure that I will continue with the politics of the CPI(ML) during the whole of my life time.

13. Photograph and specimen handwriting : Taken.

14. Names of police officers who can identify : (deleted).

15. Place and duration of interrogation : 14 and 15, Lord Sinha Road (from 18.1.72 to 1.2.72).

16. Assessment :

Intelligence - Average, Absence of marked political depth.

Personality - outwardly amiable.

Secretive or frank - Secretive (It was apparent that he was deliberately either lying or giving a distorted version of certain incidents/developments/persons).

Co-operative or not - Not co-operative.

17. Names of the interrogating officers : (deleted).

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Statements of other leaders do not support this version.
2. It was apparent to most of his interrogators that he continued to suppress many vital facts and tried his best to exculpate himself. This was further corroborated from some of the documents seized from Charu Majumdar that he was a party to quite a few murders of party leaders and cadres, The inner-party 'investigation report' by Satish Banerjee, seized from CM, clearly named him in the murder of Kamal Sanyal and Agni Roy.

## Appendix: list of some of the documents seized (some deleted as of not much relevance)

Serial No. 27 - A letter written by "Biren" to Rahimda dated 15.1.72 informing that he sent Rs. 1500/- to the addressee and asks him to give a portion of the amount to Dhirenda. It also informs that Com. Kesta wants to go to "East Pakistan" and that Kesta wants the help of "Central Government Party" and that he has written to the "Central



Government Party" regarding help. (The subject explains Biren as Dilip Banarji, Secretary, North R. C. and the amount referred to is the amount seized by the police from me. "Dhirenda" is Prof. Suniti Ghosh. He failed to recognise "Lalit" mentioned in the letter. "Central Government Party" was explained as the Dalhousie Area Committee. Kesta is reported to be an ex-employee of a Central Government Office at Dalhousie Square (details not known). His actual name is "Dulal". He left Calcutta for Nadia during the CCCR period for party work. He wanted to leave for "East Pakistan" and wanted help from the "Party" at Dalhousie Square (details not known).

Serial No. 33 - A letter written by Ramen, Soumitra and Bhisma to Benu from the Presidency Jail reporting propagation of anti-CM line in jail by Naxalites led by Souren Bose's group and Asim's group. The writer criticised the demonstrative activities of Megharanjan in the jail and condemned the activities of jail party committee through which party documents and directives are catered in the jails. (The subject explains that Prof. Suniti Ghosh might have issued circular in the name of "Benu" as the Secretary of the SC without the knowledge of the subject. Though the subject was the Secy. of the SC, he never assumed techname "Benu" and never issued circular in the name of "Benu". The subject could not explain the letter and said that the jail affairs were looked into by Prof. Suniti Ghosh. However, like many other parts of his statement, the above part was also was not quite convincing.)

Serial No. 34 - A letter written by "Lalit" to a Comrade informing that they have arranged for the treatment of Manoj Mallik and that they have informed the Central Calcutta Comrades to treat the ailing Comrades similarly. (The subject admitted that the letter was written to him. Lalit is a cadre of Sinthee area. Manoj Mallik is also a cadre of that area. The subject could not say anything about the ailment of Manoj Mallik and whether he was admitted to any hospital or not.)

Serial No. 35 - A letter written by Lalit to a Comrade informing of the receipt of a letter from the jailed comrades at Presidency Jail through Rabin Patra and also possibility of a link through Kajal (North East AC). It also intimates that attempts are being made to cater party documents in the jail through Rabin Patra. (The subject admitted that the letter was written to him by "Lalit @ Samar", Pabitra is also a cadre of Sinthee area.)

Serial No. 37 - A letter written by Dhiren (Prof. Suniti Ghosh) to Rahim (Sadhan Sarkar) dated 13.1.72, asking the latter to send the

write-up of the comrades of EPCP (ML) to him (Prof. SG). He also asks SS to return the letter of GB. He wants Rs. 500/- from SS. (GB was explained as Gopal Biswas of Barasat. Dhiren's demand for Rs. 500/- was to meet his personal and other party expenses.)

Serial No. 38 - A letter written by "Subhash" (Guru Prasad Kundu) to Rahimda (Sadhan Sarkar) dated 14.1.72. It is a report about the formation of a leading team in Hooghly with 7 members including peasants who wanted to sit in a meeting with the addressee. A reference was also made about an action at Champdani. It mentions of an "aged man" who was sent to Hooghly for party work. (The subject explains the "aged man" as Barda of Hooghly).

Serial No. 39 - A letter written by Rabin Patra from Presidency Jail to Com. Tutul. It gives out that there is an anti-CM move in the jail led by Nishith Bhattacharji and Azizul Haque. (The subject could not recognise the writer and the addressee and failed to explain the contents of the letter).

**STATEMENT OF CHARU MAJUMDAR**

1. Name with aliases : Charu Majumdar @ Chandra @Chandrada @ Mr. Roy.
2. Father's name : Late Bireswar Majumdar - a lawyer, was a Congressite.
3. Address : Mahanandapara.  
(Permanent) : Siliguri (own house built on 10 cattahs of land).
4. Present : Middle Road, Entally, Calcutta.  
Date & Place of birth : 1917 or 1918 at Siliguri.
5. Descriptive Roll : Age - 54/55 years, Height - 5'2", Build - thin, Complexion - wheatish, Nose: sharp & pointed Identification mark: Scar mark above the left knee. Wears spectacles.
6. Photograph & Finger Print : Photograph taken (specimen handwritings available on records).
7. Case references : (i) Entally P. S. Cases : (a) Sec Q C/No 15 dt. 13.1.72 u/s 302/34 IPC and 27 Arms Act. (b) Sec Q C/No 69 dt. 22.2.72 u/s 302 IPC.  
(ii) Cossipore P.S. Case : (a) Sec C/No 45 dt. 30.3.72 u/s 148/149/307 IPC, 3 & 5 E S Act.  
(iii) Beliaghata P. S. Case : (a) Sec P I C/No. 03 dt. 3.3.71 u/s 148/149/307 IPC, 3 & 5 E. S. Act.  
(iv) Amherst St. P. S. Case : (a) Sec F C/No 249 dt. 22.8.70 u/s 120B/121/109/147/148/302/379/395/396/397 IPC and 25 (a) Arms Act.
8. Date and Place of arrest : He was arrested on 16.7.72 early hours from the flat of Prabal Kumar Roy at 107A, Middle Road, Calcutta - 14 (eastern side flat on the ground floor).

[Note : Charu Majumdar was arrested on 16 July 1972, produced before the concerned magistrate who remanded him to police custody. Soon thereafter he was got examined separately by a few Govt. and private doctors including cardiologists. He was allowed to take all the medicines which he was taking till then. It is reported that his interrogation/interview by experienced officers, under the supervision of senior officers of Calcutta Police and West Bengal Police, could be carried on hardly for 2-3 hours a day, and that too not every day or continuously for 2-3 hours but depending on his mood to talk and his health condition because he was known to be a chronic patient of cardiac asthma for many years. However, according to police officers and doctors attending on him, Charubabu was quite often in

a rather talkative mood, contrary to his usual habit. Eventually on 27 July, 1972 evening Charubabu complained of shortness of breath. Soon thereafter he was removed to SSKM Hospital and admitted there at about 19.30 hrs. (7.30 PM) under the care of Dr. C.C. Kar, Head of Cardiology Dept. of SSKM. Some other heart and other allied specialists were also brought in for his examination and treatment. In spite of all efforts of all these doctors, he expired in the Intensive Cardiac Care Unit/ICCU of the Cardiology Dept. of SSKM at about 04.50 hrs. (4.50 AM) on 28 July 1972. The cause of death as noted by the doctors was "Ischaemic heart disease with congestive cardiac failure."]

9. Articles recovered/seized : (As at 'Appendix - A' along with their scrutiny report as at Appendix - B.)
10. Relations in India :
  - (a) Wife - Sm. Lila Majumdar (52), Agent, Life Insurance Corporation.
  - (b) Daughters - (1) Sm. Anita Majumdar (18), Medical Student, (2) Sm. Madhumita Majumdar (16), Student of Class XI at Siliguri Girls' High School.
  - (c) Son - Abhijit Majumdar (12), Student of Class VI at Siliguri High School (names/addresses etc. of other relations deleted to protect their identities).
11. Contacts : [Approximately 70 names/addresses given, mostly known on records and as such deleted; a few names/addresses etc. of other persons also are deleted to safeguard the privacy of such persons, eg, Sikha, SB Dutta, Sulekha and Sujit etc.]
12. Contacts in foreign countries: I have no direct contact with any leader of fraternal parties excepting Sm. Ranjana Ash of CPGB (ML) who saw me at Calcutta and Satya Moitra and Suchendu Dastiddar of EPCP (ML) who saw me at Cuttack.

**Statement**

I was born at Siliguri in 1917 or 1918. I got my early education in Siliguri High School wherefrom I passed the Matriculation examination in 1936 and was placed in the first division. Thereafter, I got myself admitted in I. Sc. class in Edward College, Pabna. I got plucked in the college Test examination when I discontinued my studies.

I originally hail from vill. - Harua, Dist. - Rajshahi (now in Bangladesh). My grandfather migrated from Rajshahi to Siliguri sometime in the later part of the 19th. century. In 1930 when I was



a school student in Siliguri, I became a member of the All Bengal Students Association (then affiliated to the Anushilan Group of freedom fighters) at the instance of Sewmangal Singh and Brojen Basu Roy Chaudhuri. This ABSA was formed sometime in 1927 or 1928 which was later divided into two with the split of the Congress into Anushilan and Jugantar Groups. ABSA remained affiliated with the Anushilan group while the other name Bengal Provincial Students Association (BPSA) owed its allegiance to the Jugantar Group. In 1931 with the arrest of Satyen Mazumdar, then an executive committee member of the ABSA and a professor of Rajsahi College, the link of Siliguri students with the ABSA was virtually paralysed and all connections were cut off.

I, however, continued studies and passed Matriculation exam. in 1936. As there was no college in Siliguri, I went to Pabna and was admitted in the I. Sc. Class in Edward College. I discontinued studies in or about 1937.

During my college days, I became addicted to drinks and consumed liquor regularly at the college hostel. I used to get Rs. 25/- per month from my father of which I used to spend Rs. 6/- as college fees, Rs. 7/- as hostel charges and the rest Rs. 12/- for wine. At later stages, I also became addicted to Ganja, Bhang, Opium, Charas and Siddhi which I continued for long.

In 1939 I became the Assistant Secretary of the Siliguri Congress (Darjeeling D. C. of the Congress was not then formed). During this period, I organised some movements followed by strikes by some Bidi Mazdoors, tailors and others. At about this time I developed likings for communism and at times I introduced myself as a communist even when I was in Congress.

In 1940 July I left Congress, went to Jalpaiguri and joined the Krishak Sabha (CPI) as an ordinary worker. It was then the last stage of "Share-Croppers' Movement" organised by the Krishak Sabha in Jalpaiguri, Rangpur and Dinajpur. With the arrest of the leaders of the movement under the newly passed DI Rule, the Share-Cropper movement fizzled out. I was also then served with orders under the DIR but I evaded arrested and went underground. The peasants suffered a setback and were averse to taking any revolutionary step.

The Second World War by that time had already started. We wanted to achieve something towards revolution through the peasants. With this object in view, we organised a secret organisation

amongst the peasants and carried on party work amongst the peasants during the period the party (CPI) was banned i.e. from 1934 to 1942 June. In June 1942, the ban on the party was lifted. Just before that, in May, 1942 when I was working amongst the peasantry, I was arrested under specific cases of Jalpaiguri and Siliguri but I obtained bail. The cases were also under the DIR and the charges were "anti-State activities". I was discharged from the Siliguri case which was started for violating interim order. The discharge was for defects in serving the order. In the Jalpaiguri case, I was convicted and sentenced to 6 months' RI in August, 1942. In January 1943 I was released from jail.

In 1943, the great famine in Bengal broke out. The party (CPI) directive during the famine was to seize crops from the jotedars and big peasants and to distribute the same amongst the poor landless peasants. Food Committees, at the instance of the party, were also formed. I led the party programme (seizure of crops) in the villages of Jalpaiguri. (But) throughout 1944 I remained sick and could not take part in the party activity. After recovery in 1945 I was back to political life and concentrated my activities in the villages of Jalpaiguri district. Towards the end of 1945, elections for the provincial assembly were held. From the CPI, Radhamohan Barman was given nomination in Jalpaiguri area but he lost to a Congress candidate Mohini Barman.

In 1946, the CPI organised Food Movement where the party had hold. In my place of activity (i.e. Jalpaiguri) I led the movement and seized crops from the stores of the jotedars. We demanded two-third of the crops for the peasants and one-third for the jotedars. The movement spread in Jalpaiguri to a great extent and continued till the partition in 1947. In this Tebhaga Andolan, 60 peasants lost their lives.

With the partition, the centre of our activities, i.e. Boda, Pachagar and Debiganj went to Pakistan. We withdrew ourselves from those areas and concentrated in Dooars area (in Jalpaiguri district) of Indian Union. In March 1948 the party (CPI) was banned and its leaders were arrested. I was also arrested from Jalpaiguri under the DIR (Defence of India Rules) and was detained in Dum Dum Central Jail till 1951 January. On release, I went back to Jalpaiguri and engaged myself in organising the disintegrated peasantry there. In this connection I may point out that officially I was inducted in the Jalpaiguri District Committee as a member in 1942. But in the Krishak

Sabha my position was not separately elevated. Though I remained a member of the Jalpaiguri DC, mostly I engaged myself in the Krishak front but the result was not very satisfactory then. After my release in 1951, I tried to revitalise the party programme and accordingly set myself at work in the villages in Jalpaiguri district. This I continued till the middle of 1952.

In January 1952 I married Sm. Lila Mazumdar nee Sengupta and the marriage was solemnised in Jalpaiguri. She was a member of the CPI and then CPI(M).

In June 1952 the party transferred me to Darjeeling District Committee and I became a member of that Committee. The transfer was at my initiative and for my personal grounds. Thus I was settled at Siliguri where my old father and my unmarried sister lived.

In Darjeeling district, I chose Siliguri as my centre of activities. In this connection I may add that while in Dum Dum Jail in December 1959, I picked up Kanu Sanyal, who also was jailed for launching a demonstration against the then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr. B. C. Roy at Siliguri. Kanu Sanyal was also a resident of Siliguri. His family was known to me but I was not so much thick and thin with Kanu. In jail our acquaintance grew deeper. After his release, he went back to Siliguri with my instruction(?) to work amongst the peasantry. Kanu Sanyal was not then a member of the CPI but a supporter.

However, after I was stationed at Siliguri in June 1952, I revived my connections with Kanu Sanyal and with him organised small movements with the village peasantry in the nature of "Tebhaga Andolan". These movements did not spread well. This continued till the end of 1953. During these movements I came in contact with Jangal Santhal and Babulal Biswakarma who were then peasants and just youths. Souren Bose, who was then a member of the Darjeeling D. C., also took part in these movements.

During 1954 I temporarily withdrew myself and my activities from the peasant front as no fruitful result came out of the movement.<sup>1</sup> Instead I concentrated party activities amongst the tea garden workers in Siliguri Sub-division, mainly in Naxalbari and Siliguri area. The number of workers in those 15 gardens was about 27000. There was an INTUC affiliated union amongst the tea garden workers. I formed a rival CPI-controlled union amongst them. The name of the union was "Terai Tea Garden Workers' Union (CPI)" and the membership strength of the union was about 5000. I became its

president and continued till 1962. The above union is still in existence and it is now affiliated with the CPI(M) (CITU).

During 1956-57 I was more or less engaged in election affairs and worked according to the party directive. No movement with the peasantry or with the Tea workers practically took place during this period. In 1957 Satyen Mazumdar was the CPI candidate for the State Assembly election from Siliguri Assembly constituency. I worked for him in the election. He was returned.

In 1958 a new strike-wave swept the tea workers because of continuous violation of the provisions of agreement reached between the workers and the management in 1955. There was, however, no general strike amongst the Tea-workers. But it was conducted in many areas of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri on local basis. I led some such strikes in Naxalbari areas. Thus passed the year 1958.

In 1959 the party's attention was once again drawn to the peasants front when the State Committee gave a call for capturing benami lands from the jotedars and Zamindars who, taking advantages of certain loopholes in the Zamindari Abolition Act, 1954 had transferred lands or had acquired benami lands. It was a statewide programme. Harekrishna Konar, then an SC member, called the programme 'left-sectarian' and virtually the call did not receive wide implementation at the hands of the Krishak Sabha, entrusted with the task of implementing the programme. I undertook some work in this respect in Naxalbari and its adjoining areas. The whole programme practically flopped though I was able to capture some benami lands and distribute the same amongst the landless local peasants. Besides, there were some court cases against the benami landholders. During 1960-61 I kept myself engaged in conducting those cases on behalf of the party in Siliguri.

In 1962 after the Sino-Indian conflict I was imprisoned in Oct. 1962 and was released in November, 1963. During 1964-1965 I was sick and during this sickness I devoted myself to writing on communism and on Thoughts of Mao. At about this time a firm conviction grew in me that liberation of the people could not be achieved without armed peasants' revolution. I continued writing on communism in 1966 also.

In 1967, Jangal Santhal was given nomination by the party [CP(I)M] to contest Phansidewa constituency in the Assembly election against Iswar Tirki of Congress. Similarly Souren Bose was given nomination in Siliguri constituency against Arun Moitra.



Congress. Both sought my permission (?) before accepting the nomination. But I asked them to accept though I had no doubt that through election no good could be delivered to the people. In fact, we did not make any election campaign in those areas. Rather, whenever possible, we tried to make people understand the hollowness of parliamentary democracy and the necessity of armed peasants' revolution in the prevailing condition of the country. Both Jangal and Souren lost to their Congress rivals in the election.

Meanwhile, I discussed in details with Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal, Dipak Biswas, Jangal Santhal and others about the possibility of launching an armed peasants' struggle somewhere in North Bengal. To convince them, I put forward the six secret documents written by me on the following subjects: (1) On organisation, (2) On Armed Struggle, (3) On China, (4) On Revisionism, (5) On Organisation (in revised form), (6) On Election.

It may be mentioned here that I also wrote other two secret documents, one of which was "on armed struggle" in a revised form. I may also mention here that all the documents were of 1 to 11-12 pages. I gave direction to the party [CPI(ML)?] now to publish the same in a book form for the general information of the cadres who, according to me, should know the background of the first historical peasants' upsurge in Naxalbari. All those with whom I had discussed agreed that an excellent revolutionary situation was prevailing in the country. The neo-revisionist leadership had betrayed the people and the path of parliamentary democracy could not deliver goods to the people and that in this condition of the country, *Thoughts of Mao-Tse-Tung* would yield expected results towards revolution and for this purpose the Thoughts of Mao were to be preached with all sincerity and devotion. Some of the writings (secret documents written by me) were published in the form of pamphlets and were distributed in Siliguri.

In March 1967, when the UF Government was installed in West Bengal, the peasants of Naxalbari rose in revolt. I was in the background. It was Kanu Sanyal assisted by Souren Bose, Dipak Biswas and Jangal Santhal who led the struggle. Out of about 27000 peasants in the area, 500 took active part while about 20000 helped them.<sup>2</sup> In this upsurge the peasants snatched arms from the jotedars and big landlords. There were arson and lootings but very few jotedars or landlords were killed in this struggle. On the contrary, we suffered heavily in the hands of the police. The UF Government ordered police action and the struggle subsided for the time being.

We selected Naxalbari and Phansidewa as the sites of launching struggle on account of the following reasons :

- (1) We had sufficient hold amongst the peasants and tea garden workers of the area.
- (2) Those peasants and tea garden workers had sustained grievances for continued oppression.
- (3) The area also had the advantages of its geographical location.

Out of the above three reasons, the first one was the guiding force behind the struggle.

During this period all of us were connected with the Darjeeling District Committee of the CPI(M). In September 1967 myself, Souren Bose and others were expelled from the CPI(M). I forgot to mention one thing that while the Naxalbari movement was in progress, Biswanath Mukharji (CPI), then in the UF Government in West Bengal (Irrigation Minister), saw me at my house in Siliguri on behalf of the Government and requested me to give up the struggle. By the by he mentioned that they were also after this type of revolution but not at that stage. I regretted that I could not give up the struggle. This would go on, I asserted.

While I continued staying at home, most of my colleagues including Souren Bose and others went underground. It was probably after November 1967, some of my CPM colleagues in Calcutta led by Sushital Roy Choudhuri, who were also expelled from the CPI(M) as they shared views with us, formed a committee styled "Naxalbari O Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti"(NOKSSS). Though I cannot recollect the date of its formation, I believe it was formed sometime in June/July 1967. This was formed in Calcutta. This committee organised a rally on 11th November 1967 at the foot of the Monument, Calcutta. I addressed the rally. The same morning (11th November '67) I arrived at Calcutta from Siliguri by plane and went straight to the residence of Sushital Roy Choudhuri at Maniktola; I stayed there for 2-3 days when, on 12th & 13th November 1967 comrades of different States met there and formed the "All India Co-ordination Committee of the Communist Revolutionaries".(AICCCR). So far as I remember, the following persons attended the two days' sitting:- Sew Kumar Misra and S.N.Tiwari of UP/ Satyanarain Singh of Bihar /L. Appu of Tamilnadu and Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Charu Majumdar, Parimal Dasgupta, Promode Sengupta, Kaliprosad Roy Chaudhuri, Prof. Suniti Ghosh, Asit Sen, Shyamal Nandi (all of West Bengal) and a few others.

(When questioned whether the following persons also attended this meeting, he admitted that they also attended but he could not recollect their names :

Rabi Das of Orissa (since left) / A. K. Dutta of Mysore (since left) / Ramprosad of Mysore / Lachhman Singh of Bihar (now in SNS group) / Radhamohan Das of Orissa / K. Narayanan of Kerala / Philip M. Prosad of Kerala / Chitta Chaudhuri, West Bengal / Madan Roy, Howrah, West Bengal / Anil Basu of Press Union, West Bengal (since left) / Niranjan Bose, West Bengal / Azizul Haque / Asit Chakraborti.

Those who attended recorded their attendance by putting their signatures. Prof. Suniti Ghosh who probably noted the points of the proceedings of the meeting kept all the papers in connection with this meeting in his custody. At present, I have no knowledge where those papers are.. In fitness of things, those papers ought to have been destroyed by Prof. Suniti Ghosh. Normally we adopt this practice in all the meetings, keep the papers with the leading members for sometime for inclusion either in *Liberation* or *Deshabrati* and destroy the same thereafter. After this meeting, we never recorded our signature in any other meeting.

It is a fact that none from Punjab and Andhra attended the meeting. More or less I can say that the revolutionary trend in Punjab was then as fervent as it was seen later.

The meeting formed a committee of the AICCR with the following persons :

Charu Majumdar / Sushital Roy Choudhuri - Convenor / Saroj Dutta / Parimal Dasgupta / S. N. Tewary / S. K. Misra / Satyanarain Singh / Ramprosad / L. Appu / Babu @ A. K. Dutta / Radhamohan Dey / K. Narayanan / Philip M. Prosad / Rabi Das.

Sushital Roy Choudhuri, the Convenor, was asked to draft a programme.

(I cannot say about the present political leanings of Chitta Chaudhuri, Madan Roy, Anil Basu, Radhamohan De and some others. In fact, I do not know all of them. It was Sushital Roy Choudhuri who knew all the above persons who attended the meeting. Later, I came to know that Chitta Chaudhuri left us and joined another faction of the Naxalities. So was the case of Shyamal Nandi and Asit Sen).

In that meeting, the following points were discussed :

(1) Excellent revolutionary situation prevailed in India.

- (2) The CPI(M) leadership betrayed the people.
- (3) Parliamentary path would not deliver goods to the people.
- (4) India is not an independent country; it is a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country.
- (5) Preaching of Mao Thoughts.
- (6) Naxalbari upsurge is a turning point in the history of revolution.
- (7) Drawing out the CPI(M) revolutionary cadres into the revolutionary struggle with a view to building up a revolutionary party guided by Marxism-Leninism and Thoughts of Mao-Tse-Tung.
- (8) Development of peasants struggle of the Naxalbari type in other states.

On 13.11.67, as far as I remember, I left for Siliguri.

Thereafter the AICCR met in May 1968 in a house in South Calcutta. Following persons attended the meeting : Philip M. Prosad, Kerala/Kunikkal Narayan, Kerala/Satyanarain Singh, Bihar/S. K. Misra, UP/Gandharba Sain of Punjab (still with CM's group)/Charu Majumdar/Saroj Dutta/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Prof. Suniti Ghosh.

In this meeting, Soviet Russia was termed as 'Social Imperialist'.

The 3rd AICCR meeting was held in the house of Salil Roy (an employee of National & Grindlays Bank) in October, 1968. Following persons attended the meeting : Charu Majumdar/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Saroj Dutta/Prof. Suniti Ghosh/Nagi Reddy/Tejeswar Rao. There was a long discussion with Nagi Reddy who attended this meeting as a special invitee along with Tejeswar Rao. In the meeting, we discussed the programme adopted by the AICCR when both Negi Reddy and Tejeswar Rao accepted our programme and joined us.

The 4th meeting of the AICCR was held at Tower Hotel, Calcutta on 8th February 1969 and continued for 2 days. Following persons were present in the meeting :

Charu Majumdar, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Saroj Dutta, Prof. Suniti Ghosh, L. Appu, S. K. Misra, Satyanarain Singh, Kandaniya from Bombay (now in Nagi Reddy's group), Srinivasan from Mysore (since left CM's group), Rabi Das of Orissa, Kola Venkaiya from Andhra.

In this meeting, the break with Nagi Reddy came up. The contradictions were on the following points :

- (1) that they (Nagi Reddy's group) did not believe in immediate armed struggle;
- (2) that they wanted to participate in election till sufficient development towards armed struggle could be reached. I tried to persuade them but they were adamant. As such, Nagi Reddy with his followers left us.



The last meeting of the AICCR was held on 22nd April 1969 in Tower Hotel, Calcutta. Salil Roy of National & Grindlays Bank arranged this venue. [Salil Roy was arrested later. He is no longer with the CPI(ML)]. Following persons, as far as I can recollect, attended the meeting : Charu Majumdar, Shew Kumar Misra of UP, Satyanarain Singh of Bihar, L. Appu of Madras, Tejeswar Rao of Andhra, Saroj Dutta, Prof. Suniti Ghosh, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal, Appalasuri of Andhra, R. P. Shroff of Kashmir, Gurubux Singh (Vijay ) of Bihar, Nagbhusan Patnaik of Andhra and may be one or two more.

A three-man presidium was formed with myself, Nagbhusan Patnaik and another person to conduct the meeting. In this meeting the third Communist party styled "Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)" came into being. It was not a fact that L. Appu presided over the meeting alone. While I read the party programme (which was drafted by me), Shew Kumar Misra read the party constitution (which was drafted by him). The full shape of the party programme and the party constitution was given in the Party Congress. In this meeting it was decided that the formation of the party would be announced by Kanu Sanyal at a meeting at Calcutta Maidan on 1st May 1969. This meeting also formed a Central Organising Committee (COC) with myself, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Souren Bose, Kanu Sanyal, Satyanarain Singh, Sew Kumar Misra, Saroj Dutta and 2/3 others.

The party programme as drafted by me, inter alia, contained the following points :

(1) Guerrilla warfare is the highest form of struggle. (I never said the Guerrilla warfare is the only form of struggle).

(2) Annihilation of "class enemies". By "class enemies" I meant the feudal enemies i.e. the land owners. I repeat that I stressed on the annihilation of land-owners, the feudal enemies. I never meant annihilation indiscriminately. At a later stage, I found that the party comrades started annihilating police, money-lenders, middle-class capitalists besides jotedars and landowners. I was not in favour of killing middle class businessmen but I could not direct the cadres to stop such annihilation lest the main programme of annihilation of "Feudal enemies" was stopped. [ According to statements of many other Naxalite leaders and even writings in the party organs *Deshabrati* and *Liberation*, Charubabu not only did not discourage or write against such indiscriminate killings but in many ways supported these actions

as the spontaneous activities of party cadres. His changed stance, as indicated in his statement now, was only after the scathing criticisms of the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party conveyed to him by Souren Bose on his return from China. Souren Bose's book in Bengali *Charu Majumdarer Katha* (On Charu Majumdar), 1989) also bears ample testimony to this.]

I must admit here that there was a stage when the struggle went out of my grip. This was mainly due to the fact that I could not stay in West Bengal at that peak of the struggle lest I might get arrested. Of course, I cannot say whether I could stop indiscriminate killings by my cadres even if I was in West Bengal at that time. Ours was a decentralised organisation.

More or less after the formation of the CPI(ML), I started practising underground life. Probably in May 1969 I came to Calcutta from Siliguri and put up at the residence of Prof. Bidyut Dutta in Maniktola (now Ultadanga P. S. area). I stayed there for a day and left for Siliguri again.

[When questioned, he admitted that it was Asit Sen of Entally area who picked him up from Dum Dum Airport and drove him straight to the residence of Prof. Bidyut Dutta. It may be mentioned here that Asit Sen was subsequently arrested. He no longer belongs to CPI(ML)].

The Calcutta DOC was formed between April and July 1969 with Sadhan Sarkar as its Secretary. Sadhan Sarkar continued as Secretary even after the formation of the Calcutta District Committee (DC) till he was taken as the Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(ML), sometime in August 1971. At about that time, the Calcutta DC and the 24 Parganas DC were dissolved and four Regional Committees were formed as follows to overcome the organisational difficulties which cropped up due to the contradictions with Kaliprosad Roy Chaudhuri, Secretary of 24 Parganas DC and a member of the SC :

- (1) North Calcutta & Suburban RC with Dilip Banarji as Secretary.
- (2) South Calcutta and Suburban RC with Kamal Sanyal as the Secretary.
- (3) South 24 Parganas Rural RC.
- (4) North 24 Parganas Rural RC.

I do not know the other members of the North Calcutta RC. But I know something about South Calcutta RC because contradictions developed amongst the members of that RC and papers were sent to

me for my perusal. The following are the members of the South Cal.RC : Kamal Sanyal - Secretary / Satish Banarji of Behala/C. R. Banarji of Calcutta Port/Kartick Ghosh of Jadavpore University and another person (may be Agni Roy).

There was an atmosphere of distrust amongst the members of the South Cal.RC. Kamal had complaints of distrust against Satish while the cadres complained of bureaucratic behaviour of Kartick Ghosh. A section of the cadres had complaint against Kamal Sanyal and Agni Roy, Secretary, Ballygunge-Tiljala Area Committee, for their alleged anti-party role. They suspected Kamal and Agni as police agents. As far as I came to know, they referred the matter to Dipak Biswas and Dilip Banarji [two of the closest confidants of CM] seeking their opinion about Kamal and Agni. Dipak and Dilip took time to reach a decision. Meanwhile, probably in the middle of April 1972, one Amit, as I was informed, killed Kamal Sanyal and Agni Roy. I feel that more thoughts should have been given before taking up such an action.

Prior to the State Conference, which was held on 15th March 1970 at Behala, a meeting of the SOC was held in a house in South Calcutta wherein a panel of the would-be members (15) was prepared for the SC.

(According to Souren Bose this meeting was held on 1th March 1970 at Tower Hotel, Calcutta).

The following points were discussed in the Congress :

- (1) Whether revolutionary situation in India exists vis-à-vis analysis of the Indian Society.
- (2) The mode of struggle in the rural and urban areas.
- (3) The role of the peasants and the working-class in the peasants revolution to overthrow the reactionary government.
- (4) Whether mass movement, mass organisation and trade union movement would find place in the struggle of armed peasants' revolution.
- (5) Annihilation of class enemies (I have already discussed this issue).
- (6) Acceptance of the draft programme and the draft constitution.
- (7) Election of central committee members and formation of different Bureau etc.
- (8) Progress of party work in different States.

In this connection, I may mention that Souren Bose raised a question suggesting that Charu Majumdar should be considered as

the Revolutionary Authority in India. While the delegates of West Bengal and Andhra supported Souren Bose, delegates of other States differed. I had to intervene when it was decided that the contribution of Charu Majumdar should be noted in the political resolution.

The following persons were elected members of the Central Committee :

SN Singh and Gurbux Singh @ Vijay(Bihar)/ Sew Kumar Misra and Mohinder Singh(UP)/ Souren Bose, Charu Majumdar, Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh, Sushital Ray Choudhury, Kanu Sanyal and Asim Chatterjee(all from West Bengal)/ Nagbhusan Patnaik, M.Appalasuri, Adivatla Kailasam and Vempatapu Styanarayan(all from Andhra)/ L.Appu(Madras)/ R.P.Shroff(J&K)/ Ambadi Sankar Kutty Menon(Kerala, since joined Congress)/ Jagjit Singh Shore and Daya Singh(Punjab) - 20 in all.

The CC met probably the following morning i.e. on 16.5.70 and elected the following members of the Polit Bureau (PB) : Charu Majumdar/ Souren Bose/Saroj Dutta/Sushital Ray Choudhury/Kanu Sanyal/SN Singh/S.K.Misra/NB Patnaik/Appalasuri/Appu/RP Shroff.

After the Party Congress I attended the following meetings :

(a) A meeting of the West Bengal SC which was held somewhere in South Calcutta in August 1970. I shall not mention the venue. Following persons were present :

Charu Majumdar /Suniti Ghosh/Saroj Dutta/Souren Bose/Sushital Roy Choudhuri (SRC).

In this meeting SRC first raised his contradictions and demanded clarification on the party's movement in urban area in the form of ransacking educational institutions and damaging statues of national leaders. I asked SRC to place his contradictions in the form of a document. He agreed to do so. Since SRC did not agree to continue as Secretary of the SC and as the Chief Editor of the *Deshabrati* till the contradictions were resolved, I asked Saroj Dutta to take over the charges from him.

[Not quite true. According to many of their leaders, SRC was virtually removed from the editorship of *Deshabrati* and Saroj Dutta already started functioning as the editor, which was pointed out by SRC himself in this meeting. Secondly, when strident demands were made by some in this meeting for suspension or removal of SRC from the party, he opted to work in far off Hooghly district. According to certain accounts, some of the pro-CM leading members even contemplated 'liquidation' of SRC. May also refer to the interrogation statement of Prof. Shyamal Ghosh in this respect].



At the instance of SRC I allotted Hooghly District to him as his area for party work. It was not a fact that I insulted SRC in that meeting. Saroj Dutta was, however, rude to him.

(b) A meeting of the Politburo (PB) was held in the house of Nripen Chakraborti (a State Government employee) in September 1970. (Nripen Chakraborti, H/A Finance Department, Writers' Buildings was arrested from his residence at Lake Town subsequently with huge Naxalite documents and letters meant for Charu Majumdar. He is also an accused in the Amherst Street PS Calcutta-conspiracy case.)

Following persons attended : Charu Majumdar/Satyanarain Singh of Bihar/S. K. Mishra of U.P./Saroj Dutta of West Bengal.

In this meeting, we developed contradiction with SNS over the question of the role of rich peasants in armed peasants revolution. SNS was in favour of integrating with the rich peasants which I did not accept. SNS said that he would place a document over this issue along with some minor issues. In fact, he placed the document on the same day. We went through the document and observed that we were not in a position to go by this document, whereupon SNS severed connection with us. I may mention here that other members of the PB who were present supported my views. I agree that this rift with SNS at this stage when we had already some contradictions with SRC had a serious damaging effect on our party. Though I do not consider SNS as an A grade leader, yet I cannot deny his organisational ability so far as Bihar was concerned.

This was the only PB meeting which was held so far after the Party Congress. I regret I could not arrange other PB meeting though there was pressing necessity for the same. Subsequently conditions stood in my way to convene further PB meeting.

(c) A meeting of the West Bengal SC was held in January 1971 at Lake Town (not in the house of Nripen Chakraborti). I shall not mention the venue. Following persons attended the meeting: Charu Majumdar/Ashim Chatarji/Shyamsundar Ghosh/Saroj Dutta/Souren Bose/Suniti Ghosh/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Sadhan Sarkar.

(Souren Bose did not refer to this meeting. According to him, there was an SC meeting at Basirhat in December '70 attended by CM, SB, Saroj Dutta and Ashim Chatarji. CM did not tell about this meeting).

The subject of discussion was the contradiction with SRC. It was in this meeting that Ashim insulted SRC and pointed out that

SRC should no longer remain as the Secretary of the SC and the Chief Editor of *Deshabrati*. I may mention here that though I asked Saroj Dutta to take over charges from SRC in the earlier meeting, yet I did not proceed with the matter on consideration that we should discuss the matter with SRC again when a final decision would be taken. I tried to convince the members that though SRC developed contradiction, he should remain as the Secretary of the SC and the editor of *Deshabrati*. But I could not persuade other members to go by my views (?) as Ashim and Saroj Dutta were adamant in removing SRC. Souren Bose was, however, neutral. Suniti Ghosh sided with Ashim and Saroj Dutta. It was ultimately decided that SRC would stay in Hooghly to look after party work there. Though I did not tell categorically Saroj Dutta to take over charge from SRC, in fact Saroj Dutta started functioning as Secretary of the SC thereafter in the absence of SRC who left for Hooghly. There was no question of selecting a Chief Editor of *Deshabrati* at that time as *Deshabrati* office was ransacked by the police meanwhile and it was being published clandestinely.

(d) Another SC meeting was held in March/April, 1971. I could not attend that meeting. I was informed by Sadhan Sarkar that this meeting was held to discuss the difference with Ashim which in the meantime crept in the party. Ashim was also not present in the meeting. It was decided that Ashim's stand should be fought. Ashim's document was, however, not placed before us then.

(e) A meeting of the CC was held in June 1972 in the house of Prabal Roy at 107A, Middle Road, Calcutta, wherefrom I was arrested later. Following persons attended the meeting : SM - Andhra/Rauf -do-/Jagjit Singh Shoal - Punjab/Charu Majumdar - West Bengal.

In this meeting we discussed the criticism against the CPI(ML) made by the Communist Party of China (CPC). I may mention here that this CPC criticism was brought by Souren Bose when the latter visited China sometime in September 1970. I sent Souren to appraise the CPC of our struggle and to get their views.<sup>3</sup>

The criticisms (by the CPC) were on the following points as far as I remember :

- (1) The calling of the Chairman of China as our Chairman;
- (2) Negation of the role of National Bourgeoisie in the armed struggle by the peasants;
- (3) Necessity of forming united fronts;
- (4) Necessity of mass movement and Trade Union movement;

(5) The form of annihilation adopted by the CPI(ML) etc.

I do not remember other points (?). You have already seized a document at the time of my arrest over this issue. That was sent by Prof. Suniti Ghosh to me for a review.

We discussed the above criticisms of the CPC. I expressed in clear terms to the other members present in this meeting that I had been thinking over this issue since Souren Bose briefed me on his return from China. I pointed out to them that I had come to the conclusion that I should make a self-criticism, accepting the criticisms made by the CPC as I think that the CPC criticisms were correct. The members of Punjab and Andhra did not agree to my proposal of coming out with a self-criticism as, according to them, the criticism made by the CPC was not correct and CM's earlier stand was by far the correct approach towards the armed peasants' revolution. They also pointed out that any self-criticism by CM at this juncture would damage CM's group of the CPI-ML and in turn would improve the position of SNS group of the party. Moreover, they were of the opinion that they were receiving result out of this programme of annihilation.<sup>4</sup> Besides, they also discussed the growing struggle in Punjab and opined that the struggle in Punjab would develop more and more following the line of CM. So in the event of any self-criticism by CM, there might be a check in the development of the struggle in Punjab. After their views were known to me, I remained silent and they left with the impression that the decision taken by the majority members(?) in this CC meeting would stand, meaning thereby that CM would not come out with any self-criticism.

I may mention here that after their departure I continued to think over the subject and decided that I should come out with a self-criticism. Before I could do so, I was arrested by the Calcutta Police. I admit that in the event of my self-criticism, a portion of important cadres would have left the party. But I hope that they would also return when they would attain maturity after going through my self-criticism more and more.

(In reply to a question whether the line adopted by SNS group was in conformity with the criticism made by the CPC as against CM's line, he admitted that SNS group's views were more or less at par with the recommendations made by the CPC though on some issues their line of approach was not correct. In reply to another question as to why CM did not sit with Ashim who tried his best to meet him to sort out certain fundamental differences with him, CM

merely replied that his couriers failed to meet Ashim's couriers and as such no meeting could take place!)

(f) During my stay in Calcutta, I also attended a meeting of the students and youths. It was held in the house of Dr. Amiya Bose at Ballygunge in the first part of 1970. About 20 persons attended including Rana Bose (s/o Dr. Amiya and Sm. Chameli Bose). SRC, Suniti Ghosh, Saroj Dutta and Prof Nisith Bhattacharya attended this meeting which was organised by the latter. My speech in this meeting was published later as a booklet captioned "Biplabi Yuba-Chhatrader Prati". Snacks and tea were served by Rana's mother Sm. Bose.

Tours undertaken : I undertook extensive tours from 1969 to organise the party in different States. It is not possible at this stage to give a detailed picture of the tours undertaken by me. Any way as far as I remember I am giving a picture which may not be a complete one. (CM then spoke of his visits to Mysore in Oct. 1969, Kerala twice during 1969-70, Delhi in April 1970, UP/ J&K also in April 1970, Bihar in Feb. 1970 and again for about eight months in 1971 (for taking shelter, though not continuously), Assam in June 1969 and again in March 1970, Madras twice during 1969-70, and Orissa several times, partly for organisational work but mostly for taking shelter during Dec. 1970 and Jan.-Feb. 1972 (Bhubaneswar/Puri/Cuttack).

Differences with party leaders : I had differences with the following persons who subsequently left me :

- (1) Asit Sen, West Bengal,
- (2) Parimal Dasgupta, West Bengal,
- (3) Nagi Reddy, Andhra,
- (4) Sushital Roy Choudhuri, West Bengal,
- (5) Satyanarain Singh, Bihar,
- (6) Ashim Chatarji, West Bengal.

I have more or less discussed the basic issues of contradictions with the above persons.

The last and the most important difference is with Prof. Suniti Ghosh. The difference came sometime in March or first part of April, 1972. The contradictions were on the following points :

- (a) Analysis/review of the past activities of the CPI(ML),
- (b) Annihilation programme,
- (c) Functioning of mass organisation secretly.

It is not a fact that Suniti Ghosh differed with me over the question



of re-establishing the revolutionary authority of Charu Majumdar, (We have information to this effect. Moreover, the documents seized from Charu Majumdar give an indication like that. Prabal Roy who was with CM for more than a month continuously and sometime acted as his personal assistant also corroborated our information).

It is also not a fact that my cadres will be after the life of Suniti Ghosh (When CM's attention was drawn to a letter written by Suniti Ghosh wherein SG expressed an apprehension like that, CM emphatically denied such possibility.). I tried to maintain contact with him to resolve the contradictions but my courier could not reach the courier of SG. It is a fact that the general cadres have an apathetic attitude towards SG as I feel SG could not integrate with the general masses.

Finance : The party is generally financed by the subscription collected by the cadres from the sympathisers. Besides, the cadres and leaders also used to subscribe themselves though no quota is fixed against them. The total collections were deposited with the following persons :

(1) Charu Majumdar/Suniti Ghosh/Sushital Roy Choudhuri/Saroj Dutta/Sadhan Sarkar.

The financial position of the party was most sound in 1969 when during the whole year about Rs. 20,000/- reached me. At that time SG used to maintain Accounts. Nothing was spent for *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* till 1970 when police raided the office of *Deshabrati*. Till that period, the sale proceeds of *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* were sufficient to maintain those journals. In 1969 my personal expense was Rs. 6,000/-. SG gave me the amount in three instalments @ Rs. 2,000/- per instalment. In 1970 SG gave me Rs. 6,000/- from his personal collections. In 1971, I spent Rs. 12,000/- for the whole year for myself. Besides, another amount of Rs. 12,000/- was spent for the party activities. I cannot say how much was spent for party activities in 1972. During 1969-71 SG used to maintain Accounts of the party. The accounts are destroyed with the completion of the year. Generally our expenses (mostly personal expenses) were like this :

Charu Majumdar - Rs. 500/-

Suniti Ghosh - Rs. 500/- to 700/-

Sushital Roy Choudhuri - Rs. 150/-

Saroj Dutta - Not known

Sadhan Sarkar - Rs. 150/-

We used to spend roughly Rs. 1,000/- for the couriers of the leaders. Our expense on account of printing *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* was about Rs. 2,000/- per month when it was published clandestinely.

My expense, however, varied according to my movement. The amount which was seized from me at the time of my arrest is the money of the party. In 1972 I received Rs. 20,000/- in three instalments. The last instalment came before April, 1972. By March 1972 all the three instalments reached me; out of this Rs. 14600/- remained with me and the rest was spent for myself.

Practically I did not feel difficulty in raising money. There were occasions when I approached personally the businessmen of North Bengal and collected the required money.

In 1968 Chinese Embassy in Nepal sent a sum of Rs. 10,000/- in Nepal currency. This came through Dipak Biswas who personally approached the Chinese Embassy in Nepal. We could not convert the same to Indian currency as it was seized by police in Naxalbari. At that time the amount was lying with Kanu Sanyal (Dipak Biswas stated that he did not bring the money but he saw the amount which might be Rs. 10,000/- or 7,000/- in Nepal currency with Kanu Sanyal. The entire amount was seized by the police sometime in the middle of 1968 from village Chowpukhuria, P.S. Phansidewa). Subsequently Souren Bose and Dipak Biswas visited the Chinese Embassy in Nepal but they could not procure any financial aid. They just apprised the Chinese Embassy of the revolutionary condition in India.

On one occasion in 1968 Bill Ash of the CPGB(ML) sent a sum of Rs. 18,000/- to us. This was actually given by the Albanian Communist Party to meet the expense of the journey of SG to Albania through National & Grindlays Bank where SG had his personal Account.

We were also getting some money from Canada through Canadian Communist Party. On one occasion, Hardayal Singh brought a sum of Rs. 10,000/- from Canada and handed over the same to us. (In this connection once CM said that they used to get the money through a Canadian firm in Calcutta (Indian Aluminium or Bata?) but subsequently he retracted and said that Hardayal Singh brought that amount personally).

Besides this, we did not get any financial aid from any other country including China.

Normally we did not approve of raising fund through dacoities. There were, however, occasions when our guerrillas attacked the

house of jotedars and landowners, annihilated them and took away the jewellery and cash. Such booties supplemented our funds. That could not be avoided.

**Couriers :** A set of 3 couriers were maintained by the party to keep links of the SC with the CC and the PB. All the 3 couriers were picked up by Suniti Ghosh. They are of middle age. Excepting myself, other leaders were to raise their own couriers.

PB and SC had no separate cover addresses.

The following persons acted as my couriers: Guruprosad Kundu/ Brother of Dilip Banarji / Sometime Nripen Chakraborti / Shyam-sundar Ghosh/Bose.

Others I do not know. It was the responsibility of Prof. Suniti Ghosh to select my couriers and I never enquired about their names.

**Hide-outs and shelters :** My hide-outs were arranged by the following persons :

(1) Shyamal Nandi (LIC) (now in Asit Sen's group. This was during AICCR period).

(2) Prof. Shyamal Ghosh [during AICCR and the 1st part of the CPI(ML) - he is in custody in the Amherst Street P. S. conspiracy case].

(3) Prof. Suniti Ghosh (he arranged shelter till April 1972. Thereafter he differed with me and did not arrange my shelter).

(4) Dipak Biswas in consultation with Dilip Banarji, both members of the West Bengal SC who were arrested on 16.7.72 early hours from a hide-out at Deb Lane, Entally. The shelter at 107A Middle Road wherefrom I was arrested was arranged by them.

I will not disclose all my shelters. Some of them are known to police which I have also come to know. Those were : (1) Father-in-law's house of Souren Bose at Chaltabagan, Calcutta (raided), (2) House of Madan Chatarji near Deshbandhu Park, North Calcutta (raided), (3) House of Prof. Debi Chatarji in South Calcutta (raided), (4) House of Nripen Chakraborti at Lake Town, Calcutta (raided), (5) House of Subhash Samanta at Milk Colony, Belgachia, Calcutta (raided), (6) One house near Deshbandhu Park (could not be located), (7) One house of an Engineer attached to a Mercantile firm in North Calcutta off Cornwallis Street (could not be located), (8) House of Pitoo @ Ashis Sen at Puri, Orissa (raided).

**Foreign contacts :** I sent Prof. Suniti Ghosh to Albania in 1969. I do not exactly remember the month. A. K. Dutta of Mysore accompanied Ghosh in this tour. A. K. Dutta has since cut off his

relations with the CPI(ML) and is now living in London after marriage with a foreign lady there. Prior to his visit, the Albanian Communist Party had sent a sum of Rs. 18,000/- to Prof. Ghosh towards the expenses of this journey. I understand that the money was credited to personal account of Prof. Suniti Ghosh at National and Grind Bank. This was arranged by Bill Ash of CPGB (ML).

The next emissary was Souren Bose. In August 1970, we had a meeting in Calcutta and decided to send Souren Bose and Prof. Suniti Ghosh to China. Saroj Dutta, Suniti Ghosh, Souren Bose and myself attended that meeting. The object was to take the opinion of the China Communist Party on the tactical line of our party. Just before this decision, the international passport of Prof. Suniti Ghosh which he had taken earlier was impounded by the Government. So we dropped the idea of sending Prof. Ghosh to China and instead decided to send Souren Bose alone.

In August '70, Souren Bose left Calcutta for China by air. The route of the journey was Dum Dum airport to London to Rome to Albania to Shanghai to Peking. (According to Souren Bose, the route was DD AP to London via Paris to Rome to Tirana airport of Albania to Shanghai to Peking).

Towards the end of November 1970 Souren Bose returned from China along the same route. On return, he saw me at my shelter at Belgachhia and placed a document (written by him in his own handwriting) before me containing the criticisms made by the leaders of the CPC.

**Links with Bangladesh :** On Bangladesh issue my viewpoint was that a two-front struggle was to be opened - one against Yahya Khan and the other simultaneously against Mujibur Rahman. As we supported Yahya Khan and pleaded to fight out Mujibur Rahman. Practically over Bangladesh issue, my rift with Ashim became broad and virtually complete.

Ashim's stand was that Yahya Khan was a national bourgeois and China supported him on the question of Bangladesh. I considered Yahya Khan as an attacker and Mujibur a collaborator with imperialism.

There are several factions of Maoist Groups in East Bengal (India, Pakistan, now Bangladesh). So far I know that the EPCP (ML) is the main Maoist Group in Bangladesh.

In this connection I may mention that Khokan Majumdar of Jalpaiguri whom I last saw in June '72 at this shelter (107A, Middle Road)



Road) gave out to me that he had been to Bangladesh in June 1972 for the purpose of sightseeing.

Once Toha and Alauddin of EPCP(ML) attempted to come to West Bengal to meet me but they could not make their way. This means that I never met Mohammed Toha or Alauddin.

Prof. Suniti Ghosh, however, used to meet the couriers of the leaders of the extremist groups of Bangladesh. I can remember that two couriers from Khulna, Bangladesh came to Calcutta in the latter part of 1971 and met Prof. Suniti Ghosh and Sadhan Sarkar, the then Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(ML). I was given to understand by Prof. Ghosh that these couriers made over a report on the struggle of the extremists in Bangladesh. The report, however, did not reach me. It might be that it was due to the arrest of Sadhan Sarkar.

Present position of the party :

- (i) Reasons for the present set back.
- (a) Defection from the party on account of contradiction with Asit Sen, Parimal Dasgupta, Nagi Reddy, Sushital Roy Choudhuri, Satyanarain Singh, Asim Chatterjee and lastly with Prof. Suniti Ghosh;
- (b) Arrests of important leaders and cadres;
- (c) Failure to raise base areas and formation of PLA;
- (d) Lack of preference of politics;
- (e) Failure in regrouping the new cadres when despair pre vailed over arrests of old cadres;
- (f) Gaining grounds of the supplementary struggles over the concerted actions of the guerrillas;
- (g) Idea of forming the PLA without raising the small but strong groups of guerrillas;
- (h) Dependence on middle peasants rather than on poor and landless peasants to raise guerrilla squads;
- (i) Failure of proper integration with the poor and landless peasants;
- (j) Prevalence of the sense of self-preservation rather than self-sacrifice among the cadres;
- (k) Non-dependence of the leadership on the poor and landless peasants;
- (l) Under-estimation of mass movement;
- (m) Putting on much emphasis on centralisation of organisational affairs;
- (n) Undue emphasis for speedy revolution by 1975.

### Appendix -A and Appendix -B combined :

Inventory of the papers/documents seized from 107A, Middle Road, Calcutta - 700014 on 16.7.72 (from the place of arrest of CM) and scrutiny report of the important ones :

[A large number of printed books/periodicals/journals including copies of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*, *Peking Review*, some copies of *Deshabrati*, *Liberation*, and a large number of Bengali/English writings by party comrades addressed to CM. Brief contents of some of these are mentioned below :

- a manuscript English write-up captioned "Setback in Delhi - a review - a political-organisational report" dt 20.4.1972, written by Ramesh Choudhury: contains analysis of party activities since its inception, failures of the State Committee to provide leadership, inner party struggle in Delhi and UP.

- A Bengali letter dt 7.5.1972 addressed to CM and written by Soumya (Prof. Suniti Ghosh): It expresses contradictions with CM on the party lines, charges the party for following a sectarian path, asking CM to repudiate the same for the cause of the revolution and the party. His letter also charged the leadership to cause the annihilation of the South Calcutta RCM and Secretary (Agni Roy and Kamal Sanyal respectively) after falsely labelling them as 'police spy'. Suniti also gave out that he learnt about such conspiracy also from a doctor who treated a cadre connected with this case and that this comrade in course of delirium during his epileptic feat also gave out that Suniti was also going to be a target on false charge of 'spying'. Suniti also referred to two other instances in which he was vilified amongst party cadres by falsely alleging that he had deliberately misinterpreted Charu's statements in *Liberation*, *Deshabrati* and *Pub Akash Lal*.

In this letter Suniti informed CM that he was returning the report of Souren Bose's China visit and made it clear to CM that he has no option but to sever all connections with persons who want to continue in politics by killing of comrades and cadres. ( vide item 24 of the seized documents).

- Bengali letter dt. 4.8.1970 by Kanu Sanyal, addressed to 'Charuda': It strongly criticised the Tech apparatus of the party under the State Committee in Calcutta which led to the arrest of Appalasuri and Nagbhusan and also criticised the Red Guard actions. (vide item 25 of the seized documents.)

- Bengali letter dt 15.6.1972 addressed to CM and written by

Satish (Satish Banerjee of Behala and South Calcutta RCM?) : It is an investigation report on the murders of Kamal Sanyal and Agni Roy (former Secy. and Member of South Calcutta RC). It brings out the complicity of some couriers and students, some ACMs (one named Amit Roy and another named Ananda who is 'dictated by Com. Puran ('Purna'? Sadhan Sarkar?), the couriers involved being Sunil and Bacchu, couriers of SRC Secy. and Tapas, courier of Agni, and the Area Committee Members being Jiban and Tapas of Garden Reach AC. The report also mentions about one Sahebjan @ Ali @ Sekhar (previously of LCM Tiljala) as being responsible for the arrest of Nisith Bhattacharjee and 6 LCMs for which the DC directed to kill him wherever found ('on view'). It further states that Com. Birenda @ Ramen [Sadhan Sarkar] has admitted that he was connected with the murders of Agni and Kamal., (vide item 26 of the seized documents).

- Manuscript Bengali write-up in red ink (pages 1-4) with a forwarding note "Porter RCM comrade Harendra babur sathe Sunil O Bachhur kathopokathan deye balo com. Harendra babur likhito report-11.5.1972, copy to Com. CM and copy to Com.PCS. The write-up contains the report of the murders of com. Panchu and Ramen by partymen. (vide item 50 of the seized documents).

- Manuscript report in English dt 29.10.1970 in six (6) fullscale pages purported to be in the handwriting of Souren Bose and containing the gist of the 'views' of Com. Chou-en-lai and Com. Kang Sheng of the Communist Party of China about the CPI(ML) in general and Charu Majumdar in particular. (vide item 86 of the seized documents / for fuller details regarding the points of criticism by the CPC, may see the Interrogation Report of Souren Bose).

- One letter (date not indicated) in Bengali by Soumya (Suniti Ghosh) to CM, urging the latter to take some actions in respect of the murders of some leaders of the party and cited the murder of the Secretary of Ballygunge-Tiljala Area Committee. (vide item 90).

- Copy of a letter by Dhiren (Suniti Ghosh) to Dilip (Banerjee?) dt 10.5.1972 containing 8 questions for proper answers about the actions of Dilip. The questions mainly relate to the murders of Secy., SCRC and Secy., Ballygunge-Tiljala AC and murder of com. Chandi of Bihar. (vide item 91/ may also refer to Interrogation Report of Asim Chatterjee in which he strongly raised the issue about the murder of Chandi and others.).

- Manuscript Bengali document (27 pages) captioned "Birbhum Sampratik Abastha - Bartaman Party Line" issued by Paschim Banga-Bihar Simanta Anchalik Committee of March 1972 : It makes a demand on the party leadership to review the past achievements in Birbhum, specially the problem of annihilation of class enemy, result of indiscriminate killings undertaken by the party there etc. etc. It also raised the questions of mass movement, role of working class and actions in urban areas, organising base areas and so on. It finally calls for evaluation of CM's teachings in the context of international situation. (vide item 103).

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. According to people close to Charubabu during those days, he was virtually 'suspended' by the party for his 'reckless activities' and was later asked to work among tea garden workers, and that it caused considerable depression in him, quite often leading to uncontrolled drinking bouts, which caused further setback in his general health condition.
2. A highly exaggerated figure. Even at the height of the movement in Naxalbari during May-July 1967, the active participants hardly exceeded 2-3 hundred and the supporters were about 700 - 1000.
3. It is noteworthy that this so-called CC meeting was held with hardly one-third of the CC and PB members. Secondly, the CPC's scathing criticism of CM and his policy formulations were communicated by Souren Bose nearly a year ago but CM tried his best to hush up the criticisms. Thirdly, CM had no option but to convene such a half-hearted meeting only after the CPC criticisms were strongly voiced in a Joint Statement of important party leaders including Souren Bose and Kanu Sanyal issued from the Vishakapatnam Jail, which had also received wide media publicity. Fourthly, CM presented in this meeting only a watered down version of the CPC criticism. For a fuller and more authentic version, may see the Interrogation Report/ Statement of Souren Bose.
4. There had been no corroboration of this from any quarters at all and, even according to many Naxalites, this appears to be CM's way of justifying his own conduct and preachings, at least as a face-saving device!



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1st inside			
cover	50	(continue)	(continued)
2	39	'dry.	'dry'.
10	20	July, September 1967	July - September 1967
13	12	Mazumdar's	Majumdar's
18	23	towards them After	towards them. After
20	24	also something,	also something
22	11	culture;	culture
54	35 - 38	<b>Note by the Deputy Commissioner ....</b>	Transferred to page no. 55
80	6	fact even	fact that even
137	7	Souren Bose's,	Souren Bose's
156	9	Poor Economic status	Economic status
173	13	basic pay is Rs.300/-	basic pay is Rs.300/-.
	25	form the CPI(M)	from the CPI(M)
174	34	Sraddhanada Park	Sraddhananda Park
176	19, 30	(Incharge)	(In-charge)
177	1	Kashba	Kasba
230	9	being in the	being wasted in the
	25	peremptorily	peremptorily
232	4	satisfactorily.	satisfactorily.]
239	40	Charu Mazumadr	Charu Majumdar
249	19	four Sreelekha couriers	four couriers
268	15	and even Identification	and even. Identification
285	27	few muders	few murders
288	9	years, Height - 5' 2", Build - thin,	years; height - 5' 2", build - thin;
	10	Complexion - wheatish, Nose : sharp & pointed	complexion - wheatish; nose : sharp & pointed.



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