

# URGENT ACTION

## ANTI-NUKE PROTESTORS AT RISK DURING PUTIN VISIT

**More than 50 persons charged with sedition for leading an 18-month-long protest against the Russian-built nuclear plant at Kudankulam risk detention without charge or trial for planned protests during President Putin's scheduled visit to Delhi on 24 December.**

Among them are **Dr S.P. Udayakumar** and **M. Pushparayan** – key leaders of the People's Movement against Nuclear Energy (PMANE) which is spearheading peaceful protests in Tamil Nadu and planning protests to coincide with Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to Delhi. They risk detention under state security legislation allowing for their detention without charge or trial for up to a year. If tried and convicted they could face life imprisonment.

Six protestors – **Lourdesamy, Nazarin, Sindhu Bharat, Thavasikumar, Jesurajan** and **Santiago Royappan** – arrested and since detained without charge or trial for participating in the protests between September and November, have been served with additional orders which could result in further detention for up to a year. The majority of the 50-odd protestors arrested have been released on bail on the condition they stay away from the nuclear plant site. In all, more than 1,000 protestors have been charged with various offences during 2011–2012. The majority of them are from the coastal village of Idinthakarai, which has been at the centre of the protests. They face charges, including defying restrictions on size of gatherings, rioting with deadly weapons and attempting to assault public servants. In March, the Tamil Nadu police baton-charged hundreds of peaceful protestors after police had staged a week-long siege of Idinthakarai, denying essential commodities. In September, the police responded with force when hundreds of protestors marched towards the nuclear plant site. They reportedly used tear gas and baton-charged them. Some 60 protestors were injured, including a child. Some protestors reportedly responded to the violence by throwing sand and stones. Additionally, one person was killed by police firing on protestors in Manappad village. The police later forcibly evicted 500 protestors at Idinthakarai after burning their vehicles and looting their property.

### Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling on the Indian and Tamil Nadu authorities not to harm peaceful protestors, such as PMANE leaders Dr S.P. Udayakumar and M. Pushparayan, including during President Putin's visit to India, and to drop any unsubstantiated charges against them;
- Expressing concern that the six protestors are arbitrarily detained in violation of international human rights treaties which India is obliged to respect;
- Calling on the authorities to release the six protestors, unless they are charged with internationally recognisable offences, remanded by an independent court and tried in fair proceedings.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 01 FEBRUARY 2013 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. Jayalalithaa  
Fort St George  
Chennai 600 009, India  
Email: cmcell@tn.gov.in  
Salutation: Dear Chief Minister

#### Solidarity messages may be sent to:

People's Movement Against Nuclear Energy  
Dr S. P. Udayakumar  
Idinthakarai PO 627104  
Tamil Nadu, India

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the eighth update of UA 367/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/038/2012/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since July 2011, PMANE has been spearheading the protests against the Kudankulam nuclear power plant which is expected to be commissioned in or after January 2013, following President Putin's visit to New Delhi on 24 December 2012. Kudankulam's neighbouring villages were hit by the tsunami that struck South and South-East Asia in December 2004, and local residents are fearful of a radioactive leak if such a disaster strikes again. Dr S.P. Udayakumar states that the expert panel set up by the Indian authorities to conduct a safety assessment, which declared the site safe, has failed to satisfactorily address several site and safety concerns raised by an independent group of experts.

The protests intensified after the March 2011 Fukushima disaster in Japan and the protestors believe the project threatens local communities. They fear that the site will affect at least 15,000 people living nearby.

Name: Dr S.P. Udayakumar, M. Pushparayan, Lourdeswamy, Nazarin, Sindhu Bharat, Thavasikumar, Jesurajan and Santiago Royappan.  
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 367/11 Index: ASA 20/045/2012 Issue Date: 21 December 2012