

Report

Kashmir People demand Relief and Rehabilitation for Flood victims

Kashmir has witnessed a welcome scene on Sept 6th, 2015 several organizations have joined in a state-wide protest action against the callousness and failure of the central and state governments in providing relief and rehabilitation to the flood victims that struck in September 2014.

The floods brought a total collapse of economy and untold sufferings for the people. As estimated by the officials, a total of 6782 villages were flooded, affecting 18 lakh people's households. Of them, 741 villages remained submerged in flood waters for weeks. 21,485 houses were damaged and 4700 were severely hit. Nearly 280 people have lost their lives in the floods. Many compare the magnitude of Kashmir floods with floods that struck Uttarakhand in 2013.

The Prime Minister Modi has put up much show of concern for the flood-hit Kashmir people. He immediately rushed to Kashmir in Sept' 2014 and again visited Kashmir in October, 2014. He shed tears, spoke consoling words and promised generous financial help to the flood victims. He told, the disaster you suffered is a disaster for the entire nation'. But, as stated by Showkat Choudury, Chairman of the Kashmir Economic Alliance, "the state and the centre have paid lip service to the victims of the floods. A year had passed, but the government has failed to release any money for the relief and rehabilitation of flood victims". Supporting the bandh, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the leader of a Hurriyat faction, said, "even damaged embankments have not been repaired. India, under a planned manner, wants to break the backbone of state's economy".

The PDP-BJP Government in Kashmir is heading a bankrupt economy. Unable to solve any problem of the people, it is increasingly resorting to the methods of repression in dealing with the protests of people.

In the context of present protest action of the people the Govt; has prohibited the people from taking out the protest march and assembling at Lal Chowk in Srinagar-a centre which was worst-hit by the 2014 floods. It has arrested or kept under house arrest several leaders of JKLF and Hurriyat. It detained the leaders of Kashmir Economic Alliance-a conglomeration of traders and business houses that called for the bandh and when they tried to reach the protest venue. These repressive actions were widely condemned including by the leaders of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries. This kind of repressive course of even against the democratic protest on the issues of common concern will only further alienate the rulers from the people.

However, the bandh was overwhelmingly successful. The response from the people was spontaneous and total. The political organizations or forces of different shades, traders, business men, students, youth, employees, teachers and other sections of people have actively participated or supported it. This is a welcome trend in the struggle of Kashmir people.
