

Pressure mounts up against detention of Binayak Sen in Chattisgarh



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Pressure has been mounting against the detention of Dr Binayak Sen in Chattisgarh with swelling number of people demanding unconditional and immediate release of Sen. Petitions addressed to the Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Chattisgarh Chief Minister Dr Raman Singh, and others are swelling with numbers of people signing up from not only India but from expatriate community globally.

[Association for India's Development](#) activists expressed their grave disappointment at the rejection of Dr Sen's bail by the Supreme Court of India. Dr Sen was arrested on 14 May 2007 under the draconian law - Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act (CSPSA) 2006, which gives the state sweeping powers to act against those allegedly in contact with a naxalite leader in jail. Dr Sen maintains that these meetings occurred with due written permission of the state.

"More than 7 months since his arrest on vague and unsubstantiated charges under a draconian law, the State of Chhattisgarh is yet to produce any evidence against Dr Sen and continues to drag its feet at every opportunity" said AID activists.

Even as the State holds Dr Sen with no credible case or evidence against him, the actual naxalite problem has only worsened over the past months. The recent escalation of violence and rise in death toll as well as the security breach in Dantewada prison are just few dark indicators.

Dr Binayak Sen, who studied medicine at Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, is the General Secretary of the state's People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and a paediatrician and public health/social activist of repute. He has been working in Chhattisgarh on health, social and human rights issues for over 25 years. He is responsible for stellar contributions to the cause of healthcare for all in Chhattisgarh including

setting up the Shaheed Hospital for Mine Workers in Dalli Rajahara and the establishment of the Mitaneen program, a pioneering model putting the Village Health Worker at the forefront of rural healthcare.

Dr. Sen during his PUCL work brought to light the human rights situation in Bastar and Dantewada districts of the state, where a civil war like situation has been prevailing, even as the state propped up by providing money and arms, an organization called the Salwa Judum to supposedly counter the attendant naxalism.

Growing list of people from India and abroad are petitioning for:

- Dr Sen be immediately released and all cases against him be dropped
- Chhattisgarh Government takes immediate steps to restore peace and end the violence by the naxalites as well as the Salwa Judum
- State government ends its support to the Salwa Judum immediately
- State government looks after the interests of all citizens of Chhattisgarh including understanding the underlying reasons why the naxalite movement is gaining strength

"Dr Binayak Sen should be immediately released unconditionally by the state" said noted social activist and Magsaysay Awardee (2002) Dr Sandeep Pandey, who leads National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM). "Binayak Sen has made commendable contribution in responding to healthcare needs of the most underserved communities over decades now, and has brought hope and empowerment to tribal communities of Chattisgarh by strengthening people's voices to safeguard their rights and civil liberties" remarked Dr Pandey.

The state had earlier failed to save the life of a dedicated frontline activist Shankar Guha Niyogi years ago. People around the world are outraged by the continued detention of Dr Sen since more than 7 months now. It also puts a question mark on our democracy where voices of pro-poor activists are stifled by the state in one of the most outrageous manner. Hope the vanguards of justice are listening.

To sign the petition [click here](#)

- Bobby Ramakant

editor

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