

## **Let Us Move to Realise the Aims of Martyrs of the Kondamodalu Adivasi Movement!**

# **Make the 37th Memorial Meetings of Comrades Kunjam Rajulu, Madem Laxmaiah-A Success!!**

## **Revolutionary Homages to all the Martyrs of Revolutionary, Adivasi Movement!!!**

35 years back, i.e; on November 29 of 1982, a life and death battle for land had taken place in Kondamodalu. Comrades Kunjam Rajulu, Madem Laxmaiah became Martyrs while resisting the police in defense of their crops. On the eve of 37th year of their remembrance, we pay our revolutionary homages to these Martyrs of adivasi movement. We are recollecting the sacrifices of the Martyrs of this movement at a time when the Kondamodalu adivasi movement is continuing even today in the face of many conspiracies.

Before 1969, the Landlords in Kondamodalu had grabbed away 14 acres land of an adivasi family towards the amount they lent which was enough only to buy a pair of cloth. Adivasis lost all their lands in playing the exorbitant rates of interests on loans and cheated by wrong measurements. They were reduced into bonded labor in their own lands. The forest officials were not allowing the shift cultivation in the reserved lines. They were not allowing the adivasis to cut the bamboo shoots. It was in 1969 when the adivasi movement had begun in Kondamodalu. It was sankranthi festival time. The role of people in the movement was brought to the fore by a hard and dedicated and organized method of work by a few active cadres under the leadership of the Committee. Within a few days, the land struggles of adivasis had begun in Kondamodalu and extended upto Nelakota. The struggles on the demands of agricultural labor, podu and debts were won. By June, 1969, it developed into a programme of seizing back their own lands and crops under the illegal occupation of landlords. It went on like a resistance movement of one level. About 360 acres of paddy land, jawar and thil crops in 700 acres came under the occupation and consumption of the adivasis. The govt. had unleashed a severe repression against this organized people's movement. Hundreds of adivasis were locked in Jails. The revolutionary Communist leaders Comrade Simhadri Subba Reddy, Shanti Raju and along with them adivasis, many revolutionary Communist sympathizers who stood by them were implicated in 75 cases of land grabbing. They were subjected to severe repression. They suffered for days together in Rajahmundry Central Jail.

In 1982, the Party had decided to re-organise the people into struggle to win back the lands they lost in 1969 as a consequence of repression. With the lifting of Emergency in the Country and the release of Comrades, the efforts continued to organize and move into an organized action. The people began to win small victories. However, the 1969 situation had again repeated. On November 29, 1982, the movement had taken another important turn.

As it was the case with the landlords in 1969, they continued to hatch the plans to frighten away the adivasis by killing a few of them. On one side, the leaders of landlords were thinking of teaching a lesson so hard to the adivasis that they would never dare to think of lands again. On the other side, the adivasis stood determined to defy all difficulties to protect the crops in the lands under their cultivation. Thus, the firing that took place on Nov' 29, 1982 was not an unexpected event. The landlords came with a well designed plan to destroy the crops and attack the adivasis. Kondamodalu adivasis -women, men and children enmasse-stood united under the leadership of Agency Girijan Sangham and repulsed this attack. They defied police tear gas attack. The landlords came with police who opened the fire on the people. The adivasis resisted it in every way possible for them. Firstly Kunjam Rajulu became a Martyr. Com.Laxmaiah surged ahead fighting daringly and was seriously wounded by the shot of police gun. The police intercepted and arrested Com.Laxmaiah's mother Gorre Laxmamma, Illa Rami Reddy and others who were taking the wounded comrade to hospital at Rampachodavaram. By then, Laxmaiah was dead. The police conducted the post-mortem, sent all the male persons to Jail and handed over the dead body to women. On their way back, the women buried Laxmaiah's body on the banks of Rampa canal and walked back to Kondamodalu. The great courage they had shown in this heart-breaking situation is really marvelous. The struggle continued even after the police firing. The women and men moved into action united to protect their crops. They did not care police camps. They seized every grain of seed which they had grown. Thus the struggle for land continued up to 1985. At last, the Govt. came with the announcement that the lands in Kondamodalu belong to the adivasis

and the non-advasis should violate their right of cultivation. The Supreme Court too came in support of it. The District Collector conducted a court inquiry into the orders given by the lower officers in favour of non-advasis landlords. The enquiry into 45 cases about 200 acres concluded that all orders given in favour of the landlords in those cases are null and void and the non-advasis occupying such lands must be evicted and the lands be handed over to the advasis. This verdict was not limited just to the cases connected to 200 acres. It examined the entire Kondamodalu land question comprehensively and gave the verdict applicable to all land problems here.

Thus the struggle of Kondamodalu advasi people together with the martyrdom of Rajulu and Laxmaiah had forced the Govt. to change its attitude. It made the govt. to accept that it was not correct to see the problems of advasis as just a law and order question. The collective efforts carried on by the advasis for cultivation after the Kondamodalu land struggle had enhanced the self respect and recognition of advasi people. The Sangham on its own had offered some land to non-advasis poor and asked them to live in a friendly relation with advasis and not to indulge in any sort of conspiracies. Since then to this day in 35 years, no law and order problem had cropped up in Kondamodalu. There is a rise in the standard of people's life. There is increase in the number of students. The Kondamodalu land struggle has brought the changes which the govt. could not have achieved even by spending crores of rupees. It stood as a ray of hope for advasi people in East and West Godavari and Khammam districts. The lands struggles are going on in several areas with the inspiration of Kondamodalu movement.

#### THE CONSPIRACIES OF AUTHORITARIAN CLASSES AND LANDLORD FORCES HAD AGAIN BEGUN

In the last 35 years, while the people were living peacefully in Kondamodalu. But, between 2012 and 2015, the landlords who were evicted from the lands were busy in their conspiracies against the movement. With the announcement of Polavaram project, they again had raised their hoods. They settled their packages with the local revenue officials by bribing them. They managed to get the notifications of land acquisition released in the name of non-advasis who were not at all present here. The advasis filed cases in the High Court questioning it. Then the authorities sat for talks with the elders of advasis. They agreed to purchase the land in Kondamodalu dispute and give it to 440 advasi families. They promised to arrange the payment of compensation to the advasis for 150 acres of bazar lands. They requested the advasi people to withdraw their cases in the High court. As this request came from an officer like the P.O., the advasis had trusted him and arrived at an agreement with the Officials. The signatures were attested on a M. O. U on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The officials themselves had submitted this M.O.U in the state High Court, informed the Court that they had already begun its implementation and requested for the withdrawal of the cases. Thereafter, the advasis had withdrawn the cases in the Court. Since then, some pro-landlord forces continued to conspire to create hurdles in the way of implementation of the M.O.U. They engineered the schemes to get verdicts in favor of the non-advasis in the name of Agency land cases and to see that the compensation was paid for them. They began trying the cases and even in the cases which were disposed in favour of the advasis in the District courts. They kept the advasis in dark about these deeds. But the advai people had smelt it. They had become parties to all these cases through the legal cell of ILTD. In the meanwhile, the Land Acquisition authorities had mentioned in the Award that Rs 22 crores be kept with the Polavaram Project Authority till the question to whom the compensation for the disputed Kondamodalu lands was to be paid was settled. The Land Acquisition Officer and the Judge of the Land Transfers Court happened to be one and the same. So he sought to give away the money to the non-advasis. The advasis understood this. So they took this impending danger to the notice of State Director, the Girijan Welfare. The Director of Girijan Welfare had issued the orders that the non-advasis must not be paid the compensation immediately even if the verdicts in the L.T.R courts come against the advasis. But the Special Deputy Collector, Land Acquisitions was so blatant that he thought of giving away the money to the landlords. Instead of depositing it with the Project Authority and without the knowledge of higher officials, he deposited Rs, 22 crores in his personal account in the Korukonda branch of SBI. He paid illegally Rs 4cr. 81 lakhs to 10 non-advasis on 20,21 July of 2019. On suspicion, the advasis sought to know the facts under the Right to Information Act which exposed the real story. The higher authorities are telling that they had set up "a Commission into this scandal and ordered for a suitable action against those responsible for it." But the advasis are demanding the govt. that Rs 4.81 Crores must be seized immediately and the officers and non-advasis responsible for it must be punished.

#### THE EXPERIENCE TELLS: THE STRUGGLE IS THE ONLY WAY!

Thus, the land struggle which began in 1969 is continuing even today. But it had changed its form. No struggle on land is going on today. It is going on in the form of repulsing the conspiracies that are being hatched in the dark rooms, changing the papers and through bribes, corrupt, and illegal means. It is going on to protect the legal rights of the advasis on lands. The land struggle today is linked with the ongoing struggle for a comprehensive rehabilitation of people.

Thus, in 50 years' long history, the Girijana Sangham and its leadership are carrying on an unflinching struggle. The leader like Com. Nakka Moshe (Somaiah) sacrificed everything for the people. The Martyr Com. Manam Rama Rao stood as a great support to the adivasi movement when the police firings were taking place in Kondamodalu. The committed leaders like Com. Jaswantha Rao, the adivasi leaders like Comrades Kundla Ganga Raju, Vejju Rami Reddy, Gorre Laxmamma, Kamala, who had taken birth and grown in the movement and worked as cadre and artiste, Vanjam Kannamma, Chintala Peddi Reddy and similarly many women and men adivasi elders and teen agers, the intimate friends like Com. Kondu kishtaiah and Surapaneni Sambaiah and Dr. B.D. Sharma, the close friend of adivasi people are no more now. But we can never forget their work for the adivasi people and movement. In this context, we pay our homages to all of them.

The October and November are crucial months in the struggle of adivasi people for lands. Comrades Koranna, Manganna (Oct'31) in Srikakulam; Com.Karam Parvathi (Nov'4) in Manugopula; Com. Jenni Tirupathi (Nov'17) in Duggeru became Martyrs. Their sacrifices do not go in vain. Let us pay our Red salutes to all the revolutionary leaders who became Martyrs in the course of revolutionary work to end the exploitation and oppression, the cruel rule of landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and imperialists and establish a New Democratic System in our Country. Let us march ahead to realize the aims of our Martyrs.

Red Salutes to Martyrs!

Long Live the Movements for Land and New Democracy!!

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**AGENCY GIRIJANA SANGHAM**  
**Affiliated to**  
**RYTHU COOLI SANGHAM [ANDHRA PRADESH]**

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