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Special Report

Tarapur Leak

Only the tip of the iceberg!

ENRON

Swadeshi is
no answer
to
imperialism!

KANSHI RAM'S DRAMA:

Time
to reject
the politics of
backwardness

A monthly that challenges the ideas of the ruling classes.

The views expressed by the authors do not necessarily represent those of the editorial board.

ENRON: part 2

Swadeshi is no answer to imperialism!

"Enron is going.. Enron is staying... Enron is going.... Enron is staying...". This was the political see-saw which the swadeshi camp went through last fortnight, as different SS and BJP leaders sent the most confounding and contradictory signals to the public on the Enron question. The contradictory signals are the signs of not just suicidal factionalism within the two parties that constitute the alliance but also the serious constraints and compulsions which trap the alliance.

First, is the promise made by the alliance that it will immediately scrap the project once it comes into power. Second, is the mass base the alliance enjoys in a section of the people who believe that "this is our government" and hence will implement all its promises. Third, is the fact that the swadeshi platform has systematically been popularised by the RSS and the Swadeshi Jagran Manch who will completely lose face if their own government capitulates to Enron. Fourth, is the fact that the alliance will once again have to face the electorate within the next twelve months for the Lok Sabha elections. Fifth, is the fact that Mr. Bal Thackeray ever careful about his public postures is hell bent on ensuring that it does not appear as if the BJP wants to scrap the Enron project while the SS leadership wants it to continue. Infact, Mr. Bal

Thackeray would rather like to carve for himself the role of the most radical swadeshi since Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It is for all these reasons that the alliance cannot be seen to be capitulating to Enron. Unless Enron provides a face-saving compromise, this government can only allow the Enron project to continue at its own peril.

The last fortnight has also seen the Parliamentary Left and the JD desperately trying to compete with the RSS and the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) for the swadeshi platform. It is a fact that on the Enron question there is not an iota of difference between the right-wing RSS and the left-wing CPI-CPM. If you read carefully the articles and the arguments put forward by the ideologues of the SJM and the Parliamentary Left, you will not be able to differentiate one from the other. Infact, all the Parliamentary Left can do is to prove that it is more swadeshi than the SJM, until someone reminds them of what Jyoti Basu is doing on his foreign jaunts. This pathetic state of tailing the swadeshi platform of the RSS is not just confined to the Parliamentary Left but also extends to sections of the Revolutionary Left and democratic forces, despite the radical phraseology they employ. The reason for this is that, these forces refuse to address themselves to the fundamental question thrown up by all these projects. The Enron question is not just a question of videshi vs

swadeshi, foreign vs Indian, imperialism vs nationalism. The question is much deeper. The question is, how come hundreds of projects like Enron are being signed everyday, not by a military dictatorship but "representative governments"? The East India Company was invited and welcomed into the country by maharajas and nawabs who were unelected, unaccountable. How come, the modern day East India companies like Enron are being invited by those who have the "mandate of the people"? It is one thing for the people to understand how a country's sovereignty is mortgaged to the imperialist forces by dictators and monarchs. But what is one to say about a country being turned into a neo-colony by "elected governments"? Therefore the Enron question is not just a question of foreign vs Indian. It is a question of exposing and challenging this "democracy" that allows the peoples will to be castrated and subjugated to the financiers on Wall Street and the calculations of the multinationals. As long as the question is confined to only that of foreign vs Indian, there is no option but to tail the Swadeshi platform of the RSS. It is only when the issue is extended to challenge the political system, that the question of revolutionary democracy can be put on the agenda. For if parliamentary democracy itself is the vehicle for the neo-colonialism of the country, then what the people should struggle for, is the replacement of this par-

liamentary democracy by revolutionary democracy. The role of the revolutionary democratic forces is therefore to give the movement the slogans which can put the searchlight on the political system.

In the last issue of VOPA we had explained and argued how the movement launched by the local people against Enron had thrown up such a slogan. The essence of this slogan consists of **the right of the Gram Sabhas to finally approve or veto any project**. We had explained why it is important to uphold and defend the right of the Gram Sabhas, which includes the entire village population, to be the final decision makers in any project — foreign or Indian. The Gram Sabha represents a direct form of democracy as it is a body which allows the vote of every man, woman and youth to be counted. When it comes to deciding about projects, we should demand this form of direct democracy. This direct democracy will be a greater obstacle to the multinationals than the present indirect democracy where “elected representatives” have no qualms about selling the interests of the people and the country.

This was once again proved during the last fortnight, when as many as three chief ministers from West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, simultaneously went scrounging round the capitals of the West, in order to invite foreign multinationals into their states. All the three chief ministers belong to parties which are trying to prove that nobody is as swadeshi as themselves. These three CMs signed hundreds of MOUs with foreign companies for projects in their states. Have any of these CMs consulted the gram panchayats, leave alone the gram sabhas, where these projects are going

to be located? Manohar Joshi the SS chief minister of Maharashtra promised foreign companies cheap land if they came to Maharashtra. Has he consulted the people whose lands and livelihoods he is mortgaging to the multinationals? The answer to all these questions is a big NO. Under the present system of parliamentary democracy, they have no duty whatsoever to consult the people affected by these projects.

Now just for a moment imagine what would happen if they had to consult the people, or if the Gram Sabhas had the final right to approve or veto a project. Could CMs like Jyoti Basu be able to sign MOUs left, right and centre. Obviously not. Right from what type of development, whose development, what type of project, who manages the project, etc. would have to be planned from bottom upwards. The masses, and not profits would have to be placed at the centre of planning and development. But this process is anathema to imperialism and capitalism. It is a fetter for its growth, which demands that humans are turned into disposable commodities at the altar of profits. It is for this reason that our most ardent swadeshi leaders will never accept the right of the Gram Sabhas to finally approve or veto a project.

The East India Company was invited and welcomed into the country by maharajas and nawabs who were unelected, unaccountable. How come, the modern day East India companies like Enron are being invited by those who have the “mandate of the people”?

What we are saying was proved just a few days ago on the floor of the Goa assembly. The Goa Gram Panchayat Act empowers the village panchayat the right to give or withhold the no objection certificate for any building plans within its area. The Kerim village gram panchayat had refused to provide the Thapar DuPont project with this certificate. This power, however meagre was fully exploited by the mass movement to throw out Thapar DuPont from Goa. As a result of this, the Goa assembly witnessed a heated discussion on this power enjoyed by gram panchayats. The attack on this wee little power was launched by the leader of the opposition Dr. Kashinath Jalmi who questioned how Goa was supposed to develop if gram panchayats continued to enjoy such powers. He charged that with this power, each village had become a separate republic, free to decide the state's industrial policy. Now it is important to remember that Dr. Jalmi is the leader of the MGP which is electorally allied to both the BJP and the SS — staunch so-called swadeshis. More interesting was the reply given by the CM, Mr. Pratap Singh Rane. The CM agreed that this power had enabled the village to become a state within a state. Just imagine, one teeny weeny right and the whole state government is threatened, while the entire industrial policy of such a state government is in peril. It is for this reason that all the parliamentary parties will unanimously unite to rid Goa of such rights.

Internationalism

If revolutionary democracy is one pillar of our platform to fight the penetration of imperialism, then internationalism is the other pillar of this platform. Internationalism is just the opposite of Swadeshi or economic nationalism. Swadeshi

is nationalism in words but globalisation in deeds as the experience of all the swadeshis in power is proving. What then do we mean by having an internationalist outlook while fighting imperialism? To understand this we have to grasp the two processes that are taking place in the economic system today.

The first process is the development at lightening speed of a world economy which respects no national boundaries. With each passing day, purely local or national commodities are disappearing and are being replaced by "international commodities". The raw materials, the energy, the technology, the machinery, the work force, etc. to manufacture these commodities come not from one area but from thousands of different places spread out throughout the globe. Never has the division of labour become so international as it is becoming today.

And yet, there is also a contradictory process at work. The development of the world economy is fettered by the imperialism and nationalism. It is fettered by imperialism's vicious drive for super profits and the desperate struggle of various national bourgeoisies for a share of these profits.

What is the result of these fetters? Firstly, We have a world economy but no international monetary system. Instead what we have is a system of floating exchange rates, rigged by currency speculators who can overnight plunge national currencies into crisis and who can milk off billions of dollars through just speculating on currencies. Such a monetary system cannot promote equitable world trade and instead exacerbates the unequal trade relations between the developed and developing countries.

Secondly, we have a world economy which for the first time

is dominated not by industrial capital but by financial capital. This financial capital originates from credit-financing and gives rise to the portfolio economy which comprises of stocks, bonds, futures, etc. To understand the domination of finance capital over industrial capital, let us look at the US economy. At the end of 1990, industrial capital used \$ 16.2 trillion in the form of plant, equipment, inventories, etc for production. At the same time, the US portfolio economy had accumulated \$ 27.5 trillion of financial assets in the form of stocks, bonds, bank accounts, etc. The parasitical form of this economy can be imagined if we remember that financial capital appropriates the bulk of surplus value created by the workers while playing no role in production. The domination of international finance capital over the world economy can be seen in the debt crisis which is hemorrhaging the third world countries. Between 1982 and 1990, total resource flows to developing countries amounted to \$ 927 billion. On the other hand, during the same period, developing countries remitted in debt service alone to the creditor countries a record \$ 1345 billion. Thus the developing countries were bled to the extent of \$ 418 billion.

Thirdly, we have a world economy completely dominated by global corporations that operate integrated production networks stretching over several countries. These corporations are beyond the control of any national state and instead wield immense power over the national states in which their operations are located. Astronomical profits are siphoned not just legally but through over invoicing and under invoicing. More than a third of world trade is intracompany transactions between these global

corporations and their subsidiaries. We have global corporations but no global state to regulate them. We have finance capital flitting from one country to another, causing catastrophes like the recent Mexico crisis, and yet no world government to regulate these flows and outflows.

Fourthly, we have a sizable section of the world economy devoted to the production of arms and the perpetuation of national hatred and national wars. The most dangerous nuclear materials are coming into the international black market which can blow up the whole planet. This war industry is an intrinsic part of the imperialist economy and one of its most lucrative source of profits. It threatens to destroy not only the world economy but our very planet.

Thus we have the rapid development of a world economy — but also a world and an economy that is perched at the edge of the precipice. It is a world economy that is engendering mass hunger in the midst of plenty. It is a world economy that nurtures wars and violence. It is an economy that is breeding mass unemployment, ecological degradation, social madness. And yet, the way forward is not to turn the clock back from the development of the world economy. For not only is this nearly impossible but also because nothing short of barbarism and fascism can make this possible. The swadeshi slogan in its purest form, is nothing but the retreating back from the interconnected world economy and its replacement by autarkic and isolated national economic units. It is an ideal which cannot be realised in practice and wherever realised even in an emasculated form, is the opposite of an ideal. It is impossible

to fight imperialism by struggling to create a walled national economy. The alternative to imperialism is not the creation of national ghettos. The alternative to imperialism is not the rejection of the world economy. The world economy itself is ripening the conditions for the struggle against imperialism, by driving to its ultimate limits the contradiction between the socialised character of the means of production and its private form of appropriation; by pushing towards breaking point the contradiction between the colossal powers of the productive forces and the anarchy of production and distribution. The world economy itself is creating the forces for the struggle against imperialism — massive unemployment of the organised work force in the imperialist and developing countries, massive insecurities and shocks for the petit bourgeois world wide, the pauperisation of large sections of the peasantry, the bulldozing of small and medium capitalists.

It is the task of the revolutionary democratic forces in India to be part and parcel of the international struggle against imperialism, rather than tail their bourgeoisies under dubious slogans like *swadeshi*. We have to become an intrinsic part of the international struggle for the cancellation of all third world debt. We have to be in the forefront in opposing all forms of national hatred, national subjugation and national wars. We have to uphold the right of local communities world wide to finally approve or veto any big project. It is only then, can we offer our people a vision that is not only internationalist, that is not only modern, not only one that is based on justice — but also one that inspires them to become the inheritors of the earth.

12th July 1995

Kanshi Ram's drama:

Time to reject the politics of backwardness!

AMITA KANEKAR

Eighteen months ago, petty bourgeois liberals had rejoiced at the victory of the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party alliance in the UP assembly elections, as a victory of the forces of social change over the forces of Hindutva. For these dreamers, who had upheld the SP-BSP's successful Backwards-Muslims-SCs electoral formula as a 'true alternative' to the Congress and BJP, the crowning of Mayavati in the state last month is a sharp lesson in bourgeois politics. The lesson is important because the same bullshit is being peddled to justify the present alliance-building activities of the National Front-Left Front. The NF-LF, for the third time no less, is hoping to come to power at the centre by 'uniting the forces of social justice' — and in their pre-election shopping spree this includes practically every cat and dog outside the Congress and the BJP. The tragedy is that after 2 disastrous experiences with these characters and their same rotten strategy in '77 and '89, India may be fated to witness a third. JD leader Biju Patnaik summed up their present game-plan when he recently exulted, "The south is all but sewn up. Once the lady (Jayalalitha) comes across it will be complete. And let the dust settle down in Uttar Pradesh, then both the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party will come with us. The game will then be over for Rao and Advani."

Well, for those willing to learn, the UP tamasha presents devastating proof of the fact that this kind of 'third force' — created through totally unprincipled electoral alliances between all kinds of casteist powerbrokers — is the last thing on earth that will stem the rise of the BJP.

Just one and a half years after the electoral triumph of the SP-BSP alliance and the formation of their government, both the government and the alliance have collapsed. In a deal that reeked of the most degenerate bourgeois realpolitik, the BSP, with a strength of 50-odd MLAs in a house of 425, has come to power with the support of a 176-strong BJP. An 'anti-manu' party, claiming to represent the most deprived and oppressed sections of the Indian masses, has come to power sitting in the lap of its much-accursed foe of yesterday, a party whose membership comprises some of the most reactionary feudal elements in the country. This alliance between those who

the BSP had called "a party of rank communalists and manuvadis" and those whom the BJP had called "a party of thugs and criminals", was essential, say both sanctimoniously, in order to end Mulayam's "goondaraj". What is unsaid is that any party with a grain of faith in democracy would have called for elections after the fall of Mulayam. But then that is only for those with the guts to face the masses!

Strange bedfellows? Not at all!

Some bourgeois papers have called the coronation of Mayavati the creation of 'India's first Dalit government headed by India's first Dalit woman CM'. A Dalit government? A Dalit chief minister? Thousands of Dalits all over the country would be the first to spit upon this government if they had half a chance! All Mayavati's bombast and all the BJP's saccharine assurances cannot hide the fact that this government is a puppet government, a dummy dancing to the tune of a party the hands of whose members are even today stained with the blood of Dalits. Even under the SP-BSP government, UP continued to lead the country in the number of serious atrocities against scheduled castes and tribes. Can this government — with its strings firmly gripped by the party whose office-bearers were involved in the most recent massacre of Dalits in Kadi, Gujarat — end them?

The situation speaks for itself. And hence many liberal writers have taken to lamenting over the certain castration of the BSP's Dalit agenda by its overbearing and Brahminical supporter. The question is, even prior to its latest friendship, did the BSP have ANY agenda at all vis-a-vis the mass of common Dalits? Only the politically blind would call the BSP a party rep-

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resenting Dalits. A lumpenised and personality cult-based party from the start, it has never claimed any principles or policies beyond anti-manuvadi sloganeering. In a situation where the country's Dalit masses are among the hardest hit by the government's globalisation and liberalisation drive, where even political eunuchs WITHIN the ruling parties are condemning their own governments' economic policies, the BSP has never pretended any interest in such matters. And if it does not even talk of alternatives, the policies it will implement will be by default those already in existence —

though those implementing them may include a few more Dalit bureaucrats and police officers than before!

Victory for Dalit Brahmins

The rank opportunism displayed by the BSP is not unique. It flows directly from the bankruptcy of the Dalit leadership today. It flows from the fact that the Dalit movement has allowed itself to be led by leaders who shout against Brahminism from the rooftops, but uphold it themselves; who in fact CANNOT oppose or combat Brahminism, because they do not recognise its essence.

The essence of brahminism is not birth in a Brahmin caste. That is what it appeared to be 50 years ago, and that is what these leaders still target today. But Brahminism has changed its form over time, adjusting to and surviving the end of feudalism. Today in the era of global capitalism, Brahminism is a global outlook which does not ostracise a person according to his birth, but according to his work. It is an outlook that subjugates physical labour to mental. It preaches a superior position — socially, economically and politically — for the thinkers, and a lowly position for those who work with their hands. The two are mutually exclusive. The thinker does not need to labour, not even to do his own personal work, and the labourer is denied the right to think, even about his own future. The thinkers comfortably decide about the world, the labourers mindlessly build the world. And not only do the former look with contempt upon the latter — the masons, the cooks, the plumbers, the sweepers, the peasants — but the latter too look down upon themselves. This is the essence of modern Brahminism. This is

why though the growth of capitalism in India has turned many twice-born into 'Dalits' slaving in factories and fields, and a few Dalits into 'Brahmins' working in offices and universities, the ideology is still going strong!

Dalit leaders however refuse to recognise the adaptation of Brahminism to capitalism. Because to oppose this will mean opposing the capitalist system itself — the system which constantly pauperises the masses; which reduces them to valueless lowly cogs in the wheels of production, or to beggars; which especially denies them any control over their lives. But these leaders have themselves made it in the capitalist world. When they have entered the ranks of the Brahmins, the last thing they want to do is to rock the capitalist boat. All they want is a larger share of the cake, which can only come with political power. Hence they scream against a form of Brahminism that is a century old, and preach to the masses that the only way things can change is if THEY, the thinkers, enter the corridors of power — the question of the unlettered toiling Dalit masses entering the political arena doesn't even arise. The masses are only fit to become votebanks and to await the crumbs that may be thrown their way!

Such backward caste-based electoral wins have led to a certain assertiveness on the part of those who had been for centuries subjugated, a self-assertion that causes a much-needed churning in society. This has been a definite gain. However the negative fallout has been the spread of narrow caste chauvinism, as well as the growth of a small lumpenised elite within the caste. The chauvinism prevents the rank and

file of Dalit activists from uniting with toilers from upper castes, it prevents them from taking the leadership in a struggle to smash the present system, it prevents them from recognising the parasitic Dalit Brahmins leading them.

This is all such 'caste victories' achieve — for the masses. For the winner however, the 'caste leader', the 'owner' of the block of votes, the opportunities are immense. For, all these so-called caste and sub-caste leaders are in truth caste brokers and pimps, ready to sell their political largess, i.e. their block of votes to the highest bidder. And bidders from among the exploiters and their parties are not lacking.

The BSP's recent achievement is thus not a blow to today's Dalit movement. It is in fact the culmination of the line of the Dalit leaderships — to 'ally' with bourgeois parties, in return for hefty monetary compensation of course, but in the name of 'concessions', 'protection' and other crumbs for the masses. Maharashtra has already had more than its share of such bankrupt Dalit politics, one of the most infamous being the RPI (Athavle) alliance with the Congress party. So what if Dalit kotwal Ambadas Savne was killed for daring to step inside a temple, so what if 130 tribals were killed BY THE POLICE for asking the minister to meet their morcha — the Marathwada university renaming represented Cabinet Minister Ramdas Athavle's great victory for the Dalits! The BSP at least never pretended anything higher — it has been interested solely and openly in electoral hustling from the start.

In states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, where semi-feudal conditions and the old rotten caste stranglehold still

persist, caste divides can be exploited to the hilt, especially in elections. Only here can parties not just run election campaigns purely on the issue of representing the backward castes, but also come to power on that block vote. The ideologues of the NF, backed enthusiastically by the LF, hail these backward caste-based parties as the 'forces of social justice', refusing to see that while these parties may not be backed by the big monopoly bourgeoisie like the Congress-BJP are, they are nevertheless backed by various other exploiter interests. Witness the incongruity of so-called Dalit Messiah Kanshi Ram's closest 'friend' being playboy industrialist Jayant Malhotra. Malhotra is the BSP's 'man' in the Rajya Sabha, a man who wouldn't know and couldn't care less about the ABC of India's caste system. Does Malhotra represent the BSP in parliament, or is the BSP furthering the interests of Malhotra? The answer is obvious.

Far from exposing the fundamental principle of parliamentary democracy — of keep-

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ing the toiling masses completely alienated from power — the caste brokers use the secrecy and absence of accountability in the system to further the interests of those whom they really represent. For example, look at the SP-BSP government of the past 18 months, which implemented the Narasimha Rao government's new economic policies without any qualms. Who will benefit from the spate of company closures, privatisations, foreign investments, burgeoning exports and cuts in public spending in UP? For the masses, i.e. the majority of OBCs and dalits, all this will mean loss of their land to big projects, loss of their jobs, soaring inflation, and a decline in their already low standard of living. But for Indian collaborators, and labour and services contractors, the whole business is a bonanza — and no doubt Mulayam ensured that a few Yadavs got some of the loot. Forget economic issues, even on the burning question of atrocities against the Dalits, the SP-BSP government could not deliver. Mayavati herself, at her first press conference after being sworn in, reeled off government statistics to show how the number of attacks against Dalits had spiraled in "Mulayam's goondaraj".

Intrinsic instability

Finally, the intrinsic instability of the SP-BSP and the NF kind of alliance stems from the fact that, the component groups have no common purpose or programme save that of coming to power. One reason for this is of course the overwhelming personal ambition and greed of the leaders, who even after selling themselves, are always willing to change their allegiances for newer and better buyers.

But besides this, is the problem of conflicting interests

of different exploiter sections within the alliance. Within single parties like the Congress, the BJP and the SS, fights between party members who represent different exploiters are settled at least temporarily through the institution of the Supremo, or other forms of the High Command. Witness for example, the present tussle in the Shiv Sena between the Hindujas (represented by chief minister Manohar Joshi) and the Ambanis (by Balasaheb). But in the khichdi of alliance politics, there can never be a universally-accepted leader to settle such issues. With every leader having sold 'his' block of votes somewhere or the other, the alliance gets pulled in two or three or a hundred different directions at the same time. Even before power is achieved it starts giving at the seams. It is just a matter of time before faction leaders get swallowed up by the bigger fish in the sea. The Congress has been doing it for years. Mulayam did it to individual opposition MLAs. Now the BJP and the BSP played the same trick on Mulayam.

Such opportunistic and transient alliances are supposed to challenge the BJP! When will our dreamers see that these antics, coupled with the decline of the Congress, are the best thing to happen for the BJP? One of the BJP's most powerful public images has become that of the only national party that can really implement that Congressi promise — of providing a stable government. In fact the blatant horse trading, in which 'representatives of the people' of the BSP had to be kidnapped and hidden from public view by their own party, to keep them from selling themselves, are creating mass disgust for the electoral system as a whole. In the absence of a real political alternative, this

mass disgust has become the main weapon in the armoury of those sections of the ruling classes who would like to see the country move towards a presidential or any other form of even less accountable government.

To conclude...

Thus, besides mass cynicism about democracy that strengthens the hands of the exploiters, the sole result of backward caste-based parliamentary politics has been the creation of an elite in all the castes, and a greater sharing of the goodies among all the caste elites. But was this the aim of the struggle of the masses?

The essence of the Dalit struggle against Brahminism was not for Dalits to become as rich or as corrupt as the upper caste elite, it was not in order to create a Dalit elite. It was to build a society which will recognise the sweat and the toil of the worker and the peasant as the very basis of human society. It aimed to destroy the unbridgeable chasm between the thinkers and the toilers erected by Brahmanism. It aimed to stop the drain of the country's resources to the West, facilitated by this parasitic West-aping elite; to use these resources instead for the development of the masses. But as long as the Dalit and other mass movements continue to allow themselves to be led by caste brokers, nothing will change. The struggle of the masses will be sacrificed at the altar of political expediency, and the masses themselves will remain powerless votebanks. In short, not just one, but many more Mayavatis may come to power, but their rule will NEVER mean the rule of the Dalits!

What is to be done with KHAIRNAR?

Khairnar has proved to be a double-edged sword for the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance. If any individual can be said to have brought down the Congress government in Maharashtra, and put the alliance on the throne, it was Govind Khairnar. It was largely his attack on Sharad Pawar that enabled the SS-BJP to successfully target the corruption of the Congress government in the assembly elections. Not surprisingly, many believed that the new government would immediately reinstate him, as the BJP had promised. But don't forget, we are talking of a "responsible", "mature" government now. Those very qualities of Khairnar that made him so useful to the SS-BJP alliance before — his readiness to expose and fight dirty deeds in the highest places — seem to make the new government rather uncomfortable now.

Chief minister Manohar Joshi says that the question of Khairnar's future lies in the jurisdiction of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, not that of the state government. Mr. Joshi chooses to forget that, according to the BMC Act, the state government can intervene to cancel, reverse or stay any decision taken by the corporation. When Sharad Pawar's Congress ruled the state, the Shiv Sena and the BJP blamed all the corruption in the BMC on him. Was not Pawar held responsible (and correctly so) for the spate of illegal constructions in the BMC's jurisdiction? Why then is the new state government sud-

denly so coy about THIS BMC matter?

The real reason for this coyness emerged recently when Manohar Joshi declared that Khairnar would be reinstated only on condition that he stop "politicking".

As usual, it was the Shiv Sena supremo, who expressed things most directly from the start and reiterated his position after the elections.

"I do not need him (Khairnar) at all. He tried to damage us... I firmly believe that once he sits there, he has no right whatsoever to criticise political happenings. Government servants can have no right to criticise the prime minister or the chief minister. We may be scoundrels, tomorrow Manohar Joshi will turn out to be a scoundrel, yet such people have no right to criticise us..." (Lokprabha, 31 March 1995). Here lies the crux of the matter.

Why is Khairnar the crusader suddenly an untouchable for his own backers? The reason is simple. Khairnar was of immense use for the elections. But his "politicking" broke the most important rule of this state machinery — official secrecy. The Official Secrets Act, one among the many British laws preserved by our rulers post-1947, ensures that the Indian public remains in the dark about all the activities of the government — national and international treaties and contracts, expenditures, everything. The Act prohibits all 'public servants' and 'representatives of

the people' from disclosing anything to the people. But Khairnar took the information he had access to as a public servant, straight to the public. Unlike those honest civil servants who struggle silently not to involve themselves in the filthy goings-on, Khairnar publicly exposed the rotten heart of the system. And nothing could be more dangerous to those in power, and those whom they really represent.

The BJP, after all the meetings it organised for Khairnar prior to the elections, first chose to maintain complete silence on the issue. Now it has come out with a brilliant plan unveiled by 'a senior minister', according to The Times of India (evidently nobody has the guts to own up as the author), of a deal whereby Khairnar would be reinstated if he agreed to resign in a week — i.e. "leave with honour"!

Well, how the alliance government gets out of this contradiction will soon be apparent. One thing is certain — in these matters all the bourgeois parties are in alliance!

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Special Report

Tarapur Leak

Only the tip of the iceberg!

The recent radioactive leak from the Tarapur Atomic Power Station has brought to the fore important questions that we can only ignore at our peril. A shocking expose from the power station site by CHERYL KANEKAR AND CHRISSIE D'COSTA

"We don't mind if our lands are taken for the sake of the country's development. But give us some other source of livelihood then. Treat us as human beings, at least! What kind of development is this that leaves us to rot this way?"

— Mohan More, sarpanch of Ghiwli village on the periphery of the Tarapur atomic energy plant.

India's nuclear energy programme is a major prestige issue for the establishment, a symbol that India is next to none (especially Pakistan, where our ultra-nationalists are concerned) in progress and development. But who pays the price for this development and who really develops? The Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) shows glaringly that it is the local people and the environment who pay a heavy price, which they continue to pay years after reactors become non-productive.

All nuclear reactors have a life of only 20 to, at the most, 50 years, after which their productivity falls to nearly nothing. Yet they continue to contaminate the environment, for though it is technically possible to seal off the waste, it is very expensive. And in an age where money talks, governments worldwide have preferred to dump the waste cheaply and

hope the local people will shut up, rather than clean up the mess they have made. Some nuclear physicists even say that there is no way to completely halt the effects of a reactor on the environment. Thus the people living around the Hanford nuclear plant in the U.S.A., which was shut down in 1988, are now experiencing high rates of thyroid and breast cancer and deformed growth in animals, due to the huge amounts of radioactive materials leaking out of the plant.

Add to this the Indian ruling classes, for whom the common people's lives are cheap; the totally corrupt bureaucrats, politicians and even scientists, who cannot see beyond short-term personal gains; and the imperialists' control over technology; and the result is the horror story that is Tarapur and all the other nuclear reactors in India.

Tarapur was set up by General Electric of the U.S.A. for the Indian government, which took a loan of \$80 million in foreign exchange from USAID for it and will be paying back the loan out of public money upto the year 2006 (Anumukti, May 1994). GE has the record of having built at least a dozen reactors all over the world which have developed cracks in the reactor core wall, which surrounds the radioactive

fuel rods, and such cracks, according to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, can lead to the meltdown of the reactor and the release of its radioactive contents directly into the environment (The Times Of India, 4.8.94). Tarapur's initial completion date of October 1968 was postponed to May 1969, because cracks were found in some of its steel components. Six years later, its production of power had to be reduced from 380 MW to 320 MW since leaks found in its secondary steam generators could not be repaired. The production of the two units was again lowered in 1984 and 1985 to capacities of 160 MW each, again because of irreparable leaks in the secondary steam generators. Foreign technology, zindabad! And thus Tarapur, whose life of 20 years is already over, has earned the reputation of being the world's most polluting operating nuclear power station (Anumukti).

The U.S.A. was earlier supplying enriched uranium to the plant, but stopped in 1974, when India first tested a nuclear weapon in Pokharan. Though France supplied uranium for a while, it too has stopped now because of India's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and declare that she is not testing nuclear weapons. Today the plant uses

indigenously produced mixed oxide, which gives much higher radiation doses to the workers in the plant than uranium. A nuclear physicist, who wished to remain anonymous, told VOPA that Tarapur is not unique here. India's entire nuclear energy programme is based on sub-standard foreign technology, because India, not being a signatory to the NPT, cannot deal with top global companies and has to buy from third-rate manufacturers. To top this off is the immense corruption involved in the awarding of contracts, as bureaucrats use public money to land fat kickbacks for themselves, getting low-quality machinery and evading quality control tests, making every reactor in the country a den of danger.

Nuclear Energy — Turning Villages into Rural Slums

As for the villages whose lands have been acquired for the project and which border it, the Tarapur plant, far from bringing progress and development, is reducing them to small hells of unemployment, poverty and pollution. The villagers of Ghiwli, Akkarpatti and Popharan in Palghar taluka have had one demand for several years now, "Relocate our villages. Give us land for the land we lost, or guaranteed jobs, and get us out of here!" The recent leakage of radioactive and other toxic chemicals from the waste immobilisation plant at Tarapur has only strengthened their resolve to fight for relocation.

Ghiwli is in the worst situation. The village, a cluster of small mud huts with hardly any plants and trees around, is a depressing sight, standing out starkly from the neighbouring villages with its bleak greyness. Besides the two small patches of field on either side of the

approach road, it is surrounded on all sides by the empty land of the Tarapur project, the border of which comes right upto the outermost row of houses of the village.

The villagers told us that they first realised something was wrong when the water of a well near the border of the Tarapur land suddenly rose, from a level of one and a half foot to three feet and then to six feet, even though there was not a drop of rain in the area. At the same time, ten to twelve cattle died between June 10 and June 13, after drinking the water of a stream into which the plant's waste water flowed. That was when they began writing to the BARC asking whether toxins had leaked and to the tehsildar of Thane demanding a complete relocation of the village. At first they got no reply. Only when the issue hit press headlines did they find out that a leak had been discovered in the plant in April 1995, but no warning had been given to them at all.

The residents told us that the project came with promises of jobs for at least one person in each family and free water, paid for by the BARC, from the nearby Sakhara dam, since the land to be acquired contained 13 of the village wells. The villagers were encouraged by the example of Delwadi, a village whose land was acquired by TAPS in 1962, which was shifted to a nearby location, with small rooms, water supply, electricity and roads set up for it and each family getting two acres of land. However, the story was very different when the land of Ghiwli was acquired for the project.

The law requires that if 70% or more of the land of any village is acquired, the entire village must be shifted. Except for the fields of one or two vil-

lagers, all the land of Ghiwli has been acquired for the project. Yet the government did not bother to shift the village or give the villagers new land to till. Instead, it avoided its own law by acquiring the land in three phases, first taking 30%, then 25% and so on. The approximately 2,000 people who lost their land were compensated at the rate of Rs 12,000 per acre or just Rs 3 per square metre, while the 1,000 or so landless labourers, who were equally dependent on the land for their living, were not compensated at all. Most of the men and women of the village today are contract labourers, getting work every now and then at the M.I.D.C. estate at Boisar 14 kilometres away, for Rs 25 or Rs 30 a day. Only about 40 people were given jobs at TAPS.

The pasture land for cattle and even the land used for toilet purposes has been taken over, while no toilets have been provided. Thus the people have had to break the fencing to graze their cattle and even have to themselves trespass regularly. Every rainy season, oily water from the streams on the project land floods the village, leaving a peculiar smell, said the villagers.

Since May 1995, the water from the Sakhara dam pipeline stopped entirely. When the sarpanch wrote to the dam authorities inquiring about this, he got a letter saying that the water bill, which the BARC had promised to pay, had not been paid for 7 years, and until the Rs 5 lakhs were collected, the water supply would be cut off. A letter to the BARC got the response that no such promise had been made. Thus the villagers had to start using the water of the two wells left. Now that one well is contaminated, they have to use water from a

dirty well or trudge for an hour daily to get water from Tarapur village or from the SRP quarters on the project land, where the SRP men allow them to take water from their supply. Pranita More said that if they drank or touched the well water, their throats and hands itched, and children who played in the streams developed boils on their legs. Anusuya Patil, a member of the gram panchayat, said, "We challenge all the TAPS officials and the district authorities who say the area is safe to live in — just wash your hands in this stream and sit down to eat in front of us, then we'll believe you. But here, even when the TAPS people come to take water for testing, they don't themselves dip their hands into the stream, but ask the children playing nearby to collect the water for them!"

In Akkarpatti too, a village with a population of 1,200, about 80% of the land has been acquired for the Tarapur 3 and 4 units, according to the sarpanch, Manisha Churi, and the rest of the land is to be taken over soon. In 1983 and 1991, the villagers were forcibly made to sign away their lands at gunpoint by the government, which brought a huge contingent of SRP and police men into the village and spread terror. The land is lying empty today, since the plants have not yet been set up. In 1991, the villagers were compensated at the incredibly low rates of Rs 15,000 per acre for orchard land, Rs 12,000 per acre for agricultural land and Rs 8,000 for grasslands, ie. not more than Rs 3.30 per square metre. Only about 25% of the men got jobs in BARC or TAPS. In almost every family, two or three brothers have left for Bombay in search of work, while several families have moved out altogether and are probably now in the slums or on the streets of Bombay.

"We challenge all the TAPS officials and the district authorities who say the area is safe to live in — just wash your hands in this stream and sit down to eat in front of us, then we'll believe you."

Both Akkarpatti and Popharan have bumpy mud roads that turn to slush in the rains, sporadic electricity and rely on wells or tankers for water, even as new tarred roads and the Sakhara water pipeline laid especially for the power project pass close to them. In Popharan village, the former sarpanch, Thaksen Patil, said, "You'd never believe we are right next to a power project. We get very low voltage electricity about two days in a week. The poles and wire have never been repaired since 1974, when they were set up, though we have applied time and again. At least 15 poles will fall any day now." Manohar Churi of Akkarpatti said that every time the villagers applied for pipelines or roads or other facilities, they were told by the authorities that they would soon be shifted to another site, so there was no point setting up these facilities.

Pollution is a very real threat to both villages. The fisherfolk of Popharan already find that the fish they catch smells strange and is reduced in number because of the effluents poured into the sea by the

MIDC factories nearby. The former sarpanch of Akkarpatti, P N Kore, says that the trees around the village are not growing properly now, drying up for no apparent reason and dropping their fruits when just formed.

The villagers are angry that the TAPS hardly ever test the people's health or the surroundings, and, if ever it is done, the people are kept in the dark about the results. Only those who work in the plant are tested regularly for radioactivity. Sarpanch More of Ghiwli said that the only time a medical check-up was done in his village in the last 25 years was when the TAPS chief superintendent, Mr Bhasin, held a medical camp a year ago, where only about 200 people were checked and the results were never disclosed to the people. In the other two villages, there have been no medical check-ups for at least 5 years and no testing of the surroundings ever. "Area monitors" to check radioactivity levels of the environment have been set up on trees in Ghiwli, but again the people cannot understand them. Many of the villagers we met expressed fears that the food they eat, the water they drink and the fodder of their livestock is contaminated and they have no way of either confirming or dismissing their fears. Even now, after the leak, though the water is being tested by the AERB and by a team of Thane Zilla Parishad doctors, the people have not been medically checked at all.

In village after village, house after house, we heard the story of BARC's 1988 emergency drill. BARC later told the villagers that the drill aimed to show them what to do in case of an emergency. But they did not inform the gram panchayats about this and instead came

themselves to the villages and began announcing that a drill was on and that the people must tie handkerchiefs over their mouths when they heard the siren and leave fast. Not understanding what a drill was, the people panicked and thousands fled in terror. Tickets ran out at the Boisar railway station and pieces of ordinary paper were given as tickets. Trains and buses were so packed that several people fell out and died or were trampled to death. "With this record of the TAPS, how can we trust them?" ask the villagers.

And so the villagers of Akkarpatti have set up a Janata Prakalp Peedhit Samiti (Project-Affected People's Committee) along with the people of Popharan to negotiate the rehabilitation and press for their demand of land for land. The Shiv Sena supported their demands in the opposition and now that it is in power in the state, many people expect their demands to be met. But even if this does not happen, as Balwant Kore put it, "Today we are just trying to negotiate for our demands. But if that does not work, we'll fight."

Not only have these thousands of local people been deprived of their livelihoods and left to rot, the contract workers in the plants too can suffer painful deaths due to radioactivity, as far as the government is concerned. Nuclear physicists and several employees of BARC and TAPS confirmed that TAPS employs batches of contract workers for about two or three months each in even the most dangerous core area of the reactor. According to one physicist, this does not endanger the plant, since the workers are trained rigorously and monitored with cameras, but it does seriously endanger the workers' own health. The workers are

paid high wages according to the amount of time they work and, having no regular job, try to work as long as possible to earn more, which the plant authorities allow. Many workers have died of cancer due to the high doses of radiation they receive.

But then, this is the story of all "development" in India. Whether for nuclear projects, dams, canals or petrochemical projects, it is always tribals, peasants and workers who are booted off their lands, fired upon and paid starvation-level wages to "develop the nation".

The crucial question about nuclear energy is whether we need it at all. Are its benefits worth the devastation of the environment and people's lives it causes and the huge costs of cleaning up. The global rulers of today cannot face up to this question. When policies are being made in the interests of a small elite, whose highest ideal is "Quick profits for me NOW", when rivalry is so intense that competitors will do just anything to survive in the market, long-term issues like what kind of earth we want to leave behind us are last on the agenda.

As for the BARC, its response to criticism was typical. Some years ago, when BARC's safety violations were exposed in the press, the then director, Dr R Chidambaram, now chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), declared that the accusations against the BARC were an "international conspiracy to malign India's nuclear power programme". Now too the villagers are being accused of being traitors and international agents for raising their voices against the plant. Well, all one can say is that — with patriots like the AEC and the Indian government, who needs traitors?!

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court we will be well into the twenty-first century.

Thus is the rule of law administered. Without rules. Without laws. Oral instructions and whispers. Officers of the government, public servants daily doing the very opposite of what they are supposed to do. Nothing on record to incriminate anyone later. Everything hidden behind learned looking black coats and gowns, not to mention the foreign language in which the court proceedings are carried on so that the workers should never know or understand the immensity of the injustice.

Those who think that the rule of the jungle is found in the Chambal ravines or the jungles of Africa, should have a good look again at the genteel but deadly legal jungle of the government of India.

PS: The Supreme Court has now stayed the judgment of the Bombay High Court. So the workers, after all their expense and all their trouble, are back to square one for the next ... years!

This time Air India was represented by none other than Arun Jaitley, National Executive member of the country's main Opposition party, the BJP. It was this BJP office bearer who appealed against the High Court verdict, and so convincingly that the judges decided that the law of the land should not be implemented on behalf of the workers. Need one mention that most of the workers in question are Hindus, while all of them are citizens of this nation? What this says of the BJP's 'pro-Hindu', 'nationalist' and especially 'opposition' credentials hardly needs mentioning!

In a situation where many human rights activists, trade unionists, women's activists, environmentalists, etc. spend their lives trying to change and humanise the laws of the country, SATYAJIT BHATKAL provides a glimpse of how these laws, whenever they are supposed to favour the masses, are brazenly flouted by the very officials appointed to implement them.

Rule of Law or Law of the Jungle?

WE are told that this country is governed by laws enacted in accordance with the Constitution of India. We are told that the rule of law governs this country. But does it really?

Forget about the Chambal ravines, forget about the savage police barbarities in lock-ups. Anyone would admit that they are outside the purview of the rule of law. But what about the genteel and sophisticated bureaucrats in the ministries of the central government, the fat cat managers in the public sector, the labour commissioners, the oh-so-learned attorney generals and solicitor generals of the Republic of India — are they at least bound by the laws their government passes?

The proceedings in the final hearing of a group of writ petitions concerning contract workers provided an interesting insight to this question. It revealed how the officers of the central government flout its own laws with impunity, how the top legal officers of the government of India who have a constitutional duty to defend the rule of law, in practice abdicate this duty for the proverbial thirty pieces of silver. It revealed how the bureaucracy functions in a totally unaccountable fashion, each bureaucrat a law unto himself, running his own private empire as it were.

But first, a brief background to the case. The case

involved workmen doing sweeping and cleaning work for the International Airport Authority of India (IAAI). The workmen were doing the work regularly and the work is obviously essential to the functioning of the IAAI. Yet, the workers were employed through contractors who did not pay them even minimum wages, let alone bonus, provident fund, gratuity, ESIC or other legal dues. Worse, the contractors extracted fat haftas from the workmen and engaged in criminal malpractices of the worst kind.

Fortunately for the workers, they were covered by a notification of the central government issued under the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1971, passed allegedly to improve the lot of contract workers. The notification issued in 1976 by the central government on the advice of the Contract Labour (Central) Advisory Board, prohibited the use of contract labour for the work of sweeping and cleaning in the establishments of the central government such as the ports, airports, refineries, etc. In other words, this work had to be done by workmen directly employed by the establishment.

But did the central government follow its own notification? Not for a moment! Air India, Indian Airlines, the ports and all other central government establishments brazenly continued to employ contract

workers for this work. As a result, numerous workers filed writ petitions in various High Courts all over the country. But the various central government establishments came up with absurd defences to somehow frustrate the rights of the workers.

Air India as also the Airports Authority shamelessly claimed that since they were under the control of the state government and not the central government, the notification was not applicable to them!

This claim was quite correctly turned down by the Bombay High Court and the judgment was confirmed in appeal in 1990 — 14 years after the original notification was passed. Any government with the slightest respect for its own laws would have then absorbed the contract workmen. But the government did not have the slightest such respect, and the use of contract labour by the International Airport Authority for sweeping and cleaning work continued.

Now, if the Airport Authority illegally flouts the notification of the central government, the government is entitled, nay obliged, to take action against the erring officers. But the government did nothing of the sort. Instead, it encouraged the Airport Authority to brazenly flout its own laws. Hence the contract workers, the

poorest of the poor, were forced to engage in still more expensive litigation and to file yet another writ petition in the Bombay High Court asking to be absorbed by the IAAI.

This time, the IAAI's 'defense' was still more imaginative. Its first defense was that since the new airport terminal was set up after the 1976 notification, it was not covered by the notification. This of course is akin to saying that murders committed after the Indian Penal Code was passed are not punishable under the Code!

The second major 'defense' was even worse. The central government, on the advice of the then attorney general, G. Ramaswamy, had appointed a committee to determine whether the work of sweeping and cleaning is of a permanent nature. The committee came up with the incredible observation that the work went on for only a few hours every day and hence contract labour could be used for the job.

Since flights are being operated round the clock, the airport premises and the toilets need to be cleaned frequently all day long. In fact, **the Airport Authority's tenders for the work of sweeping and cleaning explicitly state that the work is required to be done in 3 shifts round the clock.** Yet, the very same officers responsible for the issue of the contracts lie to the government's committee and tell them that the work goes on for only a few hours; they both wink in unison and the patently corrupt committee agrees to believe this absurd lie.

Now the government was faced with a dilemma. What should they do with the committee's recommendation, since clearly the government was at least on paper bound by its

1976 notification, which has the status of law. This notification could be superseded by a fresh notification, but then some minister and some bureaucrat would be required to take the responsibility for the fresh notification legitimising the use of contract labour. In order to avoid taking such responsibility and to give at least a veil of legality to the government's actions, the government filed through the central labour commissioner, Padma Venkat-achalam, an absurd affidavit in court, stating that since the new committee had declared that contract labour could be employed for sweeping and cleaning, they were going ahead and doing so. In other words, the government claimed that the report of a committee had greater validity than its own law! An absurd argument to everyone's knowledge, but backed by the prestige of none other than the then attorney general of India, who is allegedly supposed to protect the legal interests of the people of India!

In any event, the petition came up for final hearing in April 1995, before a Division Bench of the Bombay High Court consisting of the acting chief justice M. L. Pendse and justice Arvind Savant. The IAAI was represented by Mr. Rafiq Dada, senior counsel and addi-

tional solicitor general of India, while the workers were represented by Indira Jaising.

The manner in which the additional solicitor general presented the case of the IAAI was shocking. A man occupying a public office of great prestige and power openly used it against the interests of the workers and the people of India for the benefit of the contractors and IAAI bosses.

His opening remarks were: "My Lord, I would like to set out the facts in this matter correctly (by implication the workers' counsel had not done so). My Lord, the IAAI had floated tenders for the award of various contracts for the new terminal in May 1992, at which time one of the petitioners in this petition filed a petition before this court and obtained an order restraining the award of these contracts. As a result, the new terminal was unable to open until October 1992 (then softly adding) without the use of contract labour." In other words, the suggestion was that the workers had held up the commissioning of a new airport terminal — as grave a crime as murder for many judges.

But the argument cut no ice with the Bench. They queried, "Can you tell us Mr. Solicitor General, on what basis are you claiming that the government has decided to retain the use of contract labour for this work?"

"My Lord, there is the affidavit of the central labour commissioner, Padma Venkat-achalam, stating that the government has decided to permit the use of contract labour for sweeping and cleaning work."

"Are you suggesting that an affidavit overrides the 1976 notification that is part of the law?"

"My Lord, the affidavit is, based on the report of a commit-

Bench: "Why did you pass the Contract Labour Act at all? Why do you make tall claims that you want to ameliorate the lot of the poor?"

tee that has gone into the question of the nature of the work."

"Why didn't you issue a fresh notification then?"

No relevant answer from the learned addl. solicitor general. Clearly, the notification was not issued because no minister wanted to take the responsibility publicly for a law that would legalise the exploitation of contract workers.

Bench: "You may say anything on affidavit. On what is that affidavit based? Who has authorised it? Are there any papers you can produce to show on what this decision is based?"

No relevant answer from the learned addl. solicitor general. In other words, the entire record is oral. No one has dared to set out reasons for the affidavit or state who has authorised it. Because the labour commissioner vested with the responsibility of implementing the law is filing an affidavit to ensure that the law is violated!

Bench: "Why did you pass the Contract Labour Act at all? Why do you make tall claims that you want to ameliorate the lot of the poor?"

No relevant answer from the learned addl. solicitor general.

Bench: "So the government's Act is applicable to everyone except the government, is it?"

"No, no, my Lord, so many private companies are using contract workers, the Tatas..."

The Bench (interrupting): "Because they do illegal things, we should allow you also?"

No relevant answer from the learned addl. solicitor general.

Bench: "We know why you retain the practice of contract labour. One is you want to exploit the workers. The other is that you want to 'pass' contracts. Do you know what we mean, Mr. Solicitor, or is it necessary for us to explain?"

The learned addl. solicitor general (grinning without embarrassment): "My Lord, this is a universal ailment."

Bench: "Mr. Solicitor, you should not be appearing in a matter like this. You should have advised your clients not to employ contract labour after the notification."

No relevant answer from the learned addl. solicitor general. After all, what could he have answered? The addl. solicitor general had no justification for arguing for the contractor-bureaucrat mafia

other than the obvious and unmentionable fact that he was handsomely paid to do so.

Mr. Dada is no exception. All the top legal officers of the government, whether at the centre or in the states have been regularly arguing against the workers and the masses of India. Mr. G. Ramaswamy, Mr. K. Parasaran, Mr. Andhyarujina...the list is endless. Men vested with the constitutional duty of representing the people of India, regularly use their considerable prestige to appear against the poor, the homeless, the workers, the ordinary people in whose name they serve.

And so after long hours of argument, the workers petition succeeded, albeit partially. The notification was made applicable, but the IAAI was given time to declare its manpower requirement. So while the petition succeeded, many of the petitioners will lose their jobs. A full 19 years after the notification, the law is made applicable in this castrated fashion. And needless to mention, the IAAI bosses will get their cuts in selecting the workers on one pretext or the other, and by the time those disputes are decided in

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