

Bandh inevitable, say Naxals

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Rajahmundry, Dec. 9: The Peoples War Group issued a statement on Friday that the agency bandh on December 13 was "inevitable" as the government had failed to settle basic issues like implementing minimum wages of the tribals. The proposed bandh is a reaction to police atrocities such as burning of 46 Samantha villages at Chintapalli.

The government machinery is actually isolated in the tribal area and it remains only as a "welfare agency", it is said.

Last year the daily wage paid in forest works by Andhra Pradesh Paper Mills was Rs. 16. This year the tribals are on strike under the leadership of the extremists to enhance the wage to Rs. 18.

The demand is quite reasonable as it amounts to 10 to 12 per cent increase from last year's since the inflation rate is more than 10 per cent a year. Every year the extremists demand that the wages be paid on par with wages fixed by the district collector. It is unfortunate that the government is not capable of implementing its own recommendations, it is felt. The

recommendation has become a farce, the extremists maintain.

Trade of liquor, and smuggling of timber and ganja are areas when the government has absolutely neither political nor administrative will to exert control. These areas are virtually under the control of extremists.

The tribals are divided into several groups and the domination of "bogus" tribals and non-tribals is well known.

There is resentment in some circles that the government is depending on the support of PV group which is having increasing influence in erstwhile Rampachodavaram taluk and is extending its "network" to the dry zones of the district.

The proposed strike is apparently a show of strength of PW group in its bid to contain both PV Group as well as its ally, the police.