

# URGENT ACTION

## TAMIL NADU PROTESTORS FACE IMMINENT ARREST

**Sixteen people campaigning against a nuclear power plant project in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu face imminent arrest after India's Prime Minister's Office alleged that NGOs had illegally diverted funds received from abroad to the protestors.**

The protestors are campaigning against a Russian-built nuclear power plant project next to the coastal village of Kudankulam, because they feel it poses a danger to local communities. The protestors are led by **Dr S. P. Udayakumar**, a teacher, and already face charges of sedition (crimes against the State) and waging war against the State and, if convicted of these charges, they could face life imprisonment. If they are arrested and found guilty of receiving illegal funds to fund the protests, they could face jail terms up to two years.

Dr. S. P. Udayakumar reports that the People's Movement against Nuclear Energy (PMANE) to which the protestors belong sent a letter to the Prime Minister's Office asking it to withdraw the allegations. He has made public all his assets and liabilities and states that PMANE has been transparent about its accounts including funding received from local communities in Kudankulam.

Police have filed more than 55 charges against the 16 protestors. Apart from sedition and waging war against the State, the charges against the group include conspiracy and rioting with deadly weapons. Amnesty International believes the charges are false, and constitute a deliberate attempt by the state and national authorities to silence the peaceful protests.

PMANE is leading the protests against the nuclear power plant which will affect at least 15,000 people living in communities close to the site. The protestors have blockaded the site, delaying the construction of the plant. The protests began following the release of radioactive material from the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan when it was hit by an earthquake in March 2011. Kudankulam's neighbouring villages were hit by the tsunami that struck 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 PMANE had met an expert panel set up by India's central authorities to allay the fears of the local communities, but that the panel had not given satisfactory answers to their questions.

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

- Calling on the authorities not to arrest the PMANE members and to drop the charges against them if they have been brought solely to silence the peaceful protests of the group and others;
- Urging them to respect the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly of the peaceful protestors against the nuclear power plant at Kudankulam, in accordance with international law.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 APRIL 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](mailto: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](mailto:drspudayakumar@yahoo.com)

**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 first update of UA 367/11. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/052/2011/en>

Name: Dr S. P. Udayakumar, and at least 15 others

Gender m/f: all males

Further information on UA: 367/11 Index: ASA 20/008/2012 Issue Date: 7 March 2012