

RELEASE JHIRAMGHATI 10!

INDIAN STATE SHOULD STOP KILLING ITS OWN CHILDREN!

The Forum Against Corporatization and Militarization (FACAM) expresses its outrage and total condemnation of the recent arbitrary, anti-people, and thoroughly vindictive ruling by the Jagdalpur NIA Special Court. In a blatant display of judicial terror, the court has handed down the death penalty to 10 Adivasis Pramila Modiyam, Sumitra Punem, Kosa Kawasi, Mukka Mandavi, Markami Deva, Aita Markam, Banjami Sanna, Chaitu Lekam, Joga Markami, and Mahadev Naga, for their alleged involvement in the 2013 Jhiramghati ambush case. In this ambush, 29 Congress leaders, including the notorious Mahendra Karma, the merciless architect, and warlord of the state-sponsored, murderous Salwa Judum militia. We categorically condemn this draconian sentence as an act of institutional murder and demand its immediate, unconditional reversal. This judgment is a mockery of justice. It is a calculated act of vengeance by a state terrified of those who resist corporate plunder.

That the Indian State never once punished the paramilitary forces, the police, and the bloodthirsty vigilante goons of Salwa Judum for their prolonged, agonising campaign of state-sponsored terror, but now enthusiastically hands the death penalty to 10 impoverished Adivasis for allegedly avenging the loot, rape, and murder of their own people, exposes the entirely rotten, compromised core of this system. It proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the state apparatus, its investigative agencies like the NIA, and its judiciary do not serve the people. They work exclusively as the armed guards and sycophantic clerks of domestic and foreign big corporates, for whose sole interests the Salwa Judum was created in the first place. We also want to point out the fact that the very reason the Adivasis organised under the banner of the CPI (Maoist) had taken matters into their own hands to kill the criminal politicians responsible for Salwa Judum, was because the courts had failed to deliver them justice.

To understand the sheer depravity of this verdict, one must revisit the nightmare that was Salwa Judum. Launched in 2005 under the guise of a "spontaneous peace uprising, it was, in reality, a ruthless, state-funded, and corporate-backed mercenary force. Its purpose was singular and horrific: to brutally clear the resource-rich forests of Central India of all resistance so that the land, the rivers, the forests, and the mountains could be handed over to multinational mining conglomerates and domestic monopolies like Tata, Essar, Jindal, Lloyd, and Vedanta. The goal was to strike terror in the hearts of the Adivasi villagers who either dared to directly resist the corporate loot, or aid those resisting it, no matter under what banner the resistance took place. Under the leadership of Mahendra Karma, the Salwa Judum unleashed a reign of absolute terror across Bastar. Entire villages were burnt to the ground in places like Tadmetla, Morpalli, and Timmapuram. Granaries were looted, livestock was slaughtered, and thousands of Adivasis were herded into squalid, concentration-camp-like strategic hamlets.

Adivasi women were subjected to the most unspeakable, systemic sexual violence, and gang rapes by the security forces and Judum SPOs (Special Police Officers).

Yet, how many police officers, how many politicians, how many corporate executives, and how many Judum goons have faced the gallows for these mass atrocities? Zero. The Supreme

Court of India itself declared the arming of Salwa Judum illegal and unconstitutional in 2011, noting the horrific human rights abuses. But the Indian state, in its infinite cunning, simply absorbed these murderous goons into the regular police forces as the District Reserve Guard (DRG), so they could continue their murderous rampage. The absolute impunity granted to the architects of Adivasi genocide, contrasted with the death penalty handed to Adivasis accused of fighting back, lays bare the fascist nature of the Indian legal system.

Today, the death penalty has been completely scrapped by 114 countries worldwide, recognised globally as a barbaric, inhumane relic of the past, incapable of deterring crime and serving only as a tool for state vengeance. Yet, the Indian State obstinately maintains and weaponises this archaic provision, using it specifically to crush political dissent and eliminate the most exploited, marginalised, oppressed, and deprived sections of society.

We must remember the dark days of the Emergency when the state sent two peasant revolutionaries, Bhoomaiah and Kishta Goud, to the gallows on December 1, 1975, for the 'crime' of organising the oppressed against a tyrannical landlord in Andhra Pradesh. In response, a massive, militant wave of protests erupted across the state. Revolutionary student organisations, progressive writers, and the civil liberties movement poured into the streets and organised campaigns, boldly defying the looming fascist repression to demand the commutation of their sentences and the outright abolition of capital punishment. Yet, the state, terrified by the sheer force of this student and peasant solidarity, executed them in the dead of night under the absolute cover of press censorship, denying their status as political prisoners by dehumanising them as mere criminals. Today, fifty years later, that exact same fascist playbook is being deployed against the Adivasis of Bastar! The heroic, fiery legacy of the student-led agitations for Bhoomaiah and Kishta Goud must be resurrected in our universities and streets today to shatter the silence surrounding the impending institutional murder of the Jiramghati 10.

The sentencing of these 10 Adivasis cannot be viewed in isolation. It is part of a much larger, and ongoing genocidal war. The state is currently intensifying its ruthless militarisation campaigns across Central India under Operation Kagaar and the broader Surajkund Scheme.

These operations are explicitly designed to completely wipe out the resistance of the Adivasi peasantry, establish heavily fortified forward operating bases in every village, and violently enclose their lands. The NIA, the UAPA, and the death penalty are merely the legal weapons utilised to legitimise this corporate land-grab. Branding Adivasis as "terrorists" and sending them to the gallows is a psychological operation meant to instill terror in the hearts of anyone who dares to defend their jal-jangal-jameen (water, forest, and land).

FACAM appeals to all progressive, democratic, and anti-imperialist forces, trade unions, peasant organisations, civil rights advocates, revolutionary organisations, and all concerned people to rise in rage against this open institutional murder.

FACAM demands the following:

- Immediate and unconditional reversal of the arbitrary death penalty awarded to the 10 Adivasis by the Jagdalpur NIA Court.

- Complete and immediate abolition of the barbaric, anti-poor provision of the death penalty from the Indian legal system.
- Immediate disbanding of the NIA and the repeal of all draconian, anti-people laws like the UAPA.
- Immediate end to the genocidal military and psychological warfare campaigns of the Surajkund Scheme.
- Halt the relentless corporate loot and militarisation of the country's Jal-Jangal-Zameen.
- Hold the architects, planners, and perpetrators of the Salwa Judum atrocities legally and criminally accountable.

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