

# 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Naxalbari Movement

Massive Rally at Shahid Minar Maidan in Kolkata

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More than twenty five thousand people from different parts of the country observed the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Naxalbari movement with a Rally at Shahid Minar Maidan (Martyr's Memorial Ground) in Kolkata on 25 May 2007. Defying the scorching sun, thousands of Party activists and supporters marched to Shahid Minar with placards, banners and red flags in a colourful procession. The rally marked the culmination of the CPI(ML)'s countrywide "Our Country, Our History - Our Freedom, Our Rights" campaign which was called to observe the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of 1857, Birth centenary of Shahid-e-Azam Bhagat Singh and the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Naxalbari.

The rally at Shahid Minar Maidan also marked the culmination of the 'Krishak Jagran Yatra', a cultural caravan which started on May Day from Naxalbari and reached Nandigram a day before the rally. Dipankar Bhattacharya, General Secretary of the CPI(ML) declared at the Rally: "The Chief Minister accepted the moral responsibility for the police firing at Nandigram. But he should also take the political and administrative responsibility and tender his resignation". He indicted the CPI(M) for its betrayal of the revolutionary movement and asserted that the future of left lies in the hands of a party like CPI(ML) which has kept the red flag aloft with its determined struggles of peasants and workers. He hailed the martyrs of Nandigram who were killed resisting land grab efforts. Almost all Central Committee members of the CPI(ML) were present on this occasion. Intellectuals like Kinnor Roy (writer), Sabyasachi Dev (noted poet), Pachhu Roy (critic and writer) were also present. Nabarun Bhattacharya (noted poet and novelist) spoke on the occasion. WB State Committee member Abhijit Majumdar, Raja Ram Singh, Mrinmoy Chakraborty, Swadesh Bhattacharya, Ram Naresh Ram, and West Bengal State Secretary Kartik Pal hailed the heroic struggle launched by the people of Singur and Nandigram and exposed the ideological bankruptcy of the CPI(M)-led left front government. A contingent of people from Nandigram also participated in the Rally, and Narmada, one of the women leading the struggle there, gave a fiery speech and described the assaults which the people of Nandigram continue to face even today. The rally was presided over by Party's senior Polit Bureau member Swadesh Bhattacharya and conducted by Partha Ghosh. A cultural troupe from Andhra Pradesh staged a dance drama depicting the heroic struggle of Naxalbari while cultural activists from Bengal including Nitish Roy sang people's songs on this occasion. The CPI(ML) called upon left and democratic forces of Bengal to take side with the CPI(ML) to intensify the struggle against imperialism and for people's rights, particularly against the issue of SEZs and the corporate land grab.

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