

alleged miscounting of tribal population. The demand, therefore, for a separate political unit does not appear to be in the larger interest of the plains tribals of the north eastern region as a whole.

GENUINE GRIEVANCES

Though the demand for a separate state for the Bodos has naturally overshadowed many of the important issues thrown up by the ABSU(UB)-led movement, yet the question of viability of such a homeland need not necessarily be the central point in a discussion on the tribal demands. Ever since the PTCA was formed in 1967, the Bodos, and occasionally the other scheduled tribes acting under a predominantly Bodo middle class leadership, have been trying to draw the state government's attention to their overall plight, ranging from the land question to employment. It is true that the AGP government could have acted with a greater degree of promptness and sympathy to the ABSU(UB) demands; instead initially it tried to tackle the agitation as a law and order problem, resulting in a series of police excesses which further alienated the tribal population; yet it is also true that the AGP government has only inherited a legacy of long years of socio-economic neglect and land alienation as far as the plains tribals are concerned. With the pressure on tribal land mounting and additional employment shrinking, the emerging Bodo middle class organised itself politically and, like its Assamese counterpart, made the issue of language one of the main planks in its struggle. Just as in the case of the Assamese middle class, land and language have become the main rallying points of the Bodo ethnic revival.

The Assamese middle class, instead of viewing the Bodo demands with a measure of sympathy and understanding, viewed these as threats to the composite Assamese identity. The decision to make Bodo an associate official language in the Kokrajhar district and the Udalguri subdivision was a half-hearted measure which is yet to be implemented. The condition of Bodo-medium schools is decidedly pitiable and not much governmental effort has been made to produce standard textbooks and appoint qualified teachers. A big backlog exists in most of the government jobs reserved for the scheduled tribes. Figures up to 1986 reveal that while in the upper echelons, the backlog is not much, in the fourth-grade jobs there is a considerable backlog. For example, up to 1986, out of the 83 fourth-grade jobs (10 per cent of the total) reserved for the scheduled tribes of the plains in the secretariat at Dispur, only 17 had been filled up. Thus, the neglect of the plains

tribals goes back to the Congress-ruled days and the major failure of the AGP has been that it has made no serious effort to change the situation. Rather, it has attempted to continue the Congress legacy and even perfect it. The districts of Kokrajhar, Darrang, Lakhimpur and Kamrup are amongst the least developed. Poverty is a common factor for both the tribal and the non-tribal peasants and in Kokrajhar district the Rajbangshis who are the most populous group are as badly off as, if they

are not worse off than, their scheduled tribe brethren. It would perhaps be too much to expect of the AGP government to remedy a situation which has been created by long years of neglect by successive Congress governments. But the AGP could at least have made a sincere attempt towards reducing the imbalances. Instead, the AGP government seems too enmeshed in its narrow calculations to be able to give heed to genuine tribal grievances.

Pitting the Tribals against the Non-Tribal Poor

K Balagopal

Expropriation of the lands of the non-tribal landlords and a rationalisation of the state's monopoly over forest land and forest produce will go a long way towards solving the problems of the tribals and the non-tribal poor in the tribal areas of the East Godavari district. This is the truth that the state does not want the people to realise and so it pits the interests of the tribals against those of the 'small' non-tribal landholders.

EAST GODAVARI is perhaps the most picturesque district of Andhra Pradesh. The Godavari delta, which forms the major part of its coastal region, vies with the Kerala coastline in its beauty and charm, though on closer acquaintance one is bound to be struck by one sharp difference: the lack of anything resembling a system of drainage to complement the canal system of the Godavari *anicut* makes the delta more hospitable to mosquitoes than to human beings, to the point of being nearly uninhabitable in some areas and some seasons for the poorer sections of the people. To a casual visitor, however, the criss-crossing canals, the closely planted paddy fields, the fishery tanks and of course the inimitably beautiful coconut groves combine to create a picture of enduring charm and appeal.

Away from the coast, across the fifth national highway, are the rising slopes of the longest unbroken stretch of proper hills that the Eastern Ghats can boast of; the range starts a little beyond Rajahmundry and goes on and on at an average peak-height of between 3,500 and 4,000 feet, through Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, and ends up well beyond Jeypore and Rayagada in Orissa. This range is the sentinel that guards the south-eastern corner of the great Central Indian Plateau. The north-east of this plateau—Chattisgarh—has found historians and journalists to write of the unremitting struggles of its tribal people, but the Koyas and Konda Reddis of the Godavari Agency, and the

Savaras, Jatapus, Kondhs and Bagatas to their north, have waged an equally tenacious—if intermittent—struggle for centuries against the encroachment of plainspeople and their state, and more particularly during the last century and a half against the oppressive consequences of imperialist depredation and 'development'. Even as their struggle pre-dates the demarcation of their homeland as an Agency area, it has continued right through all the welfare laws and institutions that are the *raison d'être* and the necessary consequence of the demarcation, right down to this very day. These *fituris* of the Rampa region, as the British called them, have yet to find the historian they deserve.

THE DELTA AND THE HILLS

The Delta, however, has remained largely indifferent to and unaffected by the troubles of the hills. The only time the tribals descended to the plains was in the mid-sixteenth century, when they raided Fluru, much to the south of the Godavari delta. The two major streams that the Godavari splits into just below Rajahmundry enclose the delta in a seemingly impregnable embrace; and the names of the streams, Gowthami and Vasishtha, stand testimony to its brahminical thick skin, which makes it impregnable in more than a physical sense. The delta is the most intensely brahminical region of the state; it is a centre of brahmin tradition as well

NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the public that M/S **GLINDIA LIMITED**, proposes to give to the Central Government in the Department of Company Affairs, New Delhi, a notice under sub-section (1) of section 21 of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969, for substantial expansion of their undertaking. Brief particulars of the proposal are as under:

1. Name and address of the owner of the undertaking : **M/s Glindia Limited,**
Dr Annie Besant Road,
Worli, Bombay 400 025
2. Capital structure of the owner organisation : Authorised capital: 2,10,00,000
shares of Rs. 10/- each.
Issued and Subscribed: 2,00,00,000
shares of Rs. 10/ each.
3. Location of the unit or division to be expanded : Manzurgarhi, Aligarh, U.P.
4. In case the expansion relates to the production, storage, supply, distribution, marketing or control of goods, indicate:
 - (i) Names of goods : (Item 27(5)-I (D&R) Act, 1951, i.e. Processed Foods):
Cereal Foods.
 - (ii) Licensed capacity before expansion : 3472 Tonnes per annum
 - (iii) Expansion proposed : (By way of regularisation of Registered Capacity): 8400
Tonnes per annum
5. In case the expansion relates to any service, state the extent of expansion in terms of usual measures such as, value, turnover, income, etc. : Not applicable
6. Cost of the project : Rs. 45 Lakhs
7. Scheme of finance indicating the amounts to be raised from each source. : Retained Earnings—Rs. 45 Lakhs

Any person interested in the matter may make a representation in quadruplicate to the Secretary, Department of Company Affairs, Government of India, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi, within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice, intimating his views on the proposal and indicating the nature of his interest therein.

GLINDIA LIMITED

M. B. KAPADIA
COMPANY SECRETARY

Registered Office:

Dr Annie Besant Road
Worli
Bombay 400 025

Dated this nineteenth day of May 1989

as brahmin reform, the reform as insular as the tradition. Indeed, rather remarkably, it is the towns sandwiched between the turbulent Agency area north of the Godavari on one side and the Bay of Bengal on the other—from Rajahmundry to Barampur (Bcrhampur)—that have produced almost all the brahmin reformers of the Telugu nation, the equivalents of the *bhadralok* reformers of what used to be called the Bengal Renaissance (the equivalence was part of their self-perception: Kandukuri Veeresalingam, the most eminent of them, was proudly acclaimed the 'Iswarchandra Vidyasagar of Andhra'), and yet there is not a whisper in the reformers' writings about the troubles of the hills.

The Agency has remained equally indifferent to this brahminism, its reforms included. It has gone its way, fighting the British state, the non-tribal land-grabbers and moneylenders, and its own oppressive *muttadars*, tribal chiefs converted into revenue intermediaries during Asafjahi rule and continued in that position by the British. The best known struggle was the one led by Alluri Seetarama Raju, himself a plainsman-turned-ascetic, which lasted two full years from 1922 to 1924 and spread all over the Agency area from Bhadrachalam to Srikakulam. But the Agency has known no real 'peace' of any considerable duration for the last hundred years and more.

There has, however, been some change in the issues the tribals are fighting over. For one thing, as the times progress, the needs of the ruling classes undergo change. Since all their needs turn into a form of oppression of the people, the change in their objective interest is given the form of an accommodation to the people's protest. The *muttadari* system was needed by the pre-colonial and colonial states at a time when land revenue and related taxes were a major source of the income of the ruling classes. The tribals hated it both for the plunder it entailed and the oppressive practices the *muttadars* developed using their power. But the abolition of *muttadari* came only long after the British left, and long after land revenue ceased to be an important source of the state's income, though it was made to appear as a concession to the tribals' demand. On close examination, this is the nature of all the reforms that have been given effective form in tribal areas. Tries legitimisation of the criticism and condemnation of the greedy private traders operating in tribal tracts is another example. The tribals have been smarting under that exploitation for centuries, going back to well before British rule, but it was only when the modern Indian state (beginning with the colonial state) decided

that the forests are too valuable to be left to the degradations of petty traders, that efforts to control their activities were initiated. Both these reforms—abolition of *muttadari*, enactment of legislation banning private trade in minor forest produce, and the setting up of Tribal (Girijan) Co-operative Corporations to replace the private trader—were undertaken post-1970, in the aftermath of the Srikakulam uprising, and trumpeted as reforms meant to assuage tribal unrest.

ALIENATION OF TRIBAL LAND

But when it becomes necessary to give institutional or statutory accommodation, to a demand of the people *before* that becomes objectively convenient for the ruling classes, the demand has been either consistently suppressed with brute force or accommodated merely on paper. Land is the most obvious example. Land-grabbing by non-tribal plains people, whether by legal sanction (for instance, a land grant) or physical eviction or in settlement of high-interest debts, is a long-standing problem of the forest-dwellers. Indian rulers from Mauryan to British times have supported such eviction ostensibly in the interest of extending cultivation and really in the interest of increased revenue to the state. So long as the tribals had the option of retreating further into the forests and clearing some more land for cultivation, there was at least a solution available, but with the rise of commercial and industrial uses of forests and consequent 'protection' of forests, this option has been effectively closed.

The protection of forests in the form of 'reservation' is an extremely arbitrary act. It has no norms excepting the whims of the state. Lands that have been under the plough for decades, and plots that have housed tribal families for equally long periods, are suddenly converted into forests by fiat. And then not only cultivation and residence but also the grazing of cattle, the collection of firewood or timber for house construction and the gathering of minor forest produce for sale becomes illegal and therefore prohibitively costly in terms of bribes, fines and court expenses. The struggle against this arbitrary monopolisation of nature has over the years assumed greater and greater importance as an object of tribal struggles, even as the problem of land alienation by non-tribals continues.

To this problem of land, the state has no answer excepting a lot of double talk. On the one hand any opposition to the state's monopolisation of the forests in the name of development—or even ecological balance for that matter—is taboo, and on the other, land-alienation by plains people

is something one sheds copious tears over, but does nothing to set right. It was in the year 1917 (close on the heels of a two-year long hit-and-run tribal insurgency in the Godavari Agency) that the British enacted the first Agency Tract Interest and Land Transfer Act. 72 years and many more enactments later, about 56 per cent of the cultivable land in the scheduled areas (about 8.7 lakh acres) is in the ownership of non-tribals, while the extent of land restored to tribals under these enactments is about 9 per cent of this area (about 80,000 acres). And if anybody can ever manage to estimate the extent of agricultural land that is nominally in the ownership of tribals but is actually being held and cultivated by non-tribals, then these statistics will reveal an even more miserable state of affairs.

Without admitting, and accounting for, this failure, the government of AP is now acting as if there is no problem left, and on the contrary it is the difficulties of the non-tribal settlers that have got to be remedied. They are allegedly being harassed by the uncertain prospect of being evicted any day and are therefore unable to develop the lands they have grabbed. The restriction on the sale of land in scheduled areas is another alleged hindrance. The sentimental argument is being put forward that a farmer who needs to sell some land to get a daughter married off is deprived of that convenience. On this plea the state government recently announced its intention to scrap Regulation I of 1970, the last and purportedly the most severe of the enactments made during the last 70 years and more to protect the tribals from non-tribal land-grabbers. The regulation puts on the non-tribal landholder in a scheduled area the burden of proving that the land was not acquired in contravention of the law; it prohibits not only the sale of tribal land to non-tribals but also the sale of land by one non-tribal to another in scheduled areas, for if such sales are allowed, then in the event of any tribal filing a claim to such land, the proof or disproof of such claim will become very difficult. And it adds the clause that if any non-tribal landholder nevertheless wishes to dispose of land, then the government must buy it and give it to landless tribals.

ANTI-TRIBAL POLICIES

This regulation was one more consequence of the Srikakulam uprising. What is remarkable about it is that though the consolidation of land alienation laws for the newly created state of Andhra Pradesh took place in the year 1959 (the AP Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation), the rules required for its implemen-

NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the public that **ZUARI AGRO CHEMICALS LIMITED** proposes to make an application to the Central Government in the Department of Company Affairs, New Delhi, under sub-section (2) of Section 22 of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 for approval of the establishment of a new undertaking/unit/division.

Brief particulars of the proposal are as under:

- 1 Name and address of the applicant : ZUARI AGRO CHEMICALS LIMITED,
Jai Kisaan Bhavan,
Zuarinagar, Goa 403 726.
- 2 Capital structure of the applicant organisation : The capital structure of Zuari Agro Chemicals Ltd is as under:

	Rs. in lakhs	Rs. in lakhs
Share capital Authorised: 1,27,50,000 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each	1275	
4,25,000 redeemable cumulative preference shares of Rs. 100 each	<u>425</u>	<u>1700</u>
Issued and subscribed: 1,24,26,400 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each fully paid up	1242.64	
4,02,180 15% redeemable cumulative preference shares of Rs. 100 each fully paid up	<u>402.18</u>	<u>1644.82</u>
Add: Paid up amount on forfeited shares		<u>0.06</u>
		<u>1644.88</u>
- 3 Management structure of the applicant organisation indicating the names of the Directors, including the Managing/Wholtime Directors and Manager, if any : ZUARI AGRO CHEMICALS LIMITED.
The Company is managed by a Board of Directors comprising of the following Directors:
Mr. K.K. Birla, Mr. C.A. Corry, (alternate Mr. S.Y. Rege),
Mr. R.P. Fitton (alternate Mr. A.R.Wadia),
Mr. David Hjelmeland (alternate Mr. D.B.Engineer),
Mr. D.P. Mandelia (alternate Mr. R.Maheshwari)
Mr. S.V.Muzumdar, Mr. E.R.J.Neunuebel (alternate Mr. C.H.Pardiwala),
Mr. J.R.Shields (alternate Mr. H.C.Asher),
Mr. S.Gopalan (IDBI nominee), Mr. R.C.Wortley.
- 4 Indicate whether the proposal relates to the establishment of a new undertaking or a new unit/division. : The proposal relates to establishing a new undertaking.
- 5 Location of the new undertaking/unit/division : Zuarinagar, Goa 403 726
- 6 Capital structure of the proposed undertaking : The proposed undertaking will be a part of the applicant company whose capital structure is given at (2) above.
- 7 In case the proposal relates to the production, storage, supply, distribution, marketing or control of any goods/articles, indicate:
 - (i) Name of goods/articles : Optical Fibre Cables
 - (ii) Proposed licensed capacity : 20,000 fibre km/annum
 - (iii) Estimated annual turnover : Rs. 35 crores
- 8 In case the proposal relates to the provision of any service, state the volume of activity in terms of usual measures such as value, income, turnover etc : Not applicable
- 9 Cost of the project : Rs. 63 crores
- 10 Scheme of finance, indicating the amounts to be raised from each source : Internal resources Rs. 21 crores
Term Loan and/or debentures Rs. 42 crores

Any person interested in the matter may make a representation in quadruplicate to the Secretary, Department of Company Affairs, Government of India, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice, intimating his views on the proposal and indicating the nature of his interest therein.

for **ZUARI AGRO CHEMICALS LTD.,**
(B.B. SHARMA)
Company Secretary

Date the 15th day of May 1989.

tation were not framed for ten years, that is until the Srikakulam uprising broke out and was drenched in the blood of 'encounters'. But as soon as Regulation 1 of 1970 was enacted, the non-tribals reacted strongly against it, and one of them, Pandiri Rami Reddy by name, went to court challenging it in 1971. The Regulation spent nearly 18 years in court before the Supreme Court upheld it and blessed it with constitutional sanction. But no sooner had the non-tribals lost their plea with the judiciary than they won it with the executive; not merely the party in power, but the *entire* legislative opposition, including the two communist parties (which are making embarrassed noises now) put pressure on the Telugu Desam government to repeal the regulation which it had, with seeming tenacity, defended for 18 years in court. Some procedural legitimisation was needed, and so the Tribal Advisory Council, consisting of MLAs from scheduled tribe constituencies and bureaucrats of relevant departments, was put under heavy pressure to 'recommend' the repeal, and was reportedly convened 16 times to achieve this end. Ultimately it did 'recommend' the repeal, and the state government then announced its intention to repeal the regulation it had never begun to implement. Some moral legitimisation was also needed, and therefore much emphasis was put on the difficulties of the small non-tribal landholders in scheduled areas. It is the harassment they are suffering that is being put forward as the moral justification for the repeal.

Since the small and medium non-tribal landholders are quite numerous in the scheduled areas, this ruse is intended to create a mass-base for the state's anti-tribal policies, and an assured following for the non-tribal landlords whose aims go well beyond the repeal of one regulation or two. Way back in 1979, the then Congress chief minister of the state, Marri Chenna Reddy, had issued a GO exempting 'small' landholders holding up to 5 acres of wet land or 10 acres of dry land from the operation of the land alienation laws. The high court then struck down the GO as improper; and, constitutionality apart, given the widely varying conditions of cultivation in the state, this definition of a 'small' landholder is extremely dubious. The owner of a 10-acre plot in the black cotton soils of Adilabad, or a 10-acre orchard of mango or cashew in the East Godavari or Visakhapatnam Agency, is far from being a 'small' landholder; and the same is true of the owner of 5 acres of wet land in the ayacut of perennial irrigation tanks like Laknavaram or Pakhal in the scheduled area of Warangal, or in the ayacut of the minor irrigation

projects on mountain streams that abound in and around the Parvatipuram Agency of the old Srikakulam district. In any case this small non-tribal landholder is much like the poor brahmin who is invariably dragged into the argument while opposing reservations in jobs to backward classes. The existence of poor people among groups which are characterised by attributes which connote structural—statutory or social—privilege, is no argument against safeguarding the less privileged groups from inequality and oppression. As for the desired unity of the poor-tribal and non-tribal—there is much scope for real (as opposed to forced) unity: lack of access to forest land and other forest produce like timber and grazing; corrupt and oppressive practices of the forest officials as well as revenue and tribal welfare officials; low wages paid for procuring minor forest produce (tendu leaf, and gum, for instance); low wages paid for casual labour in the forest development corporation's depots; all these are common problems which have united the tribal and non-tribal poor in the scheduled areas in a joint struggle against the state and other oppressive forces, under the leadership of the CPI(ML) groups. In particular, expropriation of the lands of the non-tribal landlords in the scheduled areas, and a thorough rationalisation of the state's monopoly over forest land as well as forest produce, will go a long way in solving the problems of the tribals and the non-tribal poor. This is the truth that the state does not want the people to realise and so it pits the interests of the tribals against those of the 'small' non-tribal landholders.

TRIBALS AND FORESTS

When such a consistently deceitful attitude determines the fate of the land occupied by non-tribals, the tribals have no option except to cut down more forests and cultivate the land. The extent of this need is indicated by some statistics: while the non-tribals own about 8.7 lakh acres in the scheduled areas (almost all of it being land held by tribals at one time), the tribals own only about 7.0 lakh acres. While the state government has restored only 80,000 acres to the tribals through the operation of its laws, the tribals have (according to the government's own allegation) cut down more than 1 lakh acres of forest land and are cultivating it with the active support of the naxalite groups. This explains why the largest single category of 'encounter' victims in AP are tribals. It explains why nearly two full battalions of the central reserve police force and various categories of special police are roaming around the scheduled

areas of the state in search of prey. It also explains why the burning down of tribal hamlets and the eviction of the inhabitants on the plea that they are illegally cultivating forest land is the major form of police lawlessness in the state. In this, the tribals of the Agency area of East Godavari district have been the most severe sufferers. The number of houses burnt down, the number of people tortured and the number of women raped by the police during the last five years within the police station limits of Addateegala and Rampachodavaram has no adequate count. It is an educative commentary on the nation's history that the names of the police stations and outposts that occur in this tale of horror—Addateegala, Rampachodavaram, Mampa, Jeddangi, and Gudem, Krishnadevipet and Chintapalli in the neighbouring Visakhapatnam Agency—are precisely the same that recur again and again in the remembered tales of attack and seizure of police weapons by the roving bands of Alluri Seetarama Raju and his militants more than 65 years ago. We have not progressed much in many matters.

The plains have remained as indifferent as ever, as silent as they were in the face of the brutal suppression of the *oldy futuris* of *Rampa*. But this time round the Agency is taking its revenge, though unfortunately in a perverse way. The culture of brutal policing that has governed the hills for many decades has now finally descended to the delta. And from the rebellious tribals it has spread to respectable and nominally influential members of society, to wit, journalists and Janata Dal and Telugu Desam leaders. For the last six months there has been a continuous flow of news from Rajahmundry about the lawless behaviour of the town's policemen without any provocation whatsoever. Right now a judicial inquiry is on against an assistant superintendent of police by name Rajiv Trivedi, for having allegedly gone berserk one day and beaten up Janata Dal and TDP leaders. And during the tumultuous week that followed the murder of V M Ranga Rao at Vijayawada, a party of journalists equipped with curfew passes was thrashed gleefully by him in full knowledge that he could easily claim immunity in the prevailing climate of tension. But the real target he had in mind was a young journalist by name Sivaramkumar, who has suffered unprecedented persecution at the hands of the police of East Godavari district during the last one year.

POLICE LAWLESSNESS

Sivaramkumar edits and publishes a local paper called *Gowthami Times*, He

is the only one to have taken a vocal stand against the culture of lawlessness that pervades the policing of the district. Though his writings are a little adventurist and not always polite, his courage in questioning the behaviour of the superintendent of police is undoubted- In retaliation for this boldness the police of the district have subjected him to merciless harassment. Last March he was arrested four times and charged with abduction, blackmail, theft and arson, the last under the Terrorist Act. (I do not know if any other journalist in the country has been held under the Terrorist Act.) He was openly threatened that they could take him to the Agency area and shoot him dead and call it an 'encounter' and no questions would be asked. And at each stage his persecutors made it clear to him that they were acting under the direction of the superintendent of police. The last time he was arrested, the SP met him in person and told him to fold up his paper and leave the district, or else...

But he would not bend. Instead he filed a private complaint against the SP alleging illegal detention, harassment, implication in false criminal cases and theft of printing material. This audacity infuriated the police further, and they waited for a chance to teach him a lesson. The chance came with the murder of Congress(1) MLA Ranga Rao at Vijayawada. The murder took place on December 26, 1988. Rioting broke out in most towns of coastal Andhra Pradesh, and curfew was imposed. Journalists were issued curfew passes to go round the towns and gather information, and Sivaramkumar naturally wanted a pass for himself too. What the police did is best described by quoting from the signed complaint he has filed before the Press Council:

On the morning of 27th December the president and secretary of the Press Club of Rajahmundry prepared a list of the journalists in the town and submitted it to the superintendent of police, Dr D T Naik, for issue of curfew passes. The SP struck off my name and issued passes for the others.

On the 27th, 28th and 29th I moved around without a curfew pass, in the company of the other reporters, and filed stories for my paper. On the 29th morning, as our group of press reporters were walking along a street, a group of special policemen accosted us. Though those reporters who had passes immediately showed their passes, the policemen thrashed all of them with lathis. They were thus driven away, and I was arrested and taken to II town police station. Immediately after being put in lockup, some plainclothes policemen came there, took me out of lockup and beat me up mercilessly. Later, at about 9.00 pm, the SI came there. He made me undress down to my underwear and locked me up. Soon, two eunuchs (*hijras*)

were brought from some where and put in the same lockup.

At about 9.30 pm, the ASP of Rajahmundry Mr Rajiv Trivedi came there along with Mr Govinda Narasimhulu, SI of I town police station, and an assistant SI of I town police station. The SI had a camera attached with a flash bulb in his hand. The ASP dragged me out of the lockup, made me remove even my underwear, and thrashed me unremittingly for one full hour on my naked skin. Then I was photographed in that condition. The ASP then directed the 55 policemen who were in the station compound to come inside and hit me on my head one by one with their boots. Then he himself put his feet on my head and declared that *Gowthami Times* was now under his heel.

Then the two eunuchs in the lockup were asked to come out. They were also forced to undress. Then myself and the eunuchs were forced to adopt indecent postures, and we were photographed forty times in different postures. When I asked for some water to drink out of exhaustion, the ASP tried in vain to make the eunuchs urinate in my mouth. Seeing that I was resisting his efforts, the ASP beat me so badly that I lost consciousness. After I regained consciousness, I was brought out of the police station, and at about 2.45 pm in the night I was forced to run stark naked up and down the street. I ater the ASP again put me in lockup and thrashed me. Throughout he kept demanding that I should leave Rajahmundry, stop publishing *Gowthami Times*, and give up the profession of journalism. He threatened me that if I did not obey I would be shot dead. A tape-recorder was brought and I was forced to make all kinds of allegations info it against other journalists and important persons of Rajahmundry town. I was beaten continuously throughout this process, and I finally lost consciousness again. Then I was thrown into the lockup and the ASP left.

At about midnight of 30th December I was taken in a jeep to Rampachodavaram police station. On 31st night I was again brought to II town police station, Rajahmundry. On 1st January some (ongress(1) activists were brought to the police station on the charge of having burnt a bus in protest against Ranga Rao's murder. That evening they were produced in court, and on the mid-night on 1st I was taken to I town police station. On the morning of 2nd, the SI Mr Govinda Narasimhulu came there and took me out of lockup and told me that if I desisted from writing anything against the SP and the police department, I would get off with a minor case, and the SP would help me in my future life, I was made to put my signature on some blank papers.

In the evening, at about 7.30 pm, the ASP Mr Rajiv Trivedi came again, took me out of the lockup, and beat me horribly. He used three lathis, one after the other. He also told me that all that he had done was on the instructions of the SP, Dr D T Naik.

On the evening of 3rd, the SI took me out of lockup and told me that if I restarted the paper or even continued to live in Rajahmundry town or Cast Godavari district, the SP

and ASP would not let me live, and I had better leave the district

It was on the evening of January 4 that Sivaramkumar's arrest was recorded by the police. He was shown as having been arrested in connection with the burning of a bus in protest against Ranga Rao's murder. The crime was booked under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act. It took him more than three weeks to obtain bail, and he is back in Rajahmundry again, preparing to resume his paper against all odds. The odds include not only the bunch of sadists dressed up as policemen who are ruling the district, but also the deafening silence of the journalists' unions of the state who take to the streets in vocal protest if a journalist of the big press is so much as beaten by a traffic constable for parking his scooter in the wrong place, but have not expressed one word of protest against what the police have done to Sivaramkumar, for (they allege on the strength of police information) his paper is a 'yellow' paper and he is a blackmailer. Such priggishness would be out of place at any time, but is positively laughable at a time when the entire 'national press' as much as the respectable 'regional press' has given up all pretence to objective reporting and balanced comment, and has visibly descended into the murky world of political manoeuvres.

Niwas Spinning

NIWAS SPINNING MILLS, which made a public issue of equity capital a couple of years ago and is engaged in production of cotton and synthetic yarns, is now operating at over 90 per cent of its installed capacity of 2,000 tonnes per annum. The company is entering the export market by establishing a 100 per cent export-oriented unit at a cost of Rs 5 crore. The unit with a capacity of 5,000 terri towels per day will be equipped with imported plant and machinery from world renowned suppliers who will also provide technical know-how and set up the plant on a turnkey basis. The potential areas of the company's exports are the USSR, the US, Europe and the Gull countries. The company also intends to sell a part of its production in the domestic market, as may be permitted by the government.

The company is offering partly convertible debentures to the existing shareholders on a 'Rights' basis to part finance the proposed new unit. The debentures of Rs 250 each will carry interest at 14 per cent per annum, payable half yearly. A sum of Rs 50 out of each debenture will be converted into 5 equity shares of Rs 10 each at par on expiry of 6 months from the date of allotment. The existing equity shares of the company are quoted in the Bombay market at Rs 45 each.