



जागृत आदिवासी दलित संगठन

मध्य प्रदेश

Press release 29.08.23

Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan activist Nitin arrested in Burhanpur

In the continuing assault on Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan ,on 28.08.23, Nitin, an activist of Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan has been arrested after being implicated in a false case. This is the latest in a series of attacks by Madhya Pradesh government against Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan over the past few months when in addition to campaigning for Forest Rights and they started protesting against state connivance in massive deforestation in Burhanpur district .

On 2nd March, 35 Adivasis of Guarkheda (Baladi) village had been arrested following a fracas with forest department personnel, and Nitin's name was added later even though he was not present during the incident . 4 tribals including two women of Guarkheda (Baladi Panchayat) forcefully taken away from their homes by forest personnel. People of the village attempted to find them and also informed Sangathan activists, including Nitin of the incident. Nitin immediately contacted the DFO and District Collector, Burhanpur, seeking their intervention in the matter to ensure that due process of law is followed and no violence is committed against those picked up. The villagers were also informed about this conversation.

According to the villagers, when people reached the Burhanpur range office in search of the four picked up by the forest personnel, they heard them screaming from being beaten up, from inside a locked room. It is alleged that that a clash between the villagers and the forest officials ensued , after which 35 adivasis including 15 women were arrested by the police .

Recently we came to know that Burhanpur Police has made Nitin a co-accused in this case, and it is being alleged that Nitin incited the attack on the range office via the phone! Upon surrendering before the Court Nitin has been arrested today, and been remanded to police custody . Upon being summoned by the police to record his statement , Nitin had twice gone to Lalbagh PS in March , but both times the police had put it off on different pretexts. After the Sangathan publicly protested the role of the administration in the massive deforestation in the area, the activists of the organization began to be targeted by the police and administration alike.

Due to the awareness generated by activists of Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan regarding the Forest Rights Act and other constitutional rights of Adivasis, the organization has been subject to malicious prosecution by the forest department. The most recent attacks of repression started recently against the organization when it publicly opposed the administrative collusion in deforestation of over 15000 acres of pristine forests. Organization activists Antram Awase and Dilip Sisodia were sent to jail, adivasi activists were implicated in many cases and Sangathan activist Madhuri was externed from the district !

Burhanpur has a long history of atrocities against Adivasis, where the forest department has routinely picked up, illegally detained and beaten people over the years. The entire community can attest to the lakhs that have been extorted over decades by corrupt forest officials for allowing their forefathers to settle and cultivate in the area. Through Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan, tribals are raising their voice, demanding their forest rights and constitutional rights and are firmly opposing atrocities being committed against them.

Since graduating from the reputed "Tata Institute of Social Sciences" (TISS), Nitin has been with Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Organization for the past 5 years and has played an active role in the organization's awareness campaign for legal forest rights.

Adivasis members of JADS reached Burhanpur in large numbers and protested Nitin's arrest which they said was an attack on their non-violent struggle for legal and constitutional rights. Nitin Bhai has been falsely implicated. We are not going to be cowed down by such attacks, but will unite and continue to fight for our rights!

On behalf of JADS :

Antaram Awase, Ashabai Solanki , Nasribai Ningwal, Valsing Sastia