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Brinda: implement Forest Act to prevent sale of land to corporates

Special Correspondent

Meet calls for end to displacement caused by developmental projects

— Photo: Shiv Kumar Pushpakar



CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat (centre) with participants at the concluding session

NEW DELHI: The government's “pro-corporate policies” came under attack at a two-day national convention on tribal rights that concluded here with participants calling for an end to displacement due to developmental projects.

In a resolution, the participants said that many States, including Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, were not implementing the Scheduled Tribes and Other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 as it would prevent the sale of forest land to corporate houses.

Addressing a press conference later, Brinda Karat, (CPI-M) Polit Bureau member, said a struggle against displacement would be launched across the country in July.

She announced the launch of a National Platform for Tribal Rights with participation from all tribal States. A special 42-member committee was constituted to coordinate between the States on issues related to tribal communities.

Ms. Karat said Maoists had reportedly struck a secret deal to hand over 10,000 acres of

forest land to corporate houses in at least four districts of Jharkhand without the government's knowledge. She said these districts were totally under their control.

Package for Adivasis

Demanding a special package for Adivasis, Ms. Karat said this was necessary as very few farmers were able to access the Centre's farmer loan waiver scheme. The government should announce compensation in case of destruction of minor forest produce (MFP) like tendu patta as this was a major source of income for the tribal communities. Under the present criteria, MFP is not within the purview of compensation.

The resolution also demanded that BPL status be given to Adivasis. At present, they are outside the ambit of Below the Poverty Line category, as most of them have some landholdings.

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