

been trained to identify diseases and distribute medicines to the villagers.

- The women participate equally in these development activities. Special attention is paid to the issue of patriarchy and that is why they come forward equally to defend their rights and lands.



Women participate equally

- They run schools and publish books and magazines in the local Gondi language. (This is the first time this language has found a place in the written world).
- They have their own justice system. People's Courts are held to settle various disputes among the people, as well as with the oppressors.
- Theft, robbery, cheatings, murders for property and personal gain have vanished.
- In areas where they have kept out the state forces, sexual harassment and rape by the forest department, the contractors and the police has become a thing of the past. Now the women walk freely in the jungle whether it is day or night.
- Each village has democratic committees which look after agriculture, fish farming, education, village development, Medicine Units etc.
- The women and children have their own organisations in almost every village. The tribal peasants have their separate organisation, with units in every village.
- Almost every village has units of People's Militia which take up the responsibility of defence of the village.

Source: International Campaign Against War on the People in India (www.icawpi.org)

Join the campaign to stop Operation Green Hunt.
Contact the Workers Party wpnz@clear.net.nz www.workersparty.org.nz

India - Stop Operation Green Hunt

India is at war. The government calls it 'Operation Green Hunt', and has sent tens of thousands of armed police and paramilitary troops to the vast forest region of Dandakaranya.

There are two Indias – one is the new high tech economy; the other is the 800 million people who still live in poverty. The poorest of the poor are tribal people in the forests. Over the last thirty years they have joined India's revolutionary Maoists and set up democratic organisations and a People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA). The territory they are active in has been dubbed 'the Red Corridor'.

The forest, which spans 300km from north to south and 500km from east to west, is rich in mineral wealth. Arundhati Roy, India's best known author, says "that over the past five years or so, the



Arundhati Roy speaking to Maoists in Dandakaranya

Governments of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal have signed hundreds of MOUs [Memoranda of Understanding] with corporate houses, worth several billion dollars, all of them secret, for steel plants, sponge-

Life in the Red Corridor



Maoist camp site

iron factories, power plants, aluminium refineries, dams and mines. In order for the MOUs to translate into real money, tribal people must be moved". (*Walking with the Comrades*, 2010)

Operation Green Hunt has two connected aims: wipe out the Maoists and hand over the forests

to the corporates to mine the wealth.

G.N. Saibaba, Assistant Professor of Literature at Delhi University, described Operation Green Hunt as a full scale war with some 250,000 soldiers and US military logistics involved. Despite that firepower "they have been suffering severe blows from the Maoist movement and the motivation of the government troops is plummeting", said Saibaba. (www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/6346)

Not surprisingly women are drawn to the liberation movement. They make up 45 percent of the guerrilla army and 90,000 women belong to the Maoists' women's committee in the Red Corridor. That, as Arundhati points out, makes it the largest women's organisation in India

The Prime Minister of India says the Maoists are the country's biggest internal security threat.

Indeed they are a threat. They are undermining the old feudal and caste bondage and standing in the way of corporate power. They are for development and progress, but in a way that serves the needs of the people not the corporates.

The Maoists are transforming the lives of millions:

- They have distributed hundreds of thousands of acres of land among peasant households and women are also given property rights over land. This is India's biggest land reform programme.
- They are developing more advanced agriculture both on private land and co-operatively. The development of agriculture is being done without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- They have built dams, ponds and water channels for breeding fish and for irrigation, and dug wells for safe drinking water. This has been done through collective labour and the produce is distributed free to every household.
- They have built a health care system which reaches every tribal peasant in every village. Each village has a Medicine Unit which has

