

PARTIES COMMITTED TO RESTORE PEACE IN KANDHAMAL

A Historic initiative claims Kuidina Forum for Peace and Justice

Bhubaneswar, Dt : 13.06.2009 : In a joint statement all the political party leaders of Orissa committed to work collectively to restore peace and ensure justice in the violence torn Kandhamal. They have asked all the respective local party workers and the elected representatives to visit the affected villages, stay with the victims in the villages and shelter camps for some days and initiate dialogue relating to their basic survival issues and concerns, develop the confidence of the people and to take part in construction of damaged houses collectively if required.

“ Kuidina Forum for Peace and Justice” the local peoples initiative claims that the said political initiative is a historic step in Orissa and the only participatory process required to tackle the situation at grass root level effectively. Hemant Naik, the convener of the forum organised an all party meeting in the state capital and a mass rally was led by Salu Marandi of Adivasi Mahasabha from Railway station to PMG square in front of Bidhan Sabha on 12th June, 2009. The peace loving tatood indigenous women of Kandhamal with their typical traditional costumes shouted slogan in support of Peace, Justice and progress, condemned the violence and demanded immediate arrest of the criminals involved in violence and also responsible for supplying explosives, bombs, arms, petrol and cooking gas for mass killing and destruction. The local affected victims Kadamfula, Bhabanti Nayak, Jacob Pradhan & Basudev Pradhan narrating their horrible experiences of mass crimes like brutal killings of people from the disadvantaged and minority communities who were even burnt alive in front of their children and relatives. Alleged that the said barbaric action was preplanned and organized by a section of people with socio-political and economic vested interest.

Further revealed that the repeated incidents took place only after 1970 onwards in the history of Kandhamal and blamed the non sensitivity of the Govt. machinery and the lack of political whel of the different parties and organizations dealing with the development delivery system relating to the basic human rights of the affected and indigenous communities of Kandhamal. Strongly opposing the purposeful hatred campaign against the minorities and the weaker section of the society, expressed about the confusion created by highlighting the issue as a conflict between Hindus and Christians and Kandhas and Panos but clarified that it is a genocide and one sided attack on the disadvantaged help place communities. Advocating in support of traditional tribal cultural value system. Keshamati Pradhan clarified that the indigenous communities are peace loving and originally they were animists, neither religious fanatics nor casteists by nature.

The Forum submitted a memorandum to Mr. Naveen Pattaniak, the Chief Minister of Orissa with the demands to involve the local groups in the process, arrange adequate safety and security of the victims, adequate assessment of the human loss and damage, not to dismantle the camps during the rainy season before the construction of damaged houses are completed, wider media publicity to identify the victims who fled away out of fear, bring back and settle up them with adequate security and livelihood support, immediate transfer of officials non-sensitive to the issues of affected communities, ensure transparency in the relief, rehabilitation, peace restoration process and strong steps against forceful conversion. Ms. Asima Mahananda, Kammurudin Ali, Bhajaman Behera, Puspa Dash, Salu Marandi, Abhiram Behera, Dhirendra Panda, Sharmila and also Abdul Wally spoke in the meeting and pleaded in support of collective action in Kandhamal.

Amongst the signatories against violence and in support of campaign for peaceful existence were Narendra Kumar Swain (General Secretary, BJD), Janardan Pati (State Secretary, C.P.I. (M)), Lalatendu Bidyadhar Mahapatra (working president, Pradesh Congress Committee), Dibakar Nayak, (State Secretary, C.P.I.), Amar Prasad Satapathy (Bidhayak Dal Leader, N.C.P), Radhakanta Sethy (C.P.I. (M.L.)), Kailash Mishra (President, Samajbadi Party), Dasmanta Kumar Dash (Joint Convener, Odisha Shramik Karmachari Ekta Manch), Jatish Chandra Mohanty (State President, Samrudha Odisha), Sachin Kumar Nayak, (S.F.I., Orissa), Prashant Kumar Nayak, (State President, Bahujan Samaj Party, Orissa), Rama Chandra Tripathy (O.S.R.U., Bhubaneswar), Sekh Abdul Wally (State President, R.P.I.), Rama Krushna Panda, (National Council Member, C.P.I.), Arun Jena (Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Orissa), Ashish Kanungo (Co-Secretary, C.P.I., Orissa), Harish Mohapatra (RJD) and Bhajaman Behera.

The forum also met Sri Muralidhar Chandrkanta Bhandare, His Excellency Governor of Orissa, Sri Pyaree Mohan Mohapatra (BJD) and Sri Manmohan Praharaj D.G. Police discussed and also appraised the present situation in Kandhamal and prayed for their immediate intervention.

(Hemant Naik)

Convener

(Keshamati Pradhan)

Co-Convener