



The Fifteenth Annual

# NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FORUM

February 14-15, 2003 • Concordia College • Moorhead, Minnesota

THE MOVEMENT FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE AND PEOPLE  
RESISTANCE TO GLOBALIZATION:  
A CASE STUDY FROM KSHIPUR, ORISSA, INDIA

3:30 p.m. • February 14 • Knutson Center Centrum



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# THE MOVEMENT FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE AND PEOPLE RESISTANCE TO GLOBALIZATION: A CASE STUDY FROM KASHIPUR, ORISSA, INDIA

Kashipur (Orissa, India) was gifted with abundance of nature. Starvation did not belong here. It is the result of waves of violence against nature and the tribal communities. It is a result of a brutal state ever present to snatch the resources of the tribals for industry and private corporations, but totally absent in providing welfare and security to the dispossessed tribals. The starvation deaths in Kashipur and other regions are a result of the ecological plunder of the resources of the region, the dismantling of the food security system under economic reform policies and the impact of climate changes which cause droughts and floods.

Twenty years ago, the pulp and paper industry raped the forests of Kashipur. Today the hills stand naked, and the paper mills are bringing Eucalyptus from neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The terrorism of the pulp industry has already left the region devastated. Now the giant mining companies — Hydro of Norway, Alcan of Canada, Indico, Balco/Sterlite of India — have unleashed a new wave terror. They are eyeing the bauxite in the majestic hills of Kashipur.

Bauxite is used for aluminium — aluminium that will go to make Coca-Cola cans and fighter planes. Imagine each mountain to be a World Trade Center built by nature over millennia. Think of how many tragedies bigger than what the world experienced on September 11th are taking place to provide raw material for insatiable industry and markets.

Mining has been “liberalised” and corporations are rushing to find minerals wherever they can. The aluminium companies want the homelands of the Kashipur tribals. But tribals of Kashipur refuse to leave their homes. They are defending the land and earth — through a non-violent resistance movement — the movement for the Protection of Nature and People. As Mukta Jhodia, an elderly woman leader of the movement said at a rally on 18th September, 2001 in Kashipur, “The earth is our mother. We are born of her. We are her children. The mining companies cannot force us to leave our land. This land was given to us by God and creation, not by the government. The government has no right to snatch our land from us.”

This forced appropriation of resources from people too is a form of terrorism — corporate terrorism, which was not only threatening to rob 200 villages of their survival base but had already robbed off their lives when they were shot and killed on 16th December 2000 by the police. Fifty million tribals who have been flooded out of their homes by dams over the past 4 decades were also victims of terrorism — they have faced the terror of technology and destructive development.

For the 30,000 people who died in the Orissa super-cyclone, and the millions who will die when flood and drought and cyclones become more severe because of climate change and fossil fuel pollution, President Bush is an ecological terrorist because he refuses to sign the Kyoto protocol. And the WTO was named the World Terrorist Organisation by citizens in Seattle because its rules are denying millions the right to life and livelihood.

The tragedy of September 11 provides us with an opportunity to stop all forms of

terrorism — militaristic, technological, economic, political. Terrorism will not be stopped by militarised minds which create insecurity and fear and hence breed terrorism.

Terrorism can only be stopped by cultures of peace, democracy, and people’s security. It is wrong to define the post September 11th world as a war between “civilisation and barbarianism” or “democracy and terrorism.” It is a war between two forms of terrorism which are mirror images of each other’s mindsets — mindsets based on this that can only conceive of monocultures and must erase diversity, the very pre-condition for peace. They share the dominant culture of violence. And their victims are innocent people everywhere. The real conflict is between citizens across the world longing to live in peace and security and forces of violence and terror — denying them peace and security.

The struggle of people in Kashipur is deeply significant because they embody a generous cosmology of peace — peace with the earth, peace between people, peace within people. This is the culture of peace we need to reclaim, and spread.

*Ref: Vandana Shiva, Z Magazine*

## DEVELOPMENT AT GUNPOINT

(Documentary – 37 minutes)

David Selvaraj and Mercy Kappen

VISTHAR, Bangalore, India

The path of India’s development model has been subject to more and more criticism during the last two or three decades. Those who advocate and promote the existing development model believe that development takes place in a linear manner and that economic affluence to few can be justified because development would trickle down to the vast majority. The critics, with sufficient experience, realized that the “trickle down” theory was in effect wiping out a vast section of marginalized people, ecology, culture and the very roots of human survival. Many social movements began with this framework and understanding. The struggles of the Adivasi, India’s tribal people, were the foremost among these movements because they were once of the most affected sections.

The Kashipur block of Raygada district in Orissa has emerged on the map of new social movements, questioning the destructive development model, from the year 1993. The Adivasi struggle in the region has been for life and livelihood. The development project of the bauxite mines threatened the lives of thousands of Adivasi as well as their environment.

The recent developments in bauxite mining came up as result of globalization. The Utkal Alumina International (UAIL), a consortium of Norsk Hydro of Norway, ALCAN of Canada and the Birla group, has initiated a plan to displace thousands of Adivasi in the region and produce bauxite, which is already produced much more than what India needs today. Hence, the idea is to wipe out the Adivasi and produce an ecological damaging substance which would come out as Coca-Cola cans or war planes in the long run. The Adivasi in the region have decided to question this route of modern development.

The project is believed to wipe out hundreds of streams in the region and pollute the very roots of survival. The growing struggle ended up in a police shooting recently. The police fired at an unarmed section of Adivasi in Maikhand village in Kashipur. Three Adivasi men were killed and several were wounded. But the struggle grew in a more determined manner. Norsk

Hydro of Norway came out of the project as a result of the intensified struggle. Today, the main promoters of the project are the Birlas and ALCAN of Canada. Both of these companies have a track record of total insensitivity to the impact of the production process on the lives of local people and environment.

The police shooting generated a lot of concern and support to the struggle from various sections in the country. This also sparked the production of a film called "Development at Gunpoint." The film brings out the problems through the voices of Adivasi themselves. It has captured the intensity of the struggle and determination of the struggling Adivasi. The idea behind the film is to strengthen the movement and generate support from all possible sections.



David Selvaraj is the founder-director of Visthar, a non-formal academy for development and peace studies based in Bangalore, South India. For 10 years he served the Swiss Protestant Church as their representative in India coordinating a hunger concerns project. Visthar caters to NGOs, church and academic institutions both in India and overseas. He has an academic background in sociology, theology and development education having studied in India, Singapore and England. Selvaraj also serves as the dean of Peace, Justice and Development Studies at Concordia College and Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota.

Mercy Kappen has a degree in social work (M.S.W.) and more than 20 years of experience in community development. She has read extensively in culture and gender studies. She coordinates the academic and training work at Visthar and offers consultancy for NGOs in India and overseas. Her published works include "Gandhi and Social Action Today" (Sterling Publishers 1990) and "Rethinking Gandhi in the Context of Globalization" (Visthar 1997).

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The 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Forum art was created by David J. Hetland, a 1969 graduate of Concordia College and world-renowned liturgical artist. Carrying a traditional olive branch, the dove of peace resolutely rises to embrace earth's whirling orb. Colorful mosaic-like shapes acknowledge both the unity and vast diversity of human civilization amid these fragile days in a hopeful world.

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