

Demonstration on “Displacement and Development” from Nov 18 in capital

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[Demonstration](#) on “Displacement and Development in the context of proposed [Land Acquisition](#) (Amendment) and [Resettlement](#) and [Rehabilitation](#) Bills” will be held in [New Delhi](#) from November 18 to 21, 2009.

Since March 2007, [National](#) Alliance of Peoples' Movements (NAPM), National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers (NFFPFW), National Hawkers Federation, Nadi Ghati Morcha, Him Niti Abhiyan and many other mass organisations of the country came together under the banner of Sangharsh, and resisted

[the government](#)'s machinations of enacting a faulty Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act and introducing amendments to the Land Acquisition Act, promoting private and corporate interests over public good.

Recently they gathered in Delhi in July 2009 and our struggle gained a significant boost when the Acts could not be passed in the Budget session of the Parliament. The land related conflicts and ensuing violence and divide across the country today have brought the issue of displacement and resettlement onto the front pages of news papers once again.

There have been numerous demonstrations against displacement in Orissa, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh in recent months. All across, there is a simmering discontent in the country side and unrest in the urban areas as well. Continuing with their past efforts and series of ongoing actions across the country to struggle for a people-friendly, democratic Act on R&R and least displacing development model, the four-day programme was planned in Delhi.

The idea is not only to demonstrate, but also to capture the civil and democratic space in this charged times of undeclared emergency, when the government is planning major offensive apparently against armed resistance by Maoists, but in the process is also clamping down on peaceful mass struggles that are challenging dispossession and inequity.

In such difficult times of state-sponsored militarization, it is important to remind the government and the society at large that there is a large mass of people in the country who have been struggling democratically, for decades, to retain community control over natural resources and resist any attempt at displacing them from their land and livelihood.

The NAPM wish to make it clear to the government and send out a loud message that these Bills, in their current form, far from providing justice to the millions of displaced people across the country, will only accentuate their misery and anger.

The theme of the Convention remains “We demand that UPA government MUST

1. NOT pass the proposed Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill and Resettlement and Rehabilitation Bill in their current form in the Parliament. UPA attempted this towards the end of the 14th Lok Sabha and also on the last day of the Monsoon Session in extremely secretive manner without any debate and adequate prior information.
2. ENACT a National Development, Displacement and Rehabilitation Act based on the Draft National Development, Displacement, and Rehabilitation Policy passed by the National Advisory Council in 2006 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.
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.
4. And all the state Governments should come out publicly with the MoUs signed with different corporations, companies and others, which have land acquisition requirements and hold public dialogue - especially with affected people.

The Convention include a massive demonstration at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on November 19 and 20, while the Convention and remembering Prabhash Joshi of Gandhi Peace Foundation will be on November 18 at Kanjhawala. There will be a public meeting at Gandhi Peace Foundation on November 21 on “Development, Displacement and Land Conflicts Today”.

The participants include Medha Patkar (Narmada Bachao Andolan & NAPM), Ashok Chowdhury (NFFPFW), Gautam Bandopadhyay, (Nadi Ghati Morcha, Chattisgarh), Dayamani Barla (Adivasi Mulnivasi Astitva Raksha Manch, Jharkhand), Roma (Kaimur Kshetra Mahila Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Samiti,) Pushpa Toppo (Jharkhand Jungle Bachao Andolan) and Dr. Sunilam (Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, Betul). (EOM)

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