

Maoist held with arms & fake notes

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By OUR CORRESPONDENT in Siliguri

Published 1.07.07



Pradip Chatterjee being taken to the Jalpaiguri district court on Sunday. Picture by Biplab Basak

Siliguri, July 1: A member of the CPI (Maoist) was arrested in Jalpaiguri last night. Two pipeguns, 18 rounds of live cartridges and Rs 10,500 were seized from him.

Acting on a tip-off, CID officials picked up Pradip Chatterjee, alias Japan, a resident of Garia in Calcutta, from the Beguntari area of the town. He has been booked under Sections 25, 26 and 27 — possessing and using weapons and ammunition illegally — of the arms act.

“We have also charged him under Sections 468 and 471 of the IPC for possessing counterfeit currency. There were twenty-one 500-rupee notes with him, some of which were fake. Pradip had earlier been sent to jail for his Maoist activities,” said Sisir Dewan, the deputy superintendent of police, CID.

The 28-year-old had been arrested in Matigara, 5km from here, in 2005 on the charge of waging war against the state. He was in a Siliguri jail for eight months before being let out on bail.

“Once out, Pradip was back to campaigning for his organisation. The Maoist leadership engaged him to expand its network in north Bengal, especially in the closed tea gardens of the Dooars,” said Dewan.

Police officials claimed that Pradip has visited Kanthalguri and Ramjhora.

Talking to reporters on the way to Jalpaiguri Sadar Hospital for medical tests from the Kotwali police station, Pradip alleged that the police had framed him. “I was carrying some money and publicity materials, but not arms and ammunition. I have been framed.”

He also shouted slogans like “Maobad Zindabad (Long Live Maoism)”.

Police and intelligence officials had been on alert since receiving information that the CPI (Maoist) had formed a zonal committee in north Bengal.

“We were told that it had Pradip and leaders like Animesh Chakraborty (in Malda jail now) as members,” a CID official said.

Hours after Pradip’s arrest, CID sleuths raided his Calcutta house at 120 Raja S.C. Mallick Road, where his parents stay.

“They have taken away our cellphone and a computer. The mobile was important as both of us are cardiac patients and our landline is dead,” said 56-year-old Reena Chatterjee, Pradip’s mother. His father Prasanta Chatterjee is 70.

According Reena, Pradip left home for north Bengal around 20 days ago.

He was produced in court today and remanded in police custody for six days. Pradip is likely to be taken to Bhawani Bhavan, the CID headquarters in Calcutta, for further interrogation.

Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/maoist-held-with-arms-fake-notes/cid/698992>