

**Sansad Gherao! Delhi Chaloo!**  
**Repeal Land Acquisition Act Now!**  
**INVITATION**  
**National Action**  
**Against Forced Displacement & Land Grab**  
**and**  
**For Community Control Over Natural Resources & Livelihood Rights**  
**August 3 – 5, 2011, Jantar Mantar, New Delhi**

July 14 2011

Dear Friends/Comrades,

Greetings!

In 1979 Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal accepted LAND for LAND policy for Project Affected People, which later became the basis for Madhya Pradesh 1987 R&R Policy and also found in many subsequent policy drafts of different government agencies and movement groups. More than three decades later while the resistance to forced displacement and land grab has become much more vehement across the country, there is an attempt by political parties and corporate houses to reduce this to the matters of CASH alone. **From 2000 onwards people's movements have successfully resisted land grab in Kalinganagar, Niyamgiri, Singur, Nandigram, Sompeta, Chandrapur, Raigadh, Karla, Narmada Valley, Jagatsinghpur, Mumbai and thousands of other places.** Farmers, peasants, landless labourers and everyone together have fought to protect their land rights. In the same vein communities dwelling in forests have fought to claim their rights over the land they have been residing for generations and eking their livelihood from.

Many lives have been lost in this process too – Forbesganj, Bihar, Six people killed; Noida, Uttar Pradesh Four killed; Dhanbad, Jharkhand, Four killed; Jaitapur, Maharashtra, One killed; Kakkarapalli, Andhra Pradesh, Two killed; Sompeta, Andhra Pradesh, Three killed; Narayanpatna, Orissa, Two killed; Mudigonda, Andhra Pradesh, Eight killed; Nandigram, West Bengal, Eleven killed; Kalinganagar, Orissa, Thirteen killed and the list goes on. **These farmers, adivasis, dalits and working class people have sacrificed their life on the altar of development, while trying to defend their right over the natural resources which supports their livelihood and to which they belong.**

One of the draconian legislations which has been used by the government to acquire land and common resources is the Land Acquisition Act, 1894. Movement groups have been campaigning for its repeal for years now. On the other hand, many of the groups fighting for the rights of the displaced by already completed projects or those in progress have demanded enactment of a Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act which will bring relief to the project affected families whose claims have not been settled.

In 1998, during the tenure of Babugauda Patil, **NAPM** led siege to the Rural Development Ministry demanding primary right of Gram Sabha over the development planning and no forced displacement. Since then the issue has been raised at many levels which finally culminated in the 'National Development, Displacement and Rehabilitation' Bill approved by NAC – I in 2006. Since 2007 the struggle has continued under the collective platform '**Sangharsh**' for justice to millions of the PAFs and those resisting forced land acquisition. Many other organisations, alliances across the country too have made their efforts to secure and protect land rights of the landless communities over the years, a major victory being the enactment of Forest Rights Act in 2006. Once again after the incidents in the Greater Noida region an environment has been created whereby every political party is demanding passage of amendments to the existing Land Acquisition Act and until July 13<sup>th</sup> UPA government proposed to do so in Monsoon Session of the parliament. It is a welcome move that the new Rural Development Minister Sri Jairam Ramesh has accepted formulation of one comprehensive law and not two separate legislations. But this is only the first step. **We would like to once again reiterate that UPA Government must :**

1. **REPEAL Land Acquisition Act and ENACT a comprehensive National Development, No Forced Displacement and Rehabilitation Bill instead of two separate legislations** incorporating the progressive elements of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2007-08) enunciating the principle of least displacement, just rehabilitation and a decentralized development planning based on Article 243 of the

Constitution, PESA 1996 and Forest Rights Act, 2006 **in consultation with affected communities, movement groups and farmers groups.**

2. **PUT moratorium on all acquisitions until the process for a new comprehensive legislation is complete**
3. **ISSUE a White Paper on all the land acquisitions, displacement caused and rehabilitation completed since independence.** The White Paper must also make public the extent of land utilized, unutilized and land acquired for public purpose but remains occupied by sick and non-functional industries and other infrastructure projects.

It is time for everyone to join hands to protect the agricultural land and secure land rights for the food security needs of the future generations. In the current context new thinking has to be brought in on the land use pattern to meet the growing food demand, development needs and securing livelihood rights of millions of poor people.

**It is in this context that we invite you all to join us in Delhi at Jantar Mantar from August 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> to resist forced displacement and land acquisitions across the country and demand for a comprehensive legislation on development planning.**

The dharna is being joined by the groups whose control over land entitlements ensured by the Forest Rights Act will be threatened by these two legislations, the fish workers living on the coast and adivasis threatened by mining and peasants and agricultural workers threatened by SEZs and infrastructure projects. The labouring poor from the cities who face eviction from their dwellings and their livelihood threatened by various developmental activities too will join the dharna and so are the peasants whose land is constantly being taken by the urban development authorities for urbanisation.

**Other than the general focus on Land Acquisition Act repeal, the dharna would also address specific issues around: Dams (in Narmada Valley, North East India, Himachal and Central India), Thermal Power projects, Urban displacement, Forest Rights and Community Governance, struggles against Corporations (POSCO, Jaypee, Adanis, Tata, Coca Cola, Vedanta, Mittal, Reliance, Jindal, etc), and protecting livelihood rights of rural and urban communities in the form of statutory government entitlements such as demanding a Universal PDS and adequate benefits to BPL members and oppose any move at introducing cash transfers.**

**We do hope you will be able to join us on these days. Do send in your confirmations for the same and also support our efforts in whatever ways you can. We are looking for volunteers for various things and also resources for meeting the expenses of the programme. For details do get in touch.**

**SANSADHAN BACHAO !**

**AAJEVIKA BACHAO !**

**VIKAS CHAHIYE ! VINAS NAHI !**

**LADENGE ! JEETENGE !**

In solidarity,

**Medha Patkar** - Narmada Bachao Andolan & National Alliance of People's Movements

**Ashok Choudhary, Munnilal** – National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers

**P V Rajagopal** – Ekta Parishad

**Prafulla Samantara**, Loksakti Abhiyan, NAPM Orissa

**Roma, Shanta Bhattacharya** – Kaimur Kshetra Mahila Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, UP

**Gautam Bandopadhyay**, Nadi Ghati Morcha, Chhattisgarh

**Guman Singh** – Him Niti Abhiyan, Himachal Pradesh

**Ulka Mahajan, Suniti S R, Prasad Bhagwe** – SEZ Virodhi Manch & NAPM-Maharashtra

**Dr. Sunilam, Adv. Aradhna Bhargava** – Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, MP

**Gabriela Dietrich** – Pennuruimai Iyyakam & NAPM-Tamil Nadu

**Dayamani Barla** – Adivasi Moolniwasi Asthitva Raksha Manch, Jharkhand

**Shaktiman Ghosh** – National Hawker Federation

**Bhupendra Singh Rawat, Rajendra Ravi** – Jan Sangharsh Vahini & NAPM-Delhi

**Akhil Gogoi** – KMSS, Assam,

**Arundhati Dhuru** – NAPM – UP

**Sister Celia** – Domestic Workers Union, NAPM - Karnataka

**Simpreet Singh** – Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan & NAPM-Mumbai

**Mata Dayal** – Birsa Munda Bhu Adhikar Manch & NFFPFW-MP

**Dr. Roopesh Verma** – Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, UP

**Chitaranjan Singh** – INSAF

**Manesh Gupta** – Jan Kalyan Upphokta Samiti, UP

**Vimalbhai**, Matu Jan Sangathan & NAPM-Uttarakhand

**Bilas Bhongade**, Gosi Khurd Prakalp Grasht Sangharsh Samiti  
**Jan Sangharsh Samanvay Samiti**

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