

10.07.2026

**PUCL STATEMENT CONCERNING THE ATTACK ON
HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND WRITER, SEEMA AZAD,
PUCL NATL SECRETARY**

A 6-page statement was issued on 26th June, 2026, allegedly by the Communist Party of India (Maoist) - North Coordination Committee (NCC), claiming that Seema Azad was a State Secretary of the party and because of her "revisionist" practices, associating with a CIA agent in India, and due to her 'prioritizing bourgeoisie feminism over Marxism' she was being expelled from the primary membership of the party. The note was read out on a news podcast called "Bastar Talkies."

Seema Azad is a well-known human rights activist and feminist, active for more than 2 decades, in Uttar Pradesh and across India. She has done her Master's in psychology and LLB. She has been running a bi-monthly Hindi magazine called Dastak since 2004. She has worked as a journalist and has written 3 books. Her poems have been published in a number of magazines. She joined PUCL in 2006 and held the post of Organizational Secretary of UP PUCL since 2008. Thereafter she was elected as the President of UP State PUCL. Seema Azad was elected at the National Level first as the National Organising Secretary and subsequently as National Secretary of PUCL, in which position she has been functioning for several years. She was falsely charged by the UP Police with being a member of Maoist organization in 2010 and convicted in 2012. Her appeal is pending in the Allahabad High Court; it appears that the allegations against her are so flimsy that after conviction she has been granted bail by the High Court. Her prison memoirs in the form of 2 books include '*Zinda Nama: Chand Taron ke Begair Ek Duniya*' and '*Aurat ka Safar: Jail se Jail Tak*', in Hindi; the first Hindi book has been translated and published in English as '*Unsensored: Jail Diary of an Activist*'. These have been widely read, appreciated and recognised as a major contribution to the prison writing genre of writing.

Seema has always categorically denied, ever being a member of or directly or indirectly being part of the CPI - Maoist party, let alone its state secretary. She has also given to us in writing now, specifically denying ever having been a member of the CPI Maoist party or in any way being associated with the said party too. Thus, the question of expelling her from the above-referred political party does not even arise.

We at PUCL stand by Seema.

It is not clear as to who has issued this statement. Whilst supposedly the letterhead is of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) - North Coordination Committee (NCC), there is a strong possibility that this letter is fabricated by some State agency which is trying to implicate her and frame her in some false case. It is all the more curious since the letter has

not been sent to her but to a news portal. Even if by some chance it has been sent by the said political party, we do not subscribe to their false and distorted projection of her activities. Seema confirms that the allegations against her in the statement are wholly false and entirely imaginary, is defamatory and has no factual foundation.

On behalf of the PUCL National Executive Committee, we strongly condemn this wilfully mischievous misrepresentation of Seema's work and the allegations levelled against her and stand in solidarity with her. We at PUCL stand by our members doing public and transparent human rights work which is based on a belief in the progressive values of the Indian Constitution. To us, to do human rights works in a public, transparent and constitutional manner, however unacceptable it may be to the state, is nothing other than an exercise of the constitutional freedoms of speech, assembly and association which is guaranteed to every Indian citizen.

However this avowed commitment to the Constitution and its values has not stopped the State agencies from falsely implicating our members including Binayak Sen, Sudha Bhardwaj, TG Ajay, Fr. Stan Swamy and Seema Azad for the mere exercise of constitutionally guaranteed rights. All along, even as they worked to hold state agencies to account for their lawlessness, they have always pursued the peaceful, legal path, eschewing violence, remaining committed to non-violent means of resolving issues and asserting the primacy of constitutional and human rights principles. We stood by them in the past and we continue to stand by them as exemplars in the courageous defence of the values of the Indian Constitution.

This statement is being released with the endorsement of and on behalf of the National Executive Committee of PUCL.

10th July, 2026

Kavita Srivastava, President

Dr. V. Suresh, Gen. Secretary

People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)

Text of Letter addressed to the President and General Secretary, PUCL, by Seema Azad, in response to the Statement dated 26.6.2026.

In Hindi

िनांक: 7 जुलाई, 2026

प्रति,

कविता श्रीवास्तव, राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष, पीयूसीएल

वी सुरेश, राष्ट्रीय महासचिव, पीयूसीएल

विषय : मेरे खिलाफ चलाए जा रहे "विच हंटिंग" अभियान के संदर्भ में

मैं, सीमा आज़ाद, राष्ट्रीय सचिव पीयूसीएल, पीयूसीएल को यह औपचारिक रूप से सूचित करना चाहती हूँ कि मुझे 30 जून की रात में एक पन्ने का एक प्रेस रिलीज़ सोशल मीडिया पर घूमता हुआ मिला, जो मेरे और मेरे पार्टनर विश्वविजय के खिलाफ ढेरों झूठी बातों से भरा हुआ था। यह पत्र 'सीपीआई माओवादी एनसीसी' की ओर से भेजा गया है, जिसमें हमें गद्ददार बोलने के साथ ढेरों आरोप लगाए गए। (पत्र संलग्न)।

जब यह पत्र कई लोगों की ओर से चिंता के साथ हमारे पास भेजा जाने लगा, तो हमने इसका जवाब सोशल मीडिया पर यह बताते हुए दिया कि हमारा इससे कोई संबंध नहीं है। (फेसबुक लिंक संलग्न है) मैंने आप दोनों को 1 जुलाई को इसके बारे में फोन पर सूचना दे दी थी।

इसके बाद 2 जुलाई को यू ट्यूब चैनल "बस्टर टॉकीज़" पर कथित रूप से इसी पार्टी की ओर से जारी 6 पन्ने का पत्र पढ़ा गया, जिसमें और भी आपत्तिजनक आरोप हमारे ऊपर लगाए गए। इसमें कहा गया कि हम उनकी पार्टी के सदस्य हैं (जहां से हमें अब निकाला जा रहा है। इसमें तो यहां तक कह दिया गया कि हम CPI माओवादी NCC की स्टेट कमेटी सदस्य रहे हैं। (चैनल का लिंक संलग्न है)।

4 जुलाई को पंजाब के मानवाधिकार कार्यकर्ता अरिहंत कुमार मलेरी जी ने हमारा समर्थन करते हुए एक पत्र हमारे पास व्यक्तिगत रूप से भी भेजा, और अपने साथी करम बरासत के साथ फेसबुक पर भी लगाया (फेसबुक लिंक संलग्न है)।

इसके बाद 6 तारीख को भगत सिंह स्टूडेंट मोर्चा के फेसबुक पेज से ठीक इसी तरह का पत्र जारी किया, जैसा कि सीपीआई माओवादी NCC की ओर से जारी किया गया और इसे बहुत सारे लोगों के पास व्यक्तिगत रूप से व्हाट्सएप पर भेजा गया, जिसमें देश भर के बुद्धिजीवियों से यह अपील की गई कि वो हमारा बहिष्कार करें। (लिंक संलग्न है)।

इसके तुरंत बाद पीयूसीएल उत्तर प्रदेश के पूर्व सचिव कमल सिंह ने सोशल मीडिया ग्रुप और व्यक्तिगत व्हाट्सएप के माध्यम से मेरे खिलाफ लोगों को उकसाना शुरू कर दिया। (उनके संदेश संलग्न हैं)।

इन सारे तथ्यों को आपके सामने रखने के बाद मैं अपने बारे में आप लोगों के सामने अपनी बात रखना चाहती हूँ, क्योंकि मैं पीयूसीएल के राष्ट्रीय सचिवालय का हिस्सा हूँ, और मेरे माध्यम से ये हमला पीयूसीएल पर भी किया जा रहा है, इसलिए ये मेरी ज़िम्मेदारी है।

मैं स्पष्ट तौर पर कहना चाहती हूँ कि मैं (सीमा आज़ाद) कभी भी माओवादी पार्टी या उसके किसी भी फेक्शन या किसी भी राजनीतिक दल की सदस्य नहीं रही, न ही हूँ।

मेरे खिलाफ दुष्प्रचार अभियान में लगे CPI माओवादी NCC से मेरा किसी भी तरह का कोई संबंध नहीं है और न ही मैं इन्हें जानती हूँ।

PUCL – Statement in support of Seema Azad, National Secretary, PUCL

हां, मैं भगत सिंह स्टूडेंट मोर्चा को जानती हूँ, जो कि उत्तर प्रदेश में बनारस के BHU में काम करने वाला छात्र संगठन है।

मुझे नहीं पता कि अचानक मुझ पर इस तरह का हमला करने वाले ये कौन लोग हैं और इनका मकसद क्या है। मैं पीयूसीएल के साथ 2006 से हूँ।

मैं "दस्तक नए समय की" नाम से एक दुवैमासिक पत्रिका निकालती हूँ, जिसकी प्रकाशक, संपादक मैं खुद हूँ।

मैं जो हूँ और जो काम करती हूँ, वो सबके सामने है। अब तक के इनके दुष्प्रचार अभियान से ये ही समझ में आ रहा है कि यह अभियान मानवाधिकार कर्मियों की "ब्रांडिंग करके उन्हें राजकीय दमन के शिकंजे की ओर धकेलना है, उनकी प्रतिष्ठा पर कीचड़ उछालना है, ताकि उन्हें पूरे समाज से अलग थलग किया जा सके। पिछले कई सालों से इसी काम में सरकारें लगी हुई हैं, जिसकी यह एक और कड़ी है।

पीयूसीएल के सामने अपनी स्थिति स्पष्ट करते हुए मैं यह आग्रह करती हूँ कि मेरे और पीयूसीएल के खिलाफ चलाए जा रहे इस अभियान के खिलाफ उचित कार्यवाही की जाए।

शुक्रिया

आदर के साथ

सीमा आज़ाद

English translation

I, Seema Azad, National Secretary PUCL, would like to officially inform PUCL that on the night of June 30th a press release was circulated on social media which also caught my eye where several false allegations were raised against me and my partner Vishwavijay. This was apparently released by 'CPI Maoist NCC' where they have termed us as traitors and several other allegations have also been made. (letter attached).

When this letter reached us through several well-wishers as they were worried about the situation and it was then when we posted on social media that we have nothing to do with this organisation. (Facebook link attached) I then informed both of you on a call on 1st of July.

On 2nd July the host of Bastar Talkies YouTube channel also read the 6-page letter where they repeated some more objectionable allegations. In the video they said that we have been members of the party (from where they're expelling us) and even went on to say that we have been the state committee members of CPI Maoist NCC. (channel link attached).

On 4th July, human rights activist from Punjab, Arihant Kumar Maleri sent a letter to us personally showing his support and even posted it on Facebook with his friend Karam Barasat. (Facebook link attached).

After two days on the 6th, Bhagat Singh Students' Morcha also released the same letter that was earlier released by CPI Maoist NCC and was again circulated personally to a lot of intellectuals appealing that they boycott us. (link attached).

Immediately after this, former General Secretary of PUCL Uttar Pradesh, Kamal Singh started to instigate people against me on social media groups and personally messaging them. (his messages are attached below).

After putting forth all the facts that I have with me I want to present my own viewpoint regarding the entire incident since I am a part of PUCL's national executive and through this I believe even PUCL is being targeted and hence it is my responsibility to clear the air.

I want to be absolutely clear in saying that I, Seema Azad, was never a part of the Maoist party nor any of its factions nor of any other political party. I was never a member, nor am I now.

CPI Maoist NCC who has indulged in such kind of malicious targeting against me has no connection with me whatsoever and neither do I know them.

Yes, I know Bhagat Singh Student Morcha as a student group based in Banaras Hindu University in Banaras.

I don't know who these people are who are suddenly targeting me and their exact intentions behind that. I have been with PUCL since 2006.

I am the editor and publisher of the bimonthly magazine called "Dastak Naye Samay Ki". Whatever I do, whatever work I have done is in front of everyone to see and judge. What I have understood from this malicious campaign is that they want to "brand" human rights activists in a way that they are forced to face state oppression and if they're able to spoil the public image of the concerned person, they won't have any support whatsoever. Since the last few years, the government has been trying to do this and this entire incident seems to be a continuation of that.

I'm presenting all the facts from my end and requesting appropriate action against this malicious campaign that is being organised against me and PUCL.

07.07.2026

Seema Azad
