

**SANSAD invites you to a Press Conference**  
**International Day of Protest**  
*Demanding Unconditional Freedom for Dr. Binayak Sen*

**Wednesday, May 14, 2008**  
**3:30 p.m.**

In front of the office of the Consul General of India  
325 Howe Street, Vancouver

**A Statement of Concerns and a Charter of Demands  
will be handed over to the Consul General.**

It was on May 14, a year ago, that Dr. Binayak Sen was arrested by the government of Chattisgarh State in India under the highly draconian and repressive Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, 2005 (CSPSA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 2004 (UAPA) on charges of sedition, conspiracy to wage war against the state and conspiracy to commit other offences.

**To mark the anniversary of the uncalled-for detention, protest activities are going on this day all over India, and also in many cities of North America and Europe, especially in front of Indian Embassies or Consulates: Baltimore, Boston, Houston/Dallas, London (England), Paris, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Stockholm, Washington DC - in addition to here in Vancouver.**

For the last three decades, as a practicing pediatrician and a Public Health specialist, Dr. Sen has been promoting community rural health-care centres, and providing health care to some of most marginalized sections of society. He was principally instrumental in setting up the unique Shaheed Hospital as well as carrying out community-driven health care work through Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (People's Health Movement).

On April 21 this year, Dr. Sen was awarded the 2008 Jonathan Mann Award by the Global Health Council which he is supposed to receive on May 29 at the International Conference on Global Health in Washington, D.C., (see:  
<http://www.globalhealth.org/news/article/9833>)

Dr. Binayak Sen is also a prominent human rights activist as the State Secretary of People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) for Chattisgarh, and a Vice President of PUCL's national body. Over the years, PUCL has exposed a vast array of human rights violations, poor conditions of prisoners, custodial deaths and extra-judicial killings - especially those committed by a state-sponsored, heavily armed, vigilante group by the name of Salwa Judum, which has been terrorizing the local people struggling to defend their lands and their rights against the large-scale encroachment by big capital and multi-nationals. For a PUCL analysis of Dr. Sen's case, please check:  
<http://www.pucl.org/Topics/Human-rights/2007/sen-case-analysis.html>

For a report on the Salwa Judum vigilante group (When the State Makes War on its Own People) please click: <http://www.pucl.org/Topics/Human-rights/2006/slawajudum.htm>

For an understanding of the economic realities of the resource-rich land of Chattisgarh and why the State machinery, directly or through the Salwa Judum militia, is determined to serve the interests of local and international big capital and to repress people struggling for their lands and livelihood, please see:

<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/amr140607.html>

Internationally renowned intellectuals have been arguing for almost a year for an unconditional release of Dr. Sen (see <http://monthlyreview.org/0607sen.htm>).

A few days ago, 22 Nobel laureates have come out openly demanding an unconditional release of Dr. Sen. Among them two got the Nobel for Economics, two for Physics, nine for Chemistry, and nine for Physiology or Medicine. See the link:

<http://www.binayaksen.net/2008/05/nobel-winners-call-for-release-of-dr-binayak-sen/>

For a fuller version of Dr. Sen's work, and the legal aspects of the case slaped on him, you could look at this Medico Friend Circle Brochure: <http://www.mail-archive.com/greenyouth@googlegroups.com/msg03256.html>

Although Dr. Binayak Sen has acquired a high profile - both nationally and internationally - it should be pointed out that he is only one among a large number of human rights activists and journalists, all across India, who have been incarcerated under one or the other provision of highly repressive laws. There are : Lachit Bordoloi, a human rights activist from Assam; Prashant Rahi, journalist from Uttarakhand; Govindan Kutty, editor of People's March in Kerala; Praful Jha, a journalist from Chhattisgarh; Vernon Gonsalves, an activist from Nasik; Arun Ferreira, Ashok Reddy, Dhanendra Bhurule, Naresh Bansode, activists from the Vidarbha region, have all been charged under the UAPA and kept under prolonged detention without bail.

**Please join us at the Press Conference, and a visit to the Consul General's office to hand over a Statement of Concens and a Charter of Demands. Wednesday, May 14, 3:30 p.m., 325 Howe Street, Vancouver.**

Hari Sharma, president

**SANSAD**

**(South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy)**

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