

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE TAMIL NADU NUCLEAR PLANT PROTESTORS

Of the 180 people detained in March for protesting against a nuclear power plant project in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, 148 have been released on bail. While 25 more may be released on bail during the next few days, seven others are likely to remain in jail.

On 27 March, following talks with the Tamil Nadu authorities, 15 protestors belonging to the People's Movement against Nuclear Energy (PMANE) led by teacher **Dr S P Udayakumar** called off their eight-day fast. They had been fasting in protest against plans for commissioning a Russian-built nuclear power plant next to the coastal village of Kudankulam. However, protestors at Idinthakarai village began a relay fast on 28 March which is ongoing. The protests were organized because local people felt that the nuclear plant would pose a danger to the health of local communities. The site will affect at least 15,000 people living nearby.

Many of the 180 protestors who were detained in March, including members of PMANE, have been charged with sedition and of "waging war against the state", and if convicted, they could face sentences as high as life imprisonment. Some have been charged with "conspiracy" and "rioting with deadly weapons".

Amnesty International believes the charges against these 180 protestors are false, and constitute a deliberate attempt by the authorities to silence the protests, which have been peaceful.

Dr S P Udayakumar has said that the expert panel established by the Indian authorities has failed to respond satisfactorily to several site and safety concerns raised by an independent group of experts. On 30 March, his home in nearby Nagercoil town was searched by officials belonging to the Ministry of Home Affairs, who examined records relating to funding of a school run by his family. He has told Amnesty International that the police had resorted to harassing shopkeepers who shut up their shops in solidarity with the protestors.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release all remaining peaceful protestors immediately, and drop the false charges against them;
- Calling on the authorities to put an immediate end to the harassment of those resorting to peaceful protests at Idinthakarai and other coastal villages, and respect the protestors' rights to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, in accordance with international law.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 MAY 2012 TO:

Prime Minister of India
 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh
 South Block, Raisina Hill
 New Delhi 110 00, India
 Fax: +91 11 2301 7931
 Email: Through website:
<http://pmindia.nic.in/feedback.php>
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister
 Ms.J Jayalalitha
 Fort St George
 Chennai 600 009
 India
 Email: cmcell@tn.gov.in
Salutation: Dear Chief Minister

Solidarity messages may be sent to:
 Dr S P Udayakumar
 People's Movement against Nuclear
 Energy
 Idinthakarai PO 627104
 Tamil Nadu
 India
 E-mail: drspudayakumar@yahoo.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 367/11. Further information:
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/009/2012/en>

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Name: Dr S. P. Udayakumar, and at least seven others

Gender m/f: Dr S. P. Udayakumar is male, the others are both male and female

Further information on UA: 367/11 Index: ASA 20/016/2012 Issue Date: 10 April 2012