

"A firm foundation will have to be created which will support humanity to face all group conflicts. What is that firm foundation? It is the realisation that all the creatures which have come into this world want to survive. Thus we must make arrangements for the food, clothes, education, shelter and medical treatment of each and every individual, so that all can become assets to the earth. We must provide them with the inexhaustible resources for their forward movement towards their spiritual goal.

Today the majority of people are in darkness. That is why you will have to carry the collectivity with you, because the collectivity is yours. The collectivity is not outside you—your future is inseparably connected with the collective fortune. You must take the entire collectivity with you and move towards the sweetest radiance of the new crimson dawn, beyond the veil of the darkest night."

P. R. SARKAR

Published by Public Relations Department, Ananda Marga Pracaraka Samgha ( Central ), V. I. P. Nagar, Tiljala, Calcutta-700039, India.

# THE CALCUTTA TRAGEDY

**17 Marga  
Killed  
Fury  
Killing Of Margis:  
Judicial Probe  
Mav Stunned  
THE West P  
inquiry i**

By A Staff Reporter

was filed by the guardians. Meanwhile, Mother Teresa, who runs a children's home in the city, met the Commissioner of Police, Mr Nirupam Som, and the Deputy Commissioner, Headquarters, Mr K Mazumder, at Labazar on Monday and requested that a police picket be posted at the gates of Sishu Mahavan on Lower Circular Road as soon as possible. She told reporters during the tour—making an airport state-ent that seemed almost perfunctory adequate, almost perfunctory statement by the Left Front did not show much of what people dropped in at the

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## INTRODUCTION

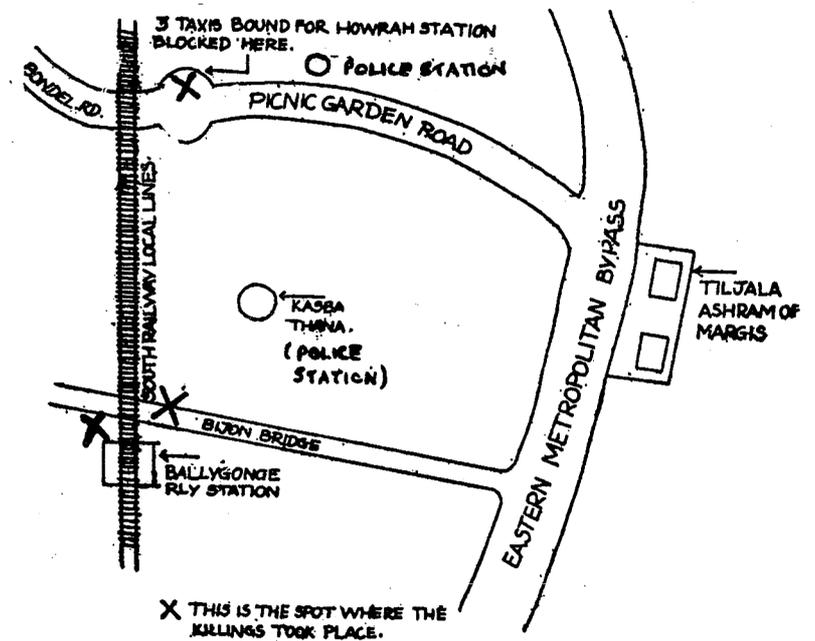
Ananda Marga is a global social service organization with branches in more than 120 countries around the world. It is also a spiritual mission which teaches meditation free of charge. The guiding philosophy of Ananda Marga is that all people deserve a life of happiness. Meditation enables people to explore their innermost nature, the source of all fulfillment. However, without the minimum necessities of life (such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and education), such higher pursuits are impossible. Therefore, active and vigorous programs for social service are of equal importance in Ananda Marga.

This booklet provides background information on a tragedy which befell seventeen of our monks and nuns on April 30, 1982. At the back of the book you will find some suggestions as to how you can help put an end to the brutal violence which snuffed out the tremendous potential of these seventeen dedicated missionaries.

None of us can afford to ignore injustice and brutality only because it is far away from us. If we do, we have only to turn our back and it will arrive at our own doorstep.

## THE CALCUTTA TRAGEDY

Early in the morning of April 30th, groups of monks and nuns of the socio-spiritual organization Ananda Marga started from various destinations towards Tiljala, a suburb of Calcutta. They were all Principals of Ananda Marga kindergartens and primary schools, and Superintendents of Ananda Marga orphanages from all over India, assembling at their global headquarters in Tiljala to attend an educational



training camp. As they proceeded towards Tiljala they had to cross the railroad tracks in either one of two places, as there are only two routes of access to that outlying area: either by Ballygunge bridge or by Bundalgate (see map).

One of the Margiis was Didi Ananda Praceta, a sweet and ever-smiling nun running the Calcutta orphanage. When she reached the Ballygunge railway crossing at about 10:00 A.M. with several other Didis (sisters) and children from their orphanages, she decided to let them go ahead to the camp while she remained in the market to collect some vegetables for her home, because since she would be away from the children for two weeks, she wanted to leave them with sufficient supplies. As she moved through the market, suddenly a crowd of men surrounded her. Shouting, "Child-stealer! Child-stealer! Kill! KILL!", they ripped off her clothes and threw her down on the ground. They blinded her with acid, and with long knives they gouged out her eye and beat her repeatedly on the head with iron rods. They mutilated her body and poured gasoline over her, and burnt her alive (see cover photo).

While her naked body was smoking on the railway tracks below, two taxis carrying monks coming from the Jodhpur Park office of Ananda Marga were crossing the Bijon Setu railway bridge over the tracks. When the taxis reached near the end of the bridge, a group of men stopped the cars, dragged all the occupants out, and threw all their belongings on the ground. Shouting in the same way, "Child-thief! Kill! Kill!" they first stunned the monks by beating them on the temples with bricks, iron rods and lathis (bamboo staffs). Then they smashed lightbulbs filled with acid on their faces, instantly blinding them. They pounded their faces with stones and iron rods and stabbed them repeatedly in the neck, heart and stomach. They flung them face down on the ground and smashed their faces again and again against the cement, which soon became covered with blood. Then they poured gasoline over their clothes and burnt them alive. Scores of people stood by, silently witnessing the massacre.

The local police arrived on the scene more than two hours later, although the police station is only  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilometer from the Bijon Setu bridge. They fired three rounds to disperse the



The mutilated and burnt bodies of Marga monks

crowd but by that time, nine monks lay dead on the bridge and on the railway tracks below.

Smoke was billowing from their burning corpses. The bridge and the railway tracks were splattered with blood and littered with smoking saffron robes, charred booklets and



Smouldering belongings of some of the Ananda Marg victims of Friday's incident in Calcutta.—Statesman.

sandals. Pools of blood stained the earth, marking the places where they had been killed. The faces of the corpses were deformed and mutilated, their limbs charred, their heads and bodies criss-crossed with ugly knife cuts and their clothes shorn off.

Almost simultaneously, one kilometer down the railway tracks, at a crossing called Bundalgate—the only other possible approach to the Ananda Marga ashram at Tiljala—the same ghastly scene was taking place. There, three taxis from Howrah railway station—two carrying Ananda Marga monks and the third carrying nine nuns and children—were crossing the tracks when a group of men surrounded them, pulled them out of their taxis, and started beating them. The nine nuns and girls were also dragged out; their clothes were torn and they were repeatedly beaten on the face with iron rods and kicked and punched by the group of men. Finally, senseless, they were flung into a heap on the ground and petrol was poured over their bodies to burn them alive.

Just at that moment a group of police arrived and fired two rounds and rescued the women and the first taxi—but meanwhile the crowd had seized the third taxi and taken the occupants to a nearby railway shed where, in exactly the same systematic method as on the bridge, they brutally murdered their victims: one assailant, armed with an iron rod, bamboo staff or brick, would batter his victim on the temple to stun him; a second would smash a bulb of acid in his face to blind him. The third, carrying a long knife, would pluck out his eyes, while a fourth would stab him in the neck, chest or stomach. A fifth, carrying a tin of gasoline or kerosine, would pour this on their clothes—sometimes using their own saffron robes to cover their faces—and a sixth, with matches, would set them afire to burn them alive.

Four monks died on the spot, and four others died in the hospital later.

One of the monks had escaped from the murderous attack and ran to some distance where he found four local railway police (carrying guns) standing. He pleaded with them to save his brothers being burnt and beaten to death, but they merely said, "Kicchu hobe na, kicchu hobe na—nothing will happen, nothing will happen", and passively witnessed the whole scene.

When they finally took him to the police station, he found some of the police there distributing sweets. They were laughing and offered him some. By Indian custom, sweets are distributed to celebrate an auspicious event.

Never had the city of Calcutta witnessed such inhuman violence, such a brutal and systematic massacre spread over one and a half hours at three different areas, without any police intervention. In all, seventeen Ananda Margiis were killed—15 monks and two nuns—and fourteen others were severely wounded and taken to hospitals.

### “TOO SHOCKING FOR WORDS”

The local populace and media strongly condemned the torture and murder of the innocent missionaries. “It crossed



Ananda Margis in a procession with ashes, after the cremation of 16 bodies, in Calcutta on Sunday evening.—Statesman.

the meanest form of beastliness. Even during the worst days of terror and violence of the sixties, when some insane Naxalites (communist terrorists) indulged in the brutal annihilation of their class enemies, West Bengal had not witnessed such a ghastly crime (*The Patriot*, May 11, 1982).”

Calling it “the Calcutta tragedy”, *The Indian Express* (May 3) said the incident was something “so horrifying that one wonders in despair where the country is heading.”

*The Times of India*, in an editorial (May 4), called it “shocking beyond words” and said, “no one can deny that our society is a violent one or that it is becoming more, not less, so...Nevertheless, the Calcutta killings will shake up the most jaded sensibilities”.

Who could have perpetrated this horrifying blood bath... and why ???

### COMMUNIST BRUTALITY

Brutality on such a scale in broad daylight, in the close vicinity and in some cases under the very eyes of the police—could only have been possible when the perpetrators enjoyed the protection of the police and indeed, the local government itself.

In contrast to the outpourings of public sympathy, the Communist-led Government of West Bengal has been strangely apathetic about the murders. The Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, who lives only one kilometer from the scene of the massacre, did not even bother to visit the site nor make any inquiry. On his way to an election meeting in Darjeeling only a few hours after the massacre, he continued his tour programme as if nothing had happened and merely remarked perfunctorily at the airport before his departure that the incident was an “isolated one” and “had no political significance”. Later he insisted that the murders were spontaneously committed by a frenzied mob, outraged at the child-lifting of the Margiis, who had been stealing children for their children’s homes. He did not depute any of his police to visit the scene or investigate the ghastly crime.

In fact, the incident is NOT an "isolated one"—and it has great "political significance". The charges of Ananda Marga child-lifting and mob frenzy are both baseless lies concocted by the CPI-M (Communist Party of India—Marxist) to conceal the truth—that the orgy of violence was a carefully planned and thoroughly organized attempt to wipe out the Ananda Marga leadership, planned and prepared for months in advance, by the communist party high command. It was the latest in a long series of attacks by the communists on Ananda Marga in West Bengal.

#### WHY COMMUNISTS FEAR THE "THREAT" OF ANANDA MARGA

Ananda Marga is a rapidly expanding socio-spiritual movement to develop all one's individual potentialities, and at the same time to liberate society from all economic and psychic exploitation. Started in a small town on the border of Bengal and Bihar in 1955, it has since grown into a huge world-wide organization with branches in every corner of India and in literally every country on earth. By organizing multifarious social service activities such as children's homes, schools for poor children, cheap kitchens, relief work, homes for the aged, and social and cultural institutions, Ananda Marga has rapidly gained the support of both intellectuals and masses wherever it has spread. With its inspiration for social change based on spirituality and moralism, Ananda Marga's dynamic alternative to both capitalism and communism has attracted millions to the movement, and seriously undermined the communist parties in India. Ananda Marga's spiritual outlook runs counter to the materialist dogmas of the Indian communists, and thus it has been opposed and harrassed in India by the CPI-M (Communist Party of India—Marxist) in the same way that the Jews are harrassed in Russia, or the Tibetans in China.

#### COMMUNISTS ATTACK ANANDA MARGA HEAD- QUARTERS IN WEST BENGAL IN 1967

When the Indian Marxists came to power in West Bengal in 1967, they considered the Ananda Marga headquarters at Ananda Nagar in the Purulia district of West Bengal to be a threat to their power. So on March 5 they incited local ruffians to raid the Ananda Marga compound, killing 5 monks in the presence of the police, who stood by silently and watched. The method of murder was remarkably similar to the Calcutta massacre. The sessions judge of Midnapore who heard the case exposed the political motivation of the incident and reprehended the administration for its negligence. He sentenced 18 persons, including certain Marxist officials of the West Bengal government, to long terms of imprisonment, including life, for conspiracy in the murderous attack. The judgement was later upheld by the High Court and the Supreme Court.

However, the case could be brought to court only after the state communist government was dissolved and replaced by a non-communist one.

#### SPIRITUAL CONGREGATION ATTACKED

Two years later, in August 1969, in Cooch Behar, a communist party stronghold in West Bengal, thousands of Ananda Marga members gathered for a spiritual congregation. The function was disrupted by a group of hired ruffians armed with guns and explosives, who threw a home-made bomb through the ventilator of the building in which the congregation had gathered. One member of Ananda Marga was killed and several others were wounded. But instead of apprehending the culprits, the police arrested the spiritual leader of Ananda Marga, P.R. Sarkar, and hundreds of his followers for "breach of peace". Ananda Marga filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court against the CPI-M government in West Bengal and, after hearing the police report that the incident was perpetrated by

CPI-M ruffians, the Supreme Court quashed the case against the Margiis.

### CONSTRUCTION OF GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS OBSTRUCTED

The communists became seriously alarmed when Ananda Marga shifted its headquarters in 1981 to Tiljala, on the outskirts of Calcutta, another communist-dominated area, and started construction of an impressive complex of buildings. Thus for over a year the CPI-M has been spearheading a local movement against Ananda Marga. They have constantly harrassed the Margiis in an attempt to stall the construction, and often threatened the local labourers to frighten them off the job. To prevent trucks from carrying building materials to the construction site, the police (at the behest of the CPI-M government) destroyed a culvert in the road leading to the jagrti complex and forcibly prevented its reconstruction. A few days later, the approach road to the ashram was also blocked.

Again Ananda Marga appealed to the courts for justice and the High Court of Calcutta ruled that the Margiis should be allowed to reconstruct the culvert and remove all obstacles along the road, and that the police should not obstruct the Margiis in any way (see court order). Even then, the police refused to comply with the court order, for which they were charged with contempt of court. Only after the contempt of court order was served to the Superintendent of Police and the Secretary of Irrigation of West Bengal, could the culvert be reconstructed.

### ATTACK ON TILJALA COMPOUND, JANUARY 1, 1982

In spite of all efforts by the government to stop it, the construction of the global headquarters proceeded at a remarkable pace until it was almost completed by January, 1982. There

The Rule is made returnable three weeks after the long vacation.

Liberty is given to the petitioner to re-build and/or reconstruct the culvert and remove all the obstructions on the said two paths. In doing so, the respondents will not obstruct the petitioners.

Let a plain copy of this order signed by the Assistant Registrar (Court) be given to the learned Advocate for the petitioners.

Sd/- N.C. Mukherji.

*Plain copy*  
*Panellani Bera*  
Assistant Registrar  
(Court)  
Appellate Side, High Court  
Calcutta. 1/6/81

Calcutta High Court order regarding culvert case

the communists made a desperate attempt to dislodge Ananda Margis from the compound by attacking it with lethal weapons and bombs on January 1st, when they knew most members were absent at a nearby spiritual gathering.

Forcibly entering the jagrti compound, about 23 communist thugs threw bombs and brutally assaulted the ashramites, ransacked the office and destroyed and looted valuables, office equipment and vehicles. Several Ananda Marga workers were seriously injured and had to be hospitalized. The Tiljala police registered cases against the attackers (who included some of the alleged assailants of the April massacre) but never pursued them. Until today no accused has been interrogated, let alone arrested. No statement of the injured has been recorded, nor was any evidence, such as the blood-stained cloths or bomb splinters, taken by the police.

The *Hindustan Times* reported (May 14), "Upset by the incident and the reluctance of the police to prosecute the accused, the Anand Marg had then sent representations and telegrams to the President, the Prime Minister, the West Bengal governor and the Inspector-General of Police, drawing their attention to the danger its members and followers were facing and requesting them to provide protection to their lives and property. There was no response from any quarter to these representations and telegrams. No one even visited the ashram to find out the truth about the allegations the Ananda Marga had made."

#### PREPARATION FOR THE MASSACRE

For several months the CPI-M have been making thorough and extensive preparations for the April 30th incident. As early as February the local communist party leaders of the Kasba-Tiljala area organized a "citizens conference" against Ananda

Marga and circulated a leaflet throughout the area inviting people to attend. The leaflet read (English translation) :

#### **"MAKE THE CITIZENS' CONFERENCE SUCCESSFUL TO FRUSTRATE ATTEMPTS OF ANANDA MARGIIS TO CREATE CHAOS"**

**Saturday 6 February at 5 P.M.**

**PLACE : ANANDA ARATI INSTITUTE HALL, PICNIC  
PARK**

"Sir & Madam :—

The activities of the separatist forces in the whole of India, particularly in the North East regions, has assumed menacing proportions. The reactionary forces in the society, aided by foreign agencies, are bent on creating chaos and disorder in the social and political life of the country. Ananda Marga is one of these reactionary forces. Recently Ananda Marga has established a large centre at the junction between Tiljala and VIP Road, inhabited by people speaking different languages and professing different religions. These Ananda Margiis are making unhealthy efforts to create communal rifts and spread terror among the common people of the locality, behind the facade of so-called spirituality.

"We think it is an imperative necessity to put up a united resistance against the attempts of the Ananda Marga to create lawlessness, in the collective interest of the common people. With this end in view, a convention of right-thinking people of all walks of life in the locality is going to be held at 5 p.m. on the coming 6 February at Ananda Arati Institute Hall.

"We sincerely invite you all to attend this convention along with your friends.

Signed :

**Mr. Sachin Sen, M.L.A. ( Member of Legislative  
Assembly from the Ballygunge-Tiljala area )**

Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, Barrister at Law and M.P.  
 ( Member of Parliament ).  
 Professor Satya Sadhan Chakraborty, M.P.  
 Professor Satish Mitra, M.P.  
 Ksudiram Bhattacharya, M.L.A.  
 Gangadhar Naskar, M.L.A., etc. etc.”

About 155 names were included as signatories of the leaflet  
 —all the local CPI-M political leaders of the area.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. Sen, Mr. Chakraborty  
 and several other Marxist leaders in fiery and violent language.



Communist leader organize “citizens conference” Against  
 Ananda Marga

The entire proceedings of the meeting were reported, with  
 pictures of the leaders, in bold letters in the CPI-M daily  
 newspaper, *Gana Shakti*, on February 8 ( English translation ) :

“On last Saturday at Tiljala picnic garden Arati Hall,  
 a convention was held which was attended by the  
 citizens of Southeast Calcutta and its suburbs.

Representatives of the labour, peasantry, middle  
 class, intellectuals, teachers and also common people  
 of the locality, appealed to the people in protest  
 against the activities of the Ananda Marga. Sachin  
 Sen, M.L.A., Ganesh Munshi, and Sunil Chakraborty  
 took the lead in framing the main resolution of the  
 convention. A local CPI-M member traced the  
 history of Ananda Marga in brief. He said, ‘We  
 should make an in-depth investigation how the terrorist  
 activities of this anti-people organization began, and  
 in which direction their present activities are being  
 conducted. If their activities are allowed to continue  
 without any opposition, then a dreadful day may  
 come, not only in West Bengal, but in all of India...  
 What is necessary today is not only passive opposition  
 but active resistance.’

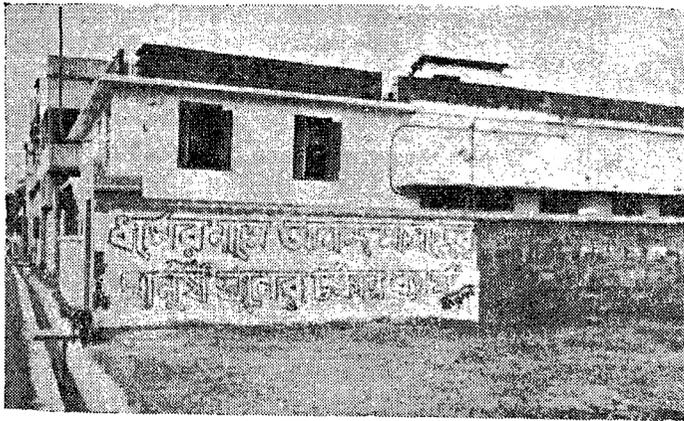
“The speakers at the convention made a fervent  
 appeal to the people to build up an active resistance  
 against the Ananda Marga...this terrorist, separatist  
 agent of imperialism.

#### CAMPAIGN OF HATE & FEAR

After this meeting, a vigorous campaign of wall-writings  
 and street-corner meetings was launched against Ananda  
 Marga, broadcasting propaganda accusing Ananda Margis of  
 being “child-lifters”, to create a fear psychosis among the  
 local population. A slanderous anti-Ananda Marga book  
 published by Pramod Das Gupta, the Secretary of the  
 Communist Party of West Bengal, was distributed everywhere.  
 Wall-writings appeared throughout the locality :

“Ananda Marga nipat jak—Death to Ananda Marga” and  
 “Ananda Marga kalo haath Bhenge Dao, Bhenge Dao—Ananda  
 Marga’s Black Hand—Break It ! Break It !” Leaflets were

distributed all over to incite the people against the Ananda Marga "threat", warning parents that the Margii "child-lifters" were at large. Anonymous menacing letters, supposedly from Margiis, were sent to various educational institutions throughout the area, threatening that harm would come to them if they did not hand over some of their children to Ananda



Communist wall writing : "Foil Ananda Marga's conspiracy to kill in the name of Dharma"

Marga. These letters so frightened some principals that they closed their schools for an indefinite period. Other warning letters were sent to teachers and parents, advising them to be alert against the Ananda Marga kidnapers.

The tempo of malicious propaganda increased until, a week before the massacre, there were continuous announcements over microphones throughout the locality by members of a CPI-M dominated club in Tiljala that the Ananda Margiis were out stealing children : "Children are being lifted—be careful".

In fact, these allegations are completely baseless. All the children in the more than one thousand Ananda Marga

children's homes all over the world are legally adopted, with proper adoption papers. The homes are all government sanctioned, and indeed the Police Commissioner of Calcutta and the local district police superintendent have confirmed that there is no police report of any child-lifting by Ananda Margiis.



Ananda Marga Children's home in India

In the words of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* of May 3, "Rumours of child-lifting by Ananda Margiis were widespread in the Kasba area preceding the Bijon Setu tragedy, though without any foundation. But neither the local police nor the politicians took any effective measures to scotch these rumours to allay public misgivings. And this, in spite of past experience. Rumours of child-lifting had often led to attacks on innocent people who in some cases lost their lives. In the Kasba area,

it seems, interested quarters with a grudge against the Ananda Margiis had deliberately raised the scare of child-lifting, which ultimately led to the inhuman and unthinkable orgy of violence on Bijon Setu."

#### PREMONITION OF TRAGEDY

On April 28, only two days before the murders, two Marga nuns with a small boy and girl were surrounded by a group of



Didi (sister) with Children of her Children's home

CPI-M men in the Kasba area and accused of having stolen the children they were carrying with them. All their efforts to

explain that the children were given to homes run by the Ananda Marga failed. They were beaten by the men when they refused to admit that they were child-lifters. Some members of the public intervened and took them to the local police station, where they were detained under charges of child-lifting—despite their producing valid adoption papers for the children.

Seven Ananda Marga members who went to the police station to inquire about the sisters' welfare were also beaten and arrested by the police on the orders of the local communist MLA ( Member of the Legislative Assembly ) Sachin Sen, who was then sitting in the station.

By April 30, this well-planned and well-orchestrated campaign of hatred and fear had presumably created not only the 'motive for the "mob frenzy" but also ensured that the local populace would be so intimidated by the propaganda that they would not defend the Ananda Marga victims in case of attack.

#### MOB FRENZY OR PREMEDITATED MURDER ??

The claims of the CPI-M government that the Ananda Margiis were done to death by a spontaneous mob fury against their "anti-social activities" are not only baseless but patently absurd. If popular vengeance was the cause, how can the following be explained :

(1) There are only two approach routes to the global headquarters of Ananda Marga at Tiljala, through Bijon Setu and Bondel Road, and *both* were the sites of the massacres. How did the "mob fury" suddenly happen to erupt at three different locations at exactly these two places at exactly the same time ??

(2) If it were only a case of spontaneous mob frenzy, how did the "mob", on the streets to do their early morning marketing, happen to be carrying the weapons of slaughter? What Indian citizen goes to market with iron rods, bamboo staffs, long daggers, and cans of petrol and matches??

(3) If it was indeed an enraged mob attack, why were none of the taxis damaged at all? This is contrary to mob psychology, which normally picks on vehicles as the first target of attack.

(4) How is it that the mob killed its victims in exactly the same expert, systematic manner at three different locations?

No—it was not spontaneous public anger which committed this genocide. It was a clear case of cold-blooded, premeditated murder.

*The Hindustan Times* of May 3 stated, "It is evident from the fact that since three such incidents occurred in two different locations on the same day, there was some prior plan to perpetrate these murders. What is truly horrifying is that even women were shown no mercy...It is quite possible that overzealous elements among the Marxists exceeded their mandate of putting obstacles in the way of the Margiis by liquidating those they were able to waylay."

#### POLICE APATHY...OR INVOLVEMENT?

And the most important question...Where were the police?? The massacre lasted for over one and a half hours, and the police stations in both areas are only about a half kilometer away from the site. The police could have reached the murder site within seven minutes, but they did not turn up until an hour after the killings. Where were they??

A Calcutta newspaper, the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, wrote on May 3, "The brutalities perpetrated on fifteen men and two women of Ananda Marga who were battered and burnt to death in full view of a large number of people who watched helplessly, and practically under the very nose of the police, are unprecedented not only in this city but anywhere else.

"This 'mob frenzy' was by no means a sudden or spontaneous outburst. The gruesome incidents took place simultaneously at a number of places in the same area, and those who took the leading part in the barbarous assault came well-prepared with iron rods, stones and petrol. The Chief Secretary, Mr. A. K. Sen, has seen a "set pattern in the incidents". In other words, he has indirectly admitted that the whole thing was a preplanned and organized conspiracy. But it cannot be said that the police were taken unawares. The Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, has not said a word on the failure of the police to take precautionary measures, though they should have been fully aware of the growing tension. The governor has asked the state government—which is something very unusual—to take adequate steps against the "recurrence of such ghastly incidents in the state". The failure of police and intelligence personnel has come under severe criticism."

*The Hindustan Times* reported on May 15, "The gruesome and broad daylight murder of 17 Ananda Margiis in the Kasba, which shocked the entire nation, could have been prevented had the senior police officials taken precautionary steps to control the violent confrontation that had been developing between some local leaders and Ananda Marga workers for several months. The police did not take any step, despite having been repeatedly informed about the situation.

"This has led many residents of the Kasba and Tiljala areas to believe that the police were either too weak and unprepared to check the confrontation, or avoided taking notice of the

matter as some ruling party leaders were directly involved in it. In either case, some residents say, it is futile for anyone to depend on the police for protection for his life and property threatened by some goonda ( anti-social ) elements."

"The incident ( of attack on the two sisters on April 28 ) alone should have alerted the police to the possibility of a violent attack on the Ananda Margiis. Had police parties been posted in the Kasba area and on the two roads used by the Ananda Margiis to reach their global ashram in Tiljala, the tragedy of April 30 might have been averted. It is strange that this blatant failure of the police has not yet been inquired into by the Inspector General of Police, West Bengal, nor has any action been taken against the erring officials.

"When this correspondent asked the police why no precautionary steps were taken when they knew of the increasing tension in the area, one senior police official admitted that such precautionary steps should have been taken, but said "they often remain on paper." He argued strangely that in the kind of atmosphere that had developed in the Kasba area, the April 30 tragedy was both "unavoidable and inevitable—whether or not the police were alert."

#### FURTHER POLICE DELAY

And another question remains unanswered : **Why did the police delay so long in arresting the suspects ?**

The local residents said that the perpetrators of the crime did not live in the immediate area ; if the police had cordoned off the entire area—standard procedure in incidents of such excessive

violence—they could have easily detected any suspicious non-residents and identified the culprits. But the first arrests were made only TWELVE HOURS after the incident—only after the press and media had strongly condemned the incident —giving the real murderers ample time to escape.

An investigative article in the *Hindustan Times* (May 14), states, "The gruesome murder of 17 Ananda Marga monks near the Kasba and Tiljala localities was allegedly planned and carried out by a local tough named "Michikey" Bablu and some of his associates. The police know about the criminals but have not yet been able to take them into custody.

"Some eyewitnesses to the April 30 murders say these criminals are often seen moving freely in the Kasba market. But when asked why they have not been arrested the police say they are not traceable and have been put on the list of 'absconders'.

"Bablu, a slim, short man in his late twenties, was arrested in connection with some murders when the Congress Party was in power in 1969. Soon this party was replaced by the CPI-M, which released him. He was later appointed secretary of the local committee of the CPI-M. He is alleged to be very close to the Marxist MLA from Baltygunge (Sachin Sen).

"The CPI-M workers have been viewing with considerable alarm the growth of Ananda Marga, which is considered a threat to the CPI-M in West Bengal in both organizational and ideological terms. About a dozen of those who have been arrested are CPI-M workers of the Kasba area.

"The hand of any outside political agency in the ghastly murders is ruled out by both the Kasba people and the CID offi-

cials. The eyewitnesses say that the theory that the crime might have been committed by some outsiders is "absurd". No outsider can dare enter the area to do something that may affect the supremacy of the local CPI-M leaders. These leaders would have brought the heavens down had the Congress-I (Indira Gandhi's party) or any other group been responsible for the crime. Mr. Subhrata Mukherjee, a local Congress-I leader, said, "I would have been immediately arrested had my party been even remotely connected with the carnage."

"CID investigation has established that there was a "pattern" behind the killings: Pokaro, maaro, aur jalao (catch, beat up and burn.) It is learnt that the killers perhaps did not want to finish off so many Ananda Margis. They were waiting for some important Ananda Marga monks, including the General Secretary and the private secretary to the Ananda Marga chief. The attack was planned for early in the day because every morning these important persons used to go to the Tiljala ashram from their office in Jodhpur Park. That fateful day also they had gone to Tiljala, but about half an hour before the killers had collected. It was perhaps a narrow escape for them.

"The CID investigation has also led them to believe that it was wrong to claim, as was done in the beginning, that the Ananda Marga monks had been lynched by an angry mob that believed them to be child-lifters. (The charge of child-lifting had been made repeatedly in the last one month to whip up public sentiment against the Ananda Marga.)

"When the monks were dragged out of the taxis, only 30-40 persons had taken an active part in their killings in three different places. Some anti-social elements had lent a helping hand. Terrorized by the scene, the people had only help-

lessly looked on. In fact, some members of the public helped a few monks escape almost certain death."\*

#### ANANDA MARGA'S FOUR DEMANDS

The *Hindustan Times* reported (May 14), "The eyewitnesses to the brutal crime are so scared that they avoid even talking about it. They say that the Kasba police are so much under the influence of the local committee of the CPI-M that no one can expect their protection against the committee members. They will not be surprised if the same persons who had perpetrated the crime on April 30th repeat it any day. "No one will ever dare to intervene," said one eyewitness.

What is to prevent this ghastly crime from being repeated—certainly not the police, nor the fear-ridden populace. The State Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, himself continues to incite the anti-social elements against Ananda Marga by his provocative statements to the press: "If Sachin Sen (the local communist

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\*The CPI-M defends itself that they would not have been so foolish as to commit such an atrocity so soon before the state elections, which they were expecting to win. But in fact, some of the CPI-M officials were so impatient to take action against Ananda Marga that they chose this time, just before the elections, with the added intention of creating an atmosphere of fear to further intimidate any political opposition. In Indian politics, acts of violent vengeance are often perpetrated at a time of political confusion—such as immediately before an election—when the blame can easily be placed on other parties.

Thus Ananda Marga has placed four demands before the Prime Minister of India :

- (1) The appointment of an independent judicial enquiry commission by the Central Government.
- (2) The immediate dissolution of the West Bengal State Government.
- (3) The arrest of the real culprits, including men of power like MLA Sachin Sen.
- (4) Adequate protection for the life and property of Ananda Marga in Calcutta and throughout West Bengal.

#### WHY AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION ?

Mr. Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister, has appointed a state inquiry commission to investigate the tragedy. But it is widely known that the communist government fears Ananda Marga as a growing challenge throughout the State, both organizationally and ideologically. Can justice really be expected from those who themselves masterminded the massacre, in a well-planned and systematic campaign to annihilate the spiritual movement from West Bengal ?

After the Ananda Nagar incident in 1967, the CPI-M state government appointed a judicial commission to investigate the murders. But this impotent commission was dissolved by the government after only one sitting, before they could even finalize their findings. What is to prevent the government from repeating this strategy again ?

The Chief Minister has used delaying tactics at every step of the inquiry procedure, and finally appointed a justice only after persistent pressure from all sectors of the outraged populace.

Since the activities of the CPI-M party and Chief Minister are not above suspicion, Ananda Marga will not accept any judicial commission instituted by it, and demands that an independent judicial commission be appointed to determine the truth and punish the *real* culprits—though they may be sitting on the thrones of political power.

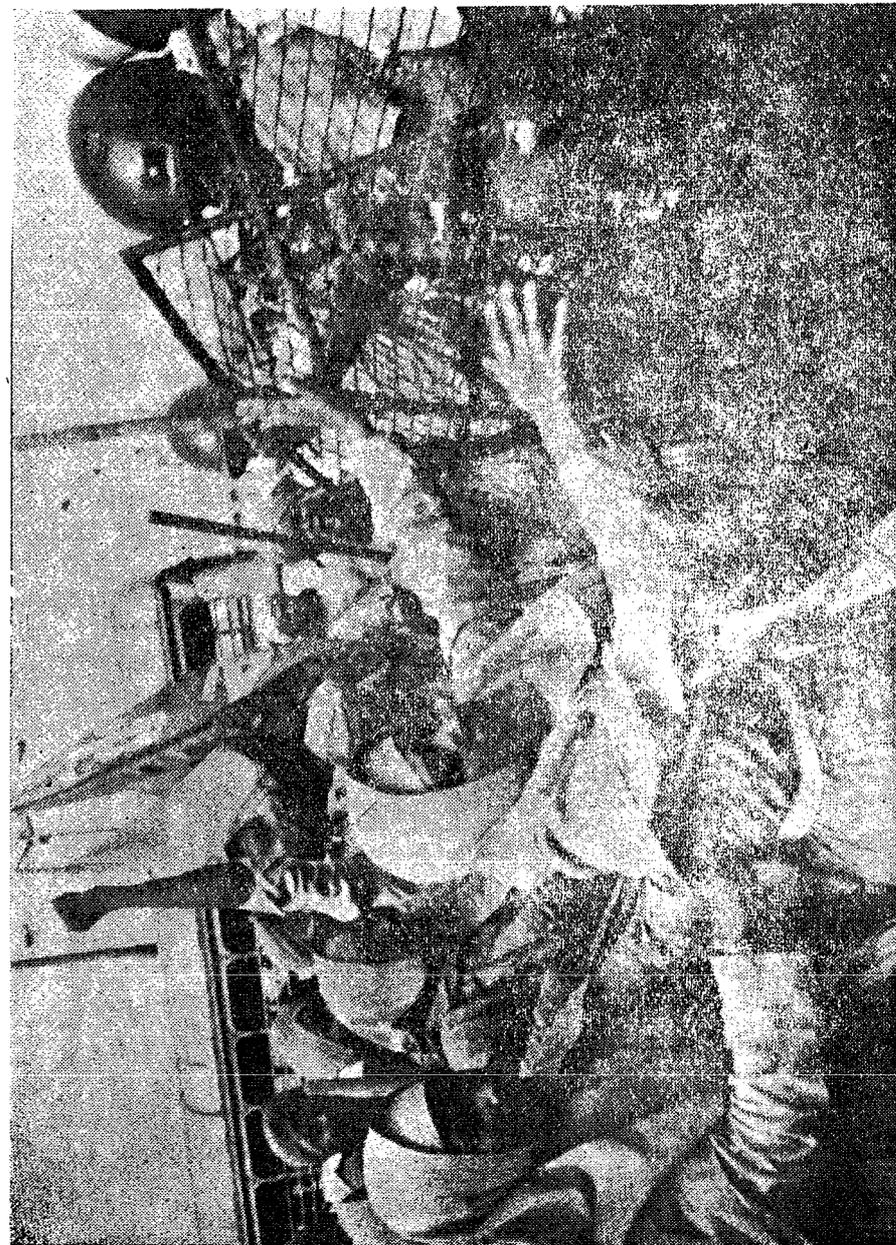
The CPI—M Government is becoming increasingly worried about the growing popular sympathy and support for the Ananda Margiis, and thus they are trying to silence their voice to the public.

During the funeral procession for the victims, weeping spectators clutched the hands of the mourning Margiis, beseeching them to stop and tell them what had really happened. But the police, directed by the communist party, roughly pushed the Margiis forward and threatened them with arrest if they even spoke a word because, they said, "This is a silent funeral procession."

At the condolence meeting following the funeral, police wielding heavy bamboo staffs, charged the Margiis, injuring 60 persons, including several women. 250 Marga members were arrested, and the organization was refused permission to hold any further condolence meetings by the West Bengal Government.

As the *Hindustan Times* reported, the eyewitnesses were too frightened to even speak about the incident. In such an atmosphere of repressive terror, can one imagine that any independent witness will be able—or have the courage—to depose in Ananda Marga's favour?

Thus the demand for the dissolution of the State government is not a political but a judicial one. As in Ananda Nagar and Cooch Behar, we can expect justice only after the communist government is removed from power, and a free and democratic atmosphere is restored in West Bengal.



Police charge against Ananda Marga nuns at condolence meeting

## INTERVENTION—NOW

We, the members of Ananda Marga, call upon the Prime Minister of India to intervene and prevent the further loss of innocent lives and the further shame to the Indian nation as the harbourer of such beastly criminals.

All the righteous people of the world have viewed with outrage the Calcutta tragedy as one of the cruelest and most heinous crimes of the present day.

We demand intervention now—before it is too late.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Send telegrams or letters of support for our demands to:

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi  
1 Safadar Jng. Rd.  
New Delhi, India

Governor of West Bengal  
Secretariat  
Calcutta, West Bengal  
India

Indian Ambassador  
Indian Embassy  
2107 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington DC 20001

Amnesty International  
304 W. 48th St.  
New York, NY 10019

International Commission  
of Jurists  
777 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

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854 PEARL ST.  
DENVER, CO 80203  
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