EDITORIAL

A WARM WELCOME TO THE GREENPEACE FAMILY!

Real foreign hand

In the recent past, you must have read about our Prime Minister raising the spectre of “foreign hand” which is supposedly behind protests against nuclear energy and GM food. By doing this, the Prime Minister dismissed our concerns and created a smokescreen to undermine both nuclear and food safety of 1.2 billion of us.

It’s no coincidence that the PMs statements come even as the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India bill and the rules under the Nuclear Suppliers Liability Act are due to be introduced in the Parliament. Both are seen as critical by the real foreign hand: giant American agrotech companies and the French, US and Russian nuclear industries.

In the last few years, farmers and consumers have mass mobilised to protect their seed sovereignty and food safety from American corporations such as Monsanto. The massive public opposition to Bt. Brinjal is a case in point that led to the former Environment Minister, Mr Jairam Ramesh, imposing a moratorium on GM food.
Similarly, how can we forget the dangers of nuclear energy after the catastrophe in Fukushima? From Fatehabad in Haryana and Jaitapur in Maharashtra to Haripur in West Bengal and Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu, lakhs of farmers and fishermen are rising up to protect their lands, homes and livelihoods against risky and expensive nuclear energy. Urban India has also begun to question if nukes are really an answer to India's energy shortage.

By dismissing these protests as being engineered by a "foreign hand", the PM has shown he is out of touch with the people of this country.

We are asking legitimate questions of a government that we have elected. Instead of answering these questions, the government is browbeating those who do not toe its line. If there is wrongdoing by NGOs, why has the government not made its evidence public? Crude attempts to muzzle the right to protest have no place in India.

The protests are the voice of millions of Indians across the country that cannot be silenced by diversionary tactics. Let us remain strongly united in our opposition to the real foreign hand.
The telecom sector in India emitted over 5.6 million tonnes of CO2 in 2008 as a result of excessive diesel use. Since then, emissions have risen up to 7.8 million tonnes and are likely to increase significantly with the sector’s predicted exponential growth in the coming years.

The telecom sector has aggressively taken advantage of the loopholes in the government subsidy on diesel. This in turn, has encouraged inefficient consumption – three billion litres to power its network towers annually.

So who bears the INR 26 billion annual loss? The state exchequer. Based on projections, this is likely to increase in the near future. The government needs to take a firm stand and implement ‘green telecom’ directives under the National Telecom Policy. A stringent penalty mechanism should be enforced in case of non-compliance which holds the industry accountable for their carbon emissions. We got something up our sleeve and will need your help for it. Keep watching this space.

http://act.gp/report-switch-off-diesel
In January, I had the privilege of joining the Greenpeace team for a trip to Singrauli. After a two-hour flight, nine-hour drive, and an overnight stay in a shady motel, we finally arrived at our destination. At 8am, I was on a hot air balloon floating over the Mahan forest in the Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh, talking to a TV channel that was covering us live. Why? Because the coal industry is lobbying to cut down the forest for coal-mining.

Mining has been in the news lately and for good reason. The trip was much more eventful and eye-opening than I had expected. From avoiding a scuffle with some local goons to being threatened by a “Naxal attack”. From trying to play peacemaker between villagers and company officials, to ironically encouraging the locals to keep a peaceful protest alive and not going down the “Naxal” route!

I’m not sure how much awareness I was able to raise about Singrauli. The folks at Greenpeace were very happy, they said that my presence there had brought the media and so at least it was in the news.

But I have never felt the fear and presence of “Big Brother” watching us ever before that. I could not stop thinking of movies such as Brazil and Avatar and even 1984. All those doomsday scenarios, evil corporations, corrupt officials and tortured innocents portrayed in those films were right there in front of me. For real! It wasn’t in the future, or on another planet, or even another country. It was in my own backyard and I was far removed and ignorant about it.

They say ignorance is bliss. It is true. I have lost my bliss. I am a filmmaker not an activist. But if I am expected to stand like a patriot when the National Anthem is played in the cinemas before the start of a show, then am I not, as a patriot, expected to fight for the rights of those robbed of their livelihood, or even killed, in the name of progress? Oh yes I forgot, they don’t serve popcorn before a protest march. Maybe the idea is to be proud of the country for showing or making the film you are about to see. Or for making multiplexes tax free!

http://act.gp/abhay-fights-for-forests
Nuclear power is a woefully inadequate response to the energy needs of our country. The unsolved problem of radioactive waste, risk of catastrophic accidents and the dangers posed to global security and the shrinking democratic space that it leads to. A case in point is the anti-nuclear fight in Koodankulam.

The fishing hamlet of Idinthakarai in Tamil Nadu has been ground zero in the ongoing battle between nuclear power and democracy; with a brutal crackdown on protests against the Indian government's plans to build a nuclear power plant nearby. The crackdown started with accusations that the protesters were "foreign funded and anti-national" and then moved on to mass arrests, false legal charges, vandalism and the threat of violence. When the government of the world's largest democracy uses charges of sedition to crush a non-violent peoples' protest, what does that say about its commitment to democratic ideals? For the last several months, thousands of villagers have been raising valid questions about the safety of the nuclear plant and what an accident will mean for their children and the seas they depend on.

People are no longer buying into the argument that nuclear power is the solution for either energy or climate security. Critics, most recently The Economist, have begun to question nuclear power's financial viability as well. Without taxpayer support, no nuclear plant would ever be built. In India, after more than 40 years and billions of dollars of public money, nuclear energy currently provides only 2.5% of the country's electricity. That's half of the 5% generated by a fast growing wind energy industry.

http://act.gp/nuclear-power-in-india
A myriad of human pressures are being exerted, both directly and indirectly on ocean ecosystems the world over. Consequently, ecosystems are collapsing as marine species are driven towards extinction and ocean habitats, destroyed. Degraded and stripped of their diversity, ocean ecosystems are losing their inherent resilience.

**Licensed to loot**

Earlier this year, MY Esperanza, the Greenpeace ship, surveyed Indian waters to investigate the depleting stock of our fish. India’s lucrative commercial fish resources, including one of the world’s last healthy Tuna stocks, are being systematically exploited by fishing vessels of foreign origin as a result of the Letter of Permit scheme (LoP). This in turn, is impacting livelihoods of millions and business interests of the Indian fishing sector, creating significant losses to the Indian exchequer in revenue through the destruction of marine habitats. Greenpeace released an investigative report – ‘Licensed to loot’ - where the National Fishworkers Forum, Association of Indian Fisheries Industry and Greenpeace India, urged Minister Sharad Pawar to scrap the LoP scheme and expedite an investigation on this issue.

**Fact:**

- Did you know that the Indian government is practically gifting away Tuna worth INR 11 crore annually to foreign fishing vessels thanks to a faulty scheme?
The past year has been that of many milestones. Here are some highlights:

- Launched a report: ‘Licensed to Loot’, exposing the violations within the Letter of Permit scheme in order to protect India’s rich marine resources.
- Got the Greenpeace ship, MY Esperanza to sail in Indian waters and expose illegal fishing by foreign vessels.
- Flown a hot-air balloon with actor, Abhay Deol over the forests of Mahaan to raise awareness on the need to preserve forests.
- Launched a legal assessment report of the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAi) bill 2011.
- Got the Govt. to introduce a mandatory regime for carbon disclosure in telecom.
- Got Facebook to ‘unfriend’ coal and switch to renewable energy to power their servers.
- Sought people’s support to stop destruction of forests for coal mining and launched the imaginary Republic of Junglistan from its embassy at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi.
- Organised a fact-finding team to document coal-induced displacement and destruction in Singrauli.
- Got Mattel, one of the largest toy companies, to adopt new ‘green’ policies in their packaging unit.
- Created the world’s largest GM-free Baingan Bharta (342 kgs) to create awareness and urge the government not to table the proposed BRAi bill.
- Got the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy to accept our recommendation to increase the number of telecom towers supported under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission.
- Started a campaign, ‘Fools for Forests’ aimed at saving the last remaining forests in India from coal mining.
- Got the government to introduce an ‘e-waste’ rule after relentless campaigning making each company responsible for the entire life cycle of their goods.
- Campaigned against Bharti Airtel, asking them to ‘Switch off Diesel’ and use renewables instead.
- Launched a report: ‘Living Soils’ to document the scientific as well as the farmers’ perspective on soil health and what government policies are doing about it.
ANNUAL REPORT

CAMPAIGNWISE EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR 2011

- Climate & Energy - 53%
- Coordination - 3%
- Media & Comms - 11%
- Public Engagement - 4%
- Actions - 12%
- GMO & Toxics - 9%
- Oceans - 6%
- Political - 2%
8 SIMPLE WAYS TO GO GREEN

You already know that you should reduce your plastic usage and not waste water or electricity. Here are eight more tips to continue being green:

- Help support the local economy by buying locally grown products.
- Have your name removed from mailing lists of companies you don’t purchase from.
- Eat seasonal food. Having mangoes in winter may seem nice but there is a huge amount of energy going in preserving.
- Gift a tree: celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and special occasions by planting trees. It lasts a lifetime!
- Use organic clothing. The advantages of organic clothing include: organic cotton could save about 1/3rd of the total amount of pesticides and fertilisers used. Many skin diseases and health hazards occur due to wearing of fabrics which are cultivated and processed by usage of pesticides and synthetic dyes.
- Try to avoid using equipment (washing machines, geysers, irons etc.) during peak hours (10 am to 8 pm).
- Switch your PC to idle mode when not using it. TVs, video recorders etc. all consume electricity even when on standby mode. Either pull out the socket or use a multi-pin. Don’t leave chargers in the socket.
- New appliances consume lesser power than older ones. Battery driven appliances consume more energy than the ones that run on electricity.
Recommend a Friend
Have a friend who loves the planet?
Send us their name and phone number and we’ll call them!
SMS GREEN <name> <number> to 9220092200

Supporter Services
Email: supporter.services.in@greenpeace.org
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Greenpeace exists because this fragile Earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action.

Greenpeace is a non-profit campaigning organisation that acts on the most crucial global threats to our planet’s biodiversity and environment. In over 40 countries around the world, Greenpeace campaigns to stop climate change, defend our oceans, protect ancient rainforests, create a toxic-free future and promote sustainable agriculture.

At Greenpeace, we strongly believe in the power of non-violent direct action. We expose environmental crimes and confront the criminals fearlessly. We point at problems and promote solutions for a clean and safe future for the Earth and all life on it.

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