

To,

The Home Minister,  
State Home Department,  
Government of Maharashtra,  
Maharashtra,

Subject: Notice of indefinite ~~st~~ Hunger strike against atrocities of the State Police & Prison Departments.

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned have taken to a hunger strike from this day as a protest against atrocities by the State Police & Prison Department. We are accused by the State Police to be "Naxalites" & "Naxalite Sympathisers" and are currently lodge in the Nagpur Jail.

We demand the following should be implemented.

1. Persons who were accused as "Naxalites" and thereafter acquitted by the Judiciary should not be rearrested immediately after release from Prison. Persons such as Jayakka (rearrested on release on 29/3/2008) and Malesh Sailu (rearrested on release on 1/4/2008) should be immediately & unconditionally released.
2. The Maharashtra Police should immediately stop branding Social organisations & activists as Naxalites & Naxal sympathisers. Many are being falsely accused as Naxal sympathisers and put into jail and also being denied bail. These accusations on Social activists should be withdrawn & they should be unconditionally released.
3. All undertrial (accused) Naxalite prisoners should be immediately removed from Solitary Confinement (i.e Anda Barrack, Punishment & Seperate Barrack, etc). A common general Barrack should be provided for such undertrials.

4. Prison interview timings should be extended to 30 minutes; Advocates should be allowed open interviews (without grill) and eatables should be permitted to be given at interviews. A facility for telephones should be given in the Barracks.
5. All undertrial prisoners, (especially accused Naxalites & IPC 302 prisoners) should not be compulsory made to wear the prison dress.
6. The draconian IPC 110 should be scrapped which has become a tool by the Police department to harrass the common people.

Untill the above demands are ~~not~~ met our hunger strike will continue. Hoping for your favourable response.

In Protest.

Date:- 7th April 2008

Place:- Nagpur Central Jail,  
Nagpur - 440020

*Murli*  
MURLI @ ASHOK SATYA REDDY.

*Arun Thomas*  
ARUN THOMAS FERREIRA

*D. S. Bhurule*  
DHANENDRA SHRIRAM BHURULE.

*N. Bansode*  
NARESH BABULAL BANSODE.

P.S:- A total of 13 inmates are currently on Hunger strike at the Nagpur Central Jail for the above demands. The jail Authorities have not accepted this petition (till 10/4/2008)

- C.C.:-
- 1) BOMBAY HIGH COURT (CHIEF JUSTICE)
  - 2) STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.
  - 3) ADDITIONAL SESSIONS JUDGE, AD-HOC SESSIONS COURT - 10  
(NAGPUR)
  - 4) SPEAKER, MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY.
  - 5) COLLECTOR, NAGPUR.
  - 6) GOVERNER, MAHARASHTRA.
  - 7) LEADER OF OPPOSITION, MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY

Date: 11th April 2008.  
Nagpur Central Jail

To,  
The Editor

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please publish this pressnote in your esteemed newspaper and oblige. Considering this note is being sent from the Nagpur Central Jail, we do hope you will give it due importance.

Thanking you,

Murli  
Murli @ Ashok Reddy

Arun Ferreira

D. S. Bhurule  
Dhanendra Bhurule

N. B. Bansode  
Naresh Bansode

### POLITICAL PRISONERS IN NAGPUR JAIL ON STRIKE

When the four of us were arrested in Nagpur in May last year it made a mere headline on the front page of the major dailies. Many attributed this single incident to the vigilance of the Maharashtra Police department in curbing the (so-called) Naxal menace. Only a few raised questions. But during the past 12 months that incident has proved to be part of a trend to apprehend social activists and revolutionaries and thrust numerous false cases on them. Such cases under the draconian UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT, 1967 are so baseless in their charges that they don't even have an iota of conviction possibilities in the court of Law. Take for example the case of Shri. Anil Mamane (currently at the Nagpur jail) and his 3 colleagues arrested at a Nagpur station and accused of selling 'Inciting revolutionary' literature at the yearly assembly of Dalits at Deekshabhoomi. For proof of such 'Inciting' literature pamphlets appealing to Dalits to struggle against caste oppression was shown as evidence. Together a total of 20 such social & political activists (8 in Nagpur, 3 in Mumbai and 10 in Chandrapur) have been arrested on charges of being 'Naxalites' or 'Naxal sympathisers' in the last one year.

This trend is nothing but a sign of the times to come. The government's 9% growth bubble has ultimately burst. Globalisation, the path followed by the Indian ruling classes, will definitely sink the Indian Economy now that America is heading towards recession. All the government's blue-eyed policies such as NREGS or 6000 crore loan waiver for peasants have begun crashing. Inflation has become the new nightmare for the rulers. The parliamentary opposition is in a state of fragmentation & bogged down by the TINA syndrome.

In such a scenario it has been Social organisations and people's movements on the path of struggle, which are showing the true development alternative. The struggles at Nandigram, anti POSCO movement or that of the Chhattisgarh tribals against the TATA, Ruia sponsored 'Salwa Judum' are heroic examples. But obviously such alternatives are not palatable to the Indian ruling classes. So of late the government has begun branding Social activists and organisations as Naxals and there has been an increase in the arrest of such activists and revolutionaries.

But Repression begets Revolt. Voices of protest are being heard from many a quarter. In various forms of Press conferences, seminars and mass demonstrations many have begun questioning these deliberate arrests. It is as part of this wave of resistance, and inspiration from the path laid down by Bhagat Singh while in jail, that we political prisoners of the Nagpur Central Jail have decided to go on an Indefinite Hunger strike. At present a total of 13 (including a women inmate) such political prisoners have commenced this strike from 7th April 2008.

The letter Addressed to the Maharashtra Home Minister contains the following demands (Reasons are bracketted for better understanding)

1. Persons who were accused as 'Naxalites' and thereafter acquitted by the Judiciary should not be rearrested immediately after release from Prison. Both Shrimati Jayakka and Shri Mallesh Sailu should be immediately & unconditionally released. (Both Jayakka & Mallesh have been slapped with 110-110 charges with full compliance of the Jail authorities. This is the second time that Mallesh has been rearrested on release - once in Sept 2007 by Gadchiroli Police & now in April 2008 by the Gondra Police.)
2. The Maharashtra Police should immediately stop branding social organisations and activists as 'Naxalites' and 'Naxal sympathisers'. Many are being falsely accused as Naxal sympathisers and put into jail and also being denied bail. These accusations on social activists should be withdrawn & they should be unconditionally released.

3. All undertrial (accused) Naxalite prisoners should be immediately removed from Solitary Confinement (i.e. Anda Barrack, Punishment & Seperate Barracks, etc.) A common general Barrack should be provided for such undertrials. (Both these 3rd & 5th demands violate the famous principle of jurisprudence i.e. innocent until proven guilty. Solitary confinement according to the law should only be given to death sentenced convicts. Such Solitary confinement barracks lack entertainment & recreational facilities, again in violation of the Maharashtra Prison Manual.)

4. Prison interview timings should be extended to 30 minutes; Advocates should be allowed open interviews (without grill) and eatables should be permitted to be given at interviews. A facility for a telephone should be given in the Barracks. (Such facilities are already in implementation in many jails throughout India, but absent in the Maharashtra prisons.)
5. All undertrial prisoners (especially accused Naxalites & IPC 302 prisoners) should not be compulsorily made to wear the prison dress.
6. IPC 110 should be scrapped which has become a tool by the Police department to harass the common people. (This IPC article commonly called 'chapee case' is being used on numerous urban unemployed youth and on many tribals in Gadchiroli and Gondia. With no jurisdiction of the law courts it has become a regular tool of oppression by the Maharashtra police.)

The Prison authorities similar to their counterparts in the Police department have reacted to our hunger strike with even more curbs. Initially our strike notice letter was not being accepted because it was collectively signed. Now our postal letters and interviews with our family members are being denied (All under archaic rules of the Maharashtra Prison Manual drafted by the British). Ever since we have been on strike no medical officer has even checked our body weight or Blood pressure. The true face of oppression is ever more apparent in times of struggle.

We appeal to the numerous struggling social organisations and activists and democratic ~~to~~ intellectuals, teachers, journal ~~ists~~, etc ~~to~~ to support this our strike in whatever way possible. Being in jail our voices are regularly attempted to be stifled. In such a situation it is the support from these sections which would greatly help in getting our just demands implemented.