TRIBALS PROTEST AGAINST POLICE REPRESSSION

May 13th, 1991 was not an ordinary day for the town of Chabursa in the Singhbhum district of Bihar. Although various political parties were organizing rallies and meetings in support of their candidates in the forthcoming general elections - on this day, this town witnessed a different rally. A rally organized against the arrest of the social activist Mr. Kumar Chandra Mardai and 45 tribals. They had protested against the destructive development project called 'The Subarnarekha Dam'. Despite police repressions, a crowd of 700 people, majority of them being women and children, turned up in this town to protest against their threatened displacement, due to the upcoming Subarnarekha dam at Isha. The project has been cleared by the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The response of the local administration to the rally was negative. The authorities curtailed people's participation in the rally by seizing all the vehicles coming from the surrounding villages. Thus, all the people who attended the rally in the scorching heat had travelled on foot, a distance of 20 km. A large procession was carried out in the town condemning the police arrest. Slogans rented the air - "Lambi kithi Jali tumhari dekh liya hai, dokhenge" (How big is your jail, we have seen and will see), "Koi nahin hatega, banch nahin banega" (No one shall be displaced, no dam shall be constructed), "Hame vikas chehriye, vibhish nahin" (We need development, not destruction). Women and children with raised hands, demonstrating with placards demanded an unconditional release of all those who had been arrested. These slogans caught even inside the jail, where many of the arrested people were still lodged. People pledged to fight against the Subarnarekha dam project. On May 16th, all the arrested persons, except two were released.

The Subarnarekha project has raised many controversies in the past several years. Financed by the World Bank, the Rs. 1200 crore project involves construction of two major dams (one at Chandi and other at Isha), two barrages and seven canals in the states of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. The escalation in the cost of the project has been quite high, increasing from Rs. 129 crores in 1974 to Rs. 1200 crores in 1990.

A major controversy related to the project is the rehabilitation of almost one lakh displaced people, majority of whom belong to the 'Ho' tribe. The rehabilitation package announced, and so far implemented by the project authorities is inadequate. Majority of the local people carry out their livelihood from traditional activities, which are land and forest based. Cash compensation and homestead land for residential purposes are totally inadequate. There is no provision of land for land as a part of rehabilitation. Besides, since majority of displaced people do not have records of their lands, they are not considered eligible for even a cash compensation. Another objection to the construction of the dam is being raised by many environmentalists and social activists. They argue that the project will create a number of environmental and social problems. Have these been thought about?

In recent months, a number of economic offenses involving crores of rupees have come to light. These include withdrawal of excess payments, illegal removal of government property, filling of false bank guarantees and of making false payments. Similarly, nearly 600 jobs meant for the oustees of the project have gone to non-oustees.

These issues, coupled with growing repression and intimidation by the local authorities, have agitated the oustees to launch a campaign against the construction of the dam until their demands are met by the project authorities. Proper rehabilitation; arrest of corrupt officials; a proper review of the project from a social, economical and environmental angle; and putting an end to police harassment is illegal and an undemocratic action by the project authorities, and the state government, for not entertaining a dialogue with the displaced people, ignoring their genuine demands and forcibly uprooting them from their traditional homelands.
The Imperialism of Northern NGOs

During an international conference on Third World development, a Latin American participant stood up and said: "Once upon a time, we were a free nation, with our own culture and development process. Then, the Spanish came and conquered us. We were defeated because they had horses. Later, our people fought the Spanish until we gained independence. But are we really independent? Even now foreign countries dictate to us economically, culturally, politically. And they do not need horses to conquer us now, because we have NGOs."

For some people, especially members of non-government organisations, this may sound like an exaggeration. It is not. The role of NGOs in promoting people’s welfare and rights needs to be questioned. So does the notion of imperialism. Not only are many Third World NGOs agents of imperialism, but there is also an imperialistic attitude in the relationship between First World and Third World NGOs.

Anybody working in the development and environment field recognizes issues such as sustainable development, social forestry, management of national parks, women in development and, most recently, the conservation of biological diversity. It was First World NGOs that put these issues on the agenda without consulting us. Third World NGOs, took them up gladly because they sell money and support.

A good example of agenda-setting was the way a prestigious Northern NGO devised its campaign for "sustainable logging in tropical forests by the year 1995". For people in this NGO, conservation is a business; for Third World people, it is a matter of life and death. No sustainable logging in an economic, ecological, cultural or democratic sense has ever been proven. Yet these so-called conservation experts dared to say that there should be sustainable logging by 1995.

The concept of sustainable logging was challenged by a friend at a recent meeting in Australia. "Sustainable for whom?" she asked. For the logging companies, perhaps. But for the people, logging becomes sustainable only if they have control over resources and are given secure rights to the land.

In my everyday activities, I often ask myself why we should spend our precious time, energy and resources on issues such as the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP), the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), the conservation of biological diversity, buffer zones around national parks and a dozen other programmes. Third World NGOs are drawn into endless discussions about these sort of issues. Yet, the more we oblige, the more legitimacy we bestow on governments and First World NGOs which support these programmes.

Most Australian NGOs receive money from the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB). They cease to ask questions about how AIDAB uses its money in the Third World. They refuse to criticize oppressive governments supported by their own government for fear of not being given funds. They do not mind operating in countries where human rights do not exist or are constantly violated.

To get support from them is to go by their book. And to go by their book is to steer clear of all critical issues such as human rights, land disputes and democracy.

The approach of US NGOs is even less comprehensible. I have always maintained that they are more concerned about projects and campaigns than about the actual needs of Third World NGOs and communities. Many receive money from the US Agency for International Development, USAID is a big agency. No small Third World NGO can cope with its technical requirements such as reports in English, sophisticated accounting, and strict project deadlines. Because they follow USAID priorities, US NGOs are prevented from supporting innovative actions and end up doing trivial work such as income-generation projects which hardly change the condition of the people.

When I expressed disappointment at this, I was told by a member of a US NGO with offices in Indonesia: "We are in no position to change our ways. If this does not suit the indigenous NGOs, they can look for other partners". And yet, they and other First World NGOs can secure financial support in the name of "having partners in the Third World".

First world NGOs often arrogantly ask, "How can we help you?" When I say: "Educate your own public," they claim that it is what they have been doing. But they have no answer when I say that the public should be educated to the point of taking action against their own government, the transnational companies and the oppressive system. A campaign for stopping military aid, for instance, would be welcome by pro-democracy groups in Third World countries. As would be another on the impact of Western-dominated international trade.

The time has come for them to put emphasis on action-oriented public education in the North rather than to continue supporting projects that maintain the status quo of oppression.

Ref: Tjia, Jann Hwa works for SEETM, (The People's Network for Forest Conservation in Indonesia).
The Planning Commission had set up a study group on land holding systems in tribal areas under the Chairmanship of Prof. B.K. Roy Burman, in November 1985. Some of the other members included were Justice D.M. Sen, then chairman of the Law Commission, Sikkim, Prof. Jaganath Pathy of South Gujarat University, Mrs. R.C. Dhen, Retd. member UPSC, Sri M. Ramunni, who was associated with the formulation of the tribal policy during the Nehru era, Prof. G. Parthasarathy of Waiitair University, Prof. G. Kabul of Manipur University, Dr. Bhupinder Singh, the then Advisor, Planning Commission was the Member Secretary.

The basic objective was to study the nature and extent of land and land-based resources available in the tribal areas, the nature and extent of dependence of tribal communities on land resources, the extent to which traditional access of the tribal communities to land and land-based resources is recognised under provisions of the various laws, the overt and covert changes following implementation of survey and settlement operations in tribal areas and changes in the matter of control and access to land and land-based resources in the wake of development activities and different administrative and legislative measures.

The report is primarily based on a field study in Orissa. It has also drawn upon secondary resource materials from some other states. Even this limited study has brought out certain issues of a general nature which have relevance to other states as well. In December 1986, the study group submitted its report to the Planning Commission. Subsequently, the Government placed it in the Lok Sabha vide U.S.O. No. 675, dated 15th April 1987.

The basic threat to the tribal existence emanates from their land alienation. For the tribals, traditional land holding system was the basis of their polity, economy and culture. This land holding system is different from mere allocation of land pattas to the individual families. As Prof. Roy Burman puts it in his forwarding letter to the then Home Minister: "Traditionally in most tribal areas individual rights of enjoyment of land and land based resources are embedded in communal systems of access to, and management of resources—during the latter part of the colonial rule attempts were made to convert the political rights of the military overlords into proprietary rights of feudal nature. But due to lack of productive and administrative infrastructure, such attempts remained only on paper. In the post-independence period, rather than correcting these attempts towards feudal distortions, these were accepted as the crucial elements of the legal framework for implementation of policies and programmes in the tribal areas. Paper laws of the colonial dispensation were given the place of pride, over the laws on the ground by which the people lived. The significance of tribal upsurges in diverse forms which have taken place from time to time during the last one century, for protection of their resource-based survival systems, not only as biological entities but also as social entity, in specific historic-ecological niche, has not been adequately appreciated. On the other hand, the paper laws of the past have been used as aibis to deny the customary rights of the people, and in the process accommodative compromises have been made with the feudal pretensions in some areas and factional elites have been promoted in others".

Apart from non-recognition of the community as a legal entity, the Orissa Government had issued an instruction that during the land survey and settlement operation for the preparation of the records of rights, land use of only up to nine degree slope should be recorded. In fact, the survey technique which was adopted did not allow accurate cadastral survey of land beyond a nine degree slope. The combination of the non-recognition of the ground reality of community rights and the adoption of an incongruous policy decision and survey technique, was disastrous for the tribals. The Study Team has cited a case in Koraput district where out of 936.13 acres of land under possession of the tribals for generations only 2.50 acres were recorded in their favor. In many other villages of the same district, less than one percent of the land was recorded in favor of the tribals. In Keonjhar district through examination of the record of rights and field verification, the Study Team found that only 2.46 percent to 23.50 percent of the land under occupation of the tribals belonging to Juang and Bhuiya communities for centuries was recorded in their favor. The rest of the land was entered in the record of rights as 'States land' and the tribals were shown as 'encroachers' on their ancestral lands.

It is to be noted that in his statement submitted to the Lok Sabha, the Planning Minister did not deny the facts
documented by the study team but, observed that the state government of Orissa "seems to have avoided" surveys beyond ten degree slope "in order to prevent alienation of fragile hill slopes."

Thus, the plea of environmental protection has been used by the state as a justification to rob the tribals of the resource base of their survival. There are two issues involved in it. Is there ample evidence to show that the tribals, on their own, cause damage to their hilly environment? Are there not many studies which show that reckless extraction of forest resources by national and international industrial-commercial concerns, in collusion with the obliging techno-bureaucratic apparatus of the state, are primarily responsible for the degradation of the hilly terrains? The second issue is that, even if the tribals play a secondary role today in causing damage to the hilly slopes which they nurtured for generations, can the state curb their right in the name of environmental protection, by a simple executive order?

The Study Team has highlighted another interesting fact. It has brought out that the land reform (without first removing the colonial distortions) has promoted neo-feudalisation process where the tribals are less assertive and democratic mobilization where they are conscious of their historical rights.

Keeping all these facts in view, the Study Team has made a number of recommendations. It has suggested that the land laws and the land policies operative in the tribal areas be carefully examined in their historical, ecological and political-economic contexts. It has also suggested that before the land survey and settlement operations are conducted in the tribal areas, the methodology of the operation, the process of identification of the rights and the contents of the rights which are to be actually recorded should receive very close examination, as it has been found that in these matters the practices vary from state to state.

It is surprising that though the report of the Study Team which reveals many disconcerting facts about erosion of the command of the tribal communities over resources, was placed before the Lok Sabha in 1987, none of the political parties have reacted to it. What is more strange is that the Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who in his report for the years 1987-89 has made a strong plea for the protection of the command of the tribals over resources has failed to take note of this well-documented report, which shows that the command over resources of the tribals is being eroded not because of failure of functionaries at the implementation level but because of the conscious decision of the State at the policy making level.

As the report of the Study Team was presented to the Lok Sabha, it is a public document and deserves wide circulation. We hope that the Planning Commission will make printed copies of the report available to the general public, particularly the social activists, academicians, the legislators and the policy makers.

Based on the review by Dr. Gupta Jash and Dr. Omkar Mittal and elaborated by the Editorial Cell.

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**World Bank to Review Sardar Sarovar Project**

The World Bank has commissioned an independent expert review of the ongoing implementation of the Sardar Sarovar project. Mr. Bradford Morse, administrator of UNDP (1976-1986) has agreed to head the independent review of the project. The review would provide further guidance for implementation of the project.

Mr. Morse will recruit a team of international specialists to assist him in conducting the review. The team will visit the project sites to assess implementation of the projects, focusing on resettlement and rehabilitation of the population affected and displaced by the construction of the project infrastructure, as well as the dam and reservoir. The assessment will take into account the views of those directly affected by the project, local NGOs as well as concerned state governments and institutions. The review will be completed in early 1992.

**Common Lands Programme (August 1-10)**

The Action Committee for Protection of Common Lands (ACPCL) and the Federation of Voluntary Organisations for Rural Development in Karnataka (FEVOROH-K) decided to start the final phase of the campaign for a cancellation of the KPL agreement;
ENERGY, ELECTRICITY AND YOU

Though our power generation has increased several fold since independence, we still have a power crisis. Have you wondered why? The reasons are the abuse and wastage of energy in our country. Electricity is a 'high quality' and very expensive form of energy. It should be used only where it is appropriate and efficient. In our country, electricity is highly subsidized i.e., it costs much more to generate than what we pay for. For bulk users like big industries, electric power is given away even cheaper. So they use it very inefficiently and for inappropriate end-uses.

In highly industrialized nations, the industries consume only about 15 - 17% of the total electric power. But in our country they take 50 - 70%. Our industries use 10-16 times more energy than what the advanced countries need for the same output. This is partly due to outdated equipment and inefficient technologies. The government concentrates only on generating more and more electricity rather than on its efficient use. There is little incentive for improvement in energy efficiency and change over to appropriate technologies. Instead, a lot of money is spent on big projects like nuclear
reactors, which gobble up huge resources, create very few jobs, pollute the environment, threaten our very existence and in the end, produce negligible amounts of electricity.

Our nuclear power programme was started forty years ago as a part of the "Show-case Development" policy. The plants at Tarapur were put up by American multinational General Electric. Later we changed over to the CANDU reactors developed by Canada. In 1974 when the Indian government exploded an atomic bomb made from the fuel of CANDU reactors, it led to an international boycott. Our scientists were forced to continue the programme on their own. Our much touted 'self reliance' in nuclear power is driven more by the force of circumstances than any patriotic fervour.

Armed with nuclear blueprints given by the Canadians, our scientists have been struggling bravely to master a monstrous technology by trial and error. One might say by too many trials and too many errors. Almost all of our reactors suffer from generic problems like fuel bundle misalignments, massive leaks of radioactivity, cracks in end shields and secondary systems etc. Reactions are shut down dozens of times during a year, or for a change, for years together. Even the 'conventional' components like turbine generators are more prone to failure in our nuclear power plants!

The installed nuclear power in India amounts to only 2% of the total and even then the reactors work at less than 50% capacity factor. Several experts have offered simple, ecologically sound and highly cost effective alternatives that would make the nuclear power redundant. But the decisions in our nuclear empire are taken based on political calculations instead of public interest. Even the little power that nuclear plants generate cannot fulfill the ordinary citizen's basic needs. Due to a variety of technical reasons nuclear power can only serve the large industrial users. And to top it all, the nuclear industry itself is a large consumer of electricity. Energy experts have estimated that if total power consumption of setting up a reactor, fuel fabrication, decommissioning and nuclear waste management is fully accounted for, nuclear reactors consume more electricity than what they can produce.

RADIATING DISINFORMATION

Sure, natural radiation has always been there, even before nuclear power. But, then there was no systematic disinformation about the effects of low level radiation. With the nuclearisation of the world, a systematic campaign has been undertaken to impress upon the gullible public that:

Radiation is something 'natural' (implying that it is quite harmless)

Radiation emitted by the nuclear power plants is very low. (Further implying that they are absolutely harmless)

Elaborate precautions are taken at all our nuclear installations. (By implication everyone inside and around them is quite safe)

Death also is natural. It comes to every one of us. But that does not confer any right to a group of individuals to inflict it randomly on larger population. Our nuklearists always talk about the immediate effects of high level radiation on one individual. This is quite irrelevant. What is relevant is the impact of low level radiation on a large population spread over decades. Accurate data on this aspect of radiation hazard is difficult to gather. The studies must be conducted on a large scale. There are also continuous efforts by the nuclear lobby to obscure the issue by discrediting the unfavourable findings.

In spite of the difficulties there have been numerous studies in the last forty years by different agencies on the impact of radiation on living beings. Each new study invariably comes to the conclusion that all the earlier studies have vastly underestimated the health hazards of nuclear radiation. One fact that has been established beyond any doubt is that there is no 'safe' lower limit for radiation. Every atom has the potential to debilitate or kill.

There is more to a nuclear power programme than a reactor. There is much more to nuclear health hazards than the radiation emitted by the reactor core. The so called nuclear fuel cycle is a series of processes starting with uranium mining, processing, fuel fabrication, reactor operation, decommissioning and waste management. In every one of these stages radioactive as well as chemical pollutants are released in the air,
water and soil, from where they enter the human food and respiratory cycles. However, our nuclearists never mention these hazards in public and talk only of the emitted radiation from the reactors which forms only a small part of the total hazard. In India there is only one agency that has total control over nuclear matters. The same group of individuals set ‘acceptable’ limits for radiation, spread it, decide how to measure it, actually measure it, interpret the results and finally blow their own trumpets in public. The self-congratulatory advertisements of NPC about radiation safety are not substantiated by the reality around nuclear plants.

Workers in the thorium processing plant at Alwary, uranium mines in Jaduguda and Nuclear Fuel Complex in Hyderabad have been heavily contaminated.

Tanjore has the dubious practice of employing illiterate casual labour, without their knowledge or consent to work in highly radioactive sections of the plant.

Widespread incidences of cancer, sterility, infertility, genetic abnormalities and other radiation induced diseases have been reported among the workers as well as from the villages around Rawaibhata.

WHAT ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE DOING TO MAKE THEIR GOVERNMENTS UNDERSTAND

Do not believe what the powerful interests behind nuclear power tell you. Energy in the form of electricity is required in a very limited proportion. Even in a highly industrialised and wasteful society like the U.S.A., it forms only about 11% of the total energy. Many energy and environment conscious governments are going in for conservation, energy efficiency and other measures. Unfortunately, India is not among them. As regards nuclear power:

Japan is under great pressure from the USA to purchase nuclear reactors to reduce its trade balance with that country. But the Japanese people are unwilling. About 15,000 consumers in Hiroshima turned off their electricity one evening to protest the power company’s use of nuclear power.

In USSR, an 810 MW N-plant is being replaced by a thermal plant. The Soviet Government has cut down its nuclear power programme by 50% because of people’s protest and greater awareness following the Chernobyl disaster.

No new nuclear plants have been taken up in USA since 1975. In California, voters recently forced a cold shutdown of Rs. 1250 crore N-plant. A reactor set up in Long Island at a cost of Rs. 7500 crore has been abandoned and sold for one dollar.

Canada, whose CANDU reactor design is being touted by NPC as ‘our’ design has, discarded CANDU’s as well as all other nuclear power since 1978.

Sweden has decided to close down all of its 12 reactors by 1995 and phase out nuclear power by the year 2010.

In Germany, the government has scrapped a nuclear power plant in Munich and decided to build a solar cell factory in its place.

Last year electric power production was privatised in Britain. But the private industry there has refused to operate any of the nuclear plants. The reason? Atomic energy is viable only as a government enterprise - when you have unlimited taxpayers’ money to squander.

The consistent rules with nuclear power all over the world have been cost overruns, delays, shutdowns and under-productions. When NPC says so many MW of nuclear power, it is talking only about the installed capacity. The actual power generated is but a small fraction of this.

‘Clean’ nuclear power plant is a myth. Nuclear radiation may be invisible. But it is one of the dirtiest pollutants created by man. It is harmful to life even in its most ‘compact’ form, in the minutest quantity. Every nuclear establishment pollutes the environment by:

Direct ionizing radiation emitted by the reactor dome. An experiment conducted around the Hanakaka reactor in Japan has proved that this radiation is 60 times more than what the nuclear authorities admit.

Release of radioactive gases in air. Liquids and solids are discharged into water and soil. This is done so casually that these are called ‘routine emissions’.
Nuclear power stations require millions of liters of water every minute to cool them and therefore, have to be located close to water sources which are also life-supporting resources for people, whether it be agriculture or fishing. This results in thermal pollution in addition to radioactive one. The reactor heat can kill all the marine life for several kilometers downstream, affecting humans also.

If you do not believe a stop nuclear power now, I can eat you absolutely powerless tomorrow.

THE WHY AND HOW OF THE FAILURE OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAMME

This part of the NPC ad campaign concentrates on the ‘achievements’ of the Indian nuclear programme. No figures on the actual performances of our reactor complexes are mentioned - with good reason. The overall performance of our power plants has been abysmal. Instead of improving and stabilising over the years, more and more reactors are becoming terminally ill.

The plant load factor for all the Indian reactors put together is a mere 45%.

TAPS-I and RAPS-I have been virtually written off. MAPS-II is expected to follow suit shortly.

The reactors at Tarapur were once dubbed as the ‘dirtiest’ plants in the world. They have now been ‘de-rated’ to 160 MW from 210 MW so that higher plant load factor percentages can be claimed.

Accidents like cracking pipes, ruptured end-shields, leaking heavy water, fractured turbines, faulty fuel rods and minor explosions and fires are quite common in our nuclear establishments. Despite assurances by the NPC, radiation hazards are on the increase in our nuclear establishments and surrounding areas.

One of the much touted advantages of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) design is that it uses natural uranium as fuel and hence we do not need any uranium enrichment plants. What we do need for PHWR reactors are the heavy water plants. The performance of these plants is also dismal. Capacity factors are in the range of 30 - 35 %, forcing the NPC to smuggle in the heavy water from international market.

Another misleading statement is the “40 to 60 paise per unit” as the cost of nuclear electricity. Since 1986 the DAE accounts are being audited by the CAG which has exposed enormous cost of overruns and delays.

MAPS-I and II were commissioned 8 years behind schedule and at a cost of Rs. 245 crore against the sanctioned Rs. 132 crore.

Narora was also 8 years behind schedule and has been constructed at more than double the estimated cost.

In 1985 an ‘expert’ committee arrived at a cost of 98 paise per unit as the cost of nuclear power, only marginally below thermal power. Very soon it was revealed that the nuclear accounts were manipulated by:

- not accounting for government subsidies in the form of R and D support, infrastructural facilities, heavy water leasing, etc.
- assuming lower and unrealisable interest rates and gestation periods
- ignoring the massive cost of decommissioning and radioactive waste management projects that would run for several centuries to come.

But what is most alarming is the ‘Three Stage Programme’ touted by the NPC to perpetuate nuclear power in India. The first stage in which a chain of PHWRs was to be set up has been a colossal failure. The ‘research’ projects on the fast breeder technology have also failed miserably. Fast breeders are inherently unstable and unsafe and so have been abandoned altogether by the rest of the world. And the third stage of thorium conversion is a mere pipe dream.

It is very much in the national interest that we abandon the nuclear myth and re-employ our scientists in endeavours that benefit the society.
THE (DOUBLE) STANDARDS TO BE FOLLOWED IN SITE SELECTION AND CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

This is the joker of the pack. Reading it, one begins to wonder whether NPC is aware of what it is talking about. For eight long years environmentalists have been crying hoarse that Kaiga is singularly unsuited as a site for a nuclear plant. It has one of the most densely covered primeval rainforests in the world. It also sustains a rich and varied genetic pool of flora and fauna. No country anywhere in the world has ever blundered into a tropical rainforest with a nuclear reactor. A number of sound, scientific reasons have been offered by environmentalists against the destruction of Kaiga.

If the NPC were really sincere about its site selection criteria, it would find that there is no place on this planet suitable for its activities. In reality, nuclear plants are set up based on just one criterion which cannot be advertised — political expediency. This has been stated explicitly by Dr. M.R. Srinivasan, during the national debate on Kaiga in Bangalore in 1988. If site selection is based only on safety and other technical criteria, can the NPC tell us why the reports of the Site Selection Committee kept as such a closely guarded secret?

Now we find NPC trusting its own 'Code of Practice', virtually every criterion of which has been violated in Kaiga. Every reason against the selection of Kaiga has been listed with the assertion that all these factors preclude the selection of a given site! A quick comparison between what NPC preaches and what it practices is shown below:

### What NPC Claims as the Criterion

- Site should be remote from wildlife sanctuaries
- Floods and cyclones should be taken into account
- The site should be safeguarded against earthquakes. The entire region, up to a radius of 300 km should be considered for previous histories of earthquakes.
- Dam failures upstream should also be taken into account.
- Reactor should not be close to military ammunition depots
- Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) will make a thorough review of the site and only then issue a license for construction of the reactor.

### The Reality of Kaiga

Kaiga is in the midst of a tropical rainforest. It is rich in wildlife, flora and fauna. Adjacent to it is the Areali bio-reservoir.

Kaiga has a tropical monsoon lasting four months a year, leading to a virtual flooding of the valley. All activities including transport and communications are disrupted in these months due to incessant rain.

A geological fault passes right through Kaiga. The seismic centre of the Koyya earthquake is well within the 300 km radius.

Upstream from Kaiga there are as many as seven major dams across Kali river, one of which, Supa has developed an inexplicable crack.

Kaiga is close to 'Sea Bird', the country's biggest naval base.

AERB permission was not obtained either during the site selection or before beginning the construction work in Kaiga.
IT IS THE IMAGE THAT MATTERS, NOT THE PERFORMANCE

As one Indian journal reported in 1979, "Tarapur is so heavily contaminated... that it is impossible for maintenance jobs to be done without the personnel exceeding the fortnightly dose of 0.4rem in a matter of minutes. Thus the maintenance worker... holding a spanner in one hand and a pencil dosimeter in the other turning a nut two or three rotations and pushing out of the work area, is a common phenomenon at Tarapur".

"Nuclear Barons"
By Peter Pringle & James Spiegelman (page 398)

For Further details, write to:
Citizens for Alternatives to Nuclear Energy (CANE)
609, 17E, Main Rajaji Nagar
Block-5, Bangalore-560 010
KARNATAKA.

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A CITIZEN’S GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE OF INDIA’S NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Location</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Started In</th>
<th>Performance Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalpakkam I (Madras)</td>
<td>235 MW</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Shut down for 84 days in 1984, 164 days in 1985, 154 days in 1986. Total of 46 shutdowns in less than four years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalpakkam II</td>
<td>233 MW</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Shut down on no less than 134 times between 1984 and 1988. Problems in fuel rods and bunglings in their repair may force a total closure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narora I (Delhi)</td>
<td>235 MW</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Shut down almost immediately after starting because of leakages and the failure of secondary safety systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Greening of our Village Forest

Himalayan Action Research Centre (HARC), has published this book, as well as "Trees, Shrubs and Grasses in the Hills" in Hindi. These books are the outcome of research work of various scientists as well as HARC and gives the detailed knowhow about the afforestation in hills. These books highlight that in most of the plantation programmes, importance is given only to the tree species, while in reality a dense and rich forest should consist of a combination of trees, bushes and grasses. This combination plays a very important role, and not only provides fuel, fodder, timber, fruits etc., but, through the soil and water conservation, it also maintains ecological balance.

For details contact: Himalayan Action Research Centre, 6th/12, Indira Nagar, Phase II, P.O. New Forest, Dehradun - 248006.

Plantation Techniques

VIKSAT and CEE, Ahmedabad in collaboration with the National Wasteland Development Board (NYDB) published, two books in Hindi - "Viksharapan Technique" and "Nursery". Both of them are written and edited by Mr. Dhiraj Balani, a trained forester. These books will be useful for activists and grass-root level groups involved in social forestry programmes.

For details contact: National Wasteland Development Board, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi - 110 003.

CESH Newsletter

This is a quarterly newsletter of the Centre for Environment Studies and Research (CESHR), Bangladesh. The newsletter covers extensive news and views related to the environment.

For details contact: M. Munirul Amin, Coordinator, CESH, 6th/1 Pu Lane, Paltan, GPO Box 3290, Dhaka - 1000, Bangladesh.

Bhagirathi Ki Pukar

This is a bi-monthly newsletter of INTACH. The May-June issue highlights the Namaste struggle. It also contains a detailed description of the first successful movement against the dam near Haridwar in 1916, under the leadership of Shri Madan Mohan Malaviya.

For details contact: INTACH, 71 Lodhi Estate, N.D. 110003.

Eshoomi Dastavaz

Demystification of land records has been on the back of the minds of many individuals concerned and involved with people's right over natural resources for a long time.

PRIA organised a workshop on 'Land records' during November 25-26, 1988 in which activists from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa took part. The outline of this manual was drawn up as a collective effort of the participants at this workshop. The deliberations of this workshop also helped in identifying generalities and diversities in land-record systems in various provinces. This manual will hopefully be possible to provide a broader framework for working on land records and enthuse activists to work for related information at their local levels. Hopefully, it may also trigger off some collaborations among groups to join hands for a demystification campaign at the regional level. Copies in Hindi are available at PRIA.

Tribals: Exploitation Goes On

Murbad Tehsil of Thane District (in Maharashtra) has been witnessing continuous exploitation of tribals of Ekshhare, since a tribal's land was restored to him from a non-tribal by the Revenue Department, in 1984. When the BDO of Murbad sanctioned the construction of a well on the same land in 1991, it added fuel to the fire. The non-tribals attacked two tribal women on 18th June. But, the police machinery, in connivance with the rich and powerful non-tribals, did not register an F.I.R. or any complaint pertaining to the tribals.

(Shanik Mukti Sanghatana, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra)
UNCED - 92 UPDATE

SITE CHOSEN FOR PARALLEL EVENTS IN RIO

A site has been selected, and the mechanism is in place to put together the parallel events in Rio de Janeiro at the time of the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. The Brazilian NGO Forum and the International Facilitating Committee (IFC) are to jointly provide the infrastructure and logistics so that all sectors will have the opportunity to express their independent views.

INCREASING PARTICIPATION BY NGOs IN UNCED

At its March meeting, the Preparatory Committee of UNCED acknowledged the extremely valuable contributions made by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the extent to which they work benefited from their specialised experience, knowledge and insights. Concern was expressed, however, as to a North-South imbalance in this representation. As a consequence, the secretariat was asked to make special efforts to find the necessary support and to ensure increased participation by developing-country NGOs in future sessions. It is common knowledge that due to scarcity of resources, NGOs can only participate on an ad hoc basis and this limits their effectiveness.

As a follow-up, a proposal to support the "Developing Country NGO Participation Fund for UNCED" has been developed by a number of NGOs and international networks working in cooperation. The beneficiaries of this "Developing Country Participation Fund" will be selected by a number of regional focal points in developing countries. This mechanism has been designed to decentralise the selection process and allow people in developing countries to select the appropriate groups.

For further information, Indian NGOs can write to:
"Anil Agarwal, CS6, 607 Model Flour, II Park Place, New Delhi - 110010.

SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA (PRIA)
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area
New Delhi - 110 062.

TEL: 6451908/6471183
TLX: 31-71477 ARPN-IN
FAX: 91-11-6442728

The office is located on the Mehrauli Badarpur Road, between Babra Hospital and Hamdard Nager on the eastern side and Vayusenabad on the western side.

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