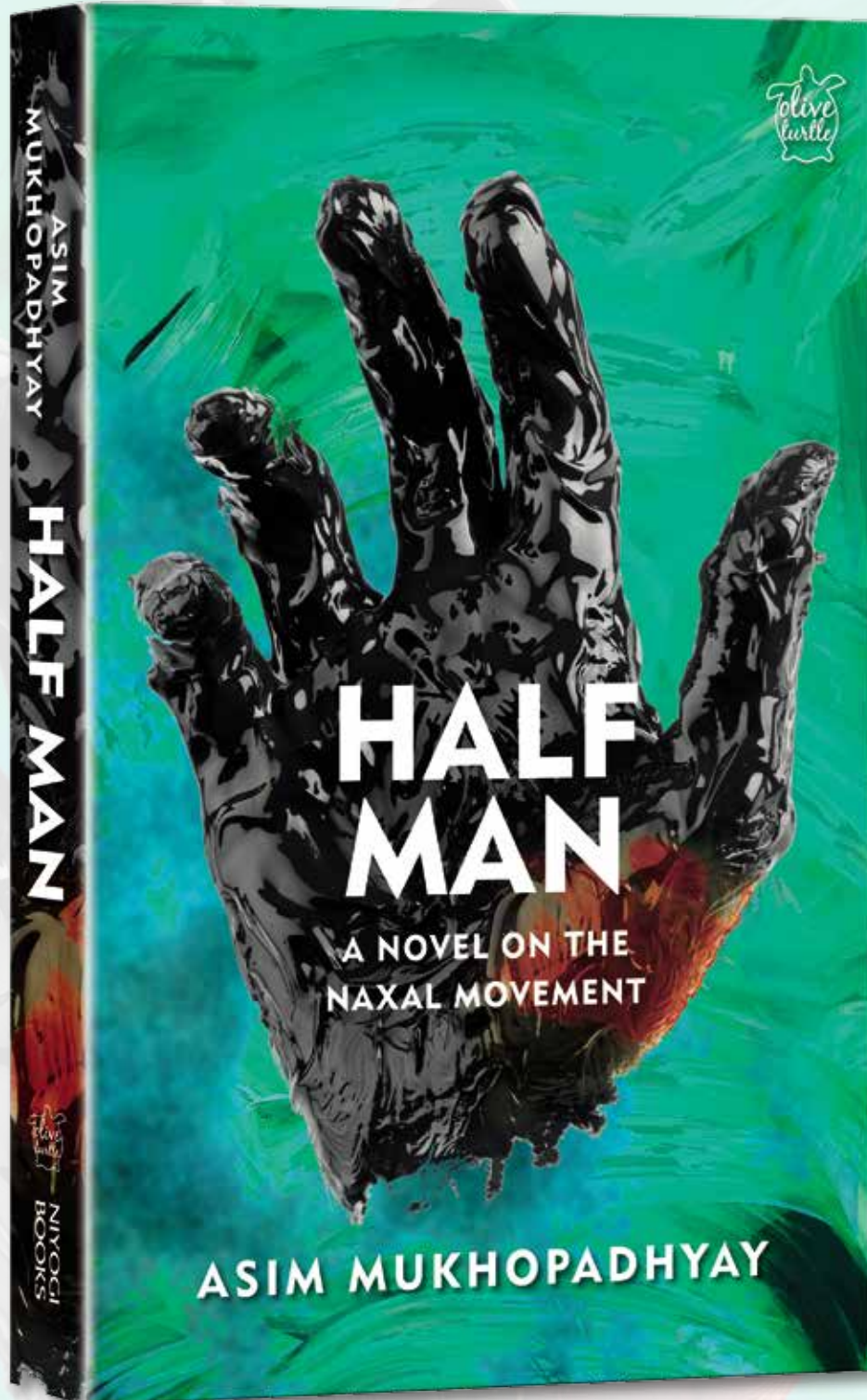


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HALF MAN

A NOVEL ON THE
NAXAL MOVEMENT

by
Asim Mukhopadhyay

FICTION

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Asim Mukhopadhyay's *Half Man* goes to the very heart of the Naxalite Movement in Bengal, with special emphasis on the infamous Cossipore-Baranagar massacres in north east Calcutta in August 1971. The novel also focuses on the horrifying repression of lakhs of displaced people in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra during the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* in Gujarat. In the novel, the massacres are witnessed by an innocent village youth of south Bengal, semi-literate but intelligent and wise beyond his years through his experiences, poor but courageous, who is tortured, humiliated, thrown out of his village and chased from one place to another and is ultimately turned into a social activist who realises that the tail of the gecko is not the system. The people are the system. They must be changed, in their way of living, thinking and fighting evil. This is a hard-hitting and brutally honest effort to focus light on India's teeming millions who are kept forcibly hidden by vested interests.

Asim Mukhopadhyay is a veteran researcher, teacher and consultant-cum-contributor on socio-economic and political situations in India and Bangladesh to various newspapers and journals such as *The Indian Express*, *Economic and Political Weekly* (Mumbai), and *Frontier* (Kolkata). He is continuing his research on the depressed communities, mainly the tribals, semi-tribals, minorities, with special emphasis on marginal farmers, artisans, the urban poor living on city pavements and scrounging garbage dumps as ragpickers. This is his debut novel.

The novel focuses on the Naxal Movement and narrates with vivid details the infamous Cossipore-Baranagar massacres that took place in north-east Calcutta in August 1971.

We get a glimpse of the Narmada Bachao Andolan through the brutal repression of lakhs of displaced people in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The novel follows the trials and tribulations of Bhola Mahato, the Half Man, an innocent village youth of south Bengal, semi-literate but intelligent and wise beyond his years.