

TAMILNADU PEASANTS IN STRUGGLE

The peasants in our Country are passing through a worst crisis. The rulers at the Centre as well as States are utterly callous towards the problems of peasants. The problems like irrigation water, the reasonable price for the agricultural produce, marketing facilities and the costs of agricultural inputs, etc., are heavily weighing on the backs of peasants. The peasants in many States today are undergoing the worst conditions of drought. There are many States which are under the spell of severe drought continuously for 4, 5 years. They find themselves neck deep in debt trap and inextricable economic crisis. Already, 3,50,000 peasants had succumbed to forced deaths called 'suicides' in the Country. Just in last three years of NDA rule, 12601 peasants have committed suicides (Maharashtra 4004; Telangana 1347; MP 1198; Chhattisgarh 954; AP 916; TN 606) in the Country. This shows the magnitude of agrarian crisis in the Country.

Tamil Nadu is in the jaws of worst drought never seen in the last 140 years. With no cultivation for want of irrigation water and dried up lands the peasants and the agricultural labour are starving and dieing for want of food. The appeals, representations and protests by the peasants have failed to move the rulers in the State. The dirty gamble for power leave no time for the rulers to look into the problems of peasants. The peasants found it intolerable. 150 peasants from Tanjavoor and Tiruchirapalli districts rushed to Delhi- the Capital of India on March 14, 2017 as part of staging a direct protest action. They began protest at Jantar-Mantar. It is continuing even now. The protesting peasants chose certain peculiar forms of protest which they believed to be more effective to attract the attention of the rulers and melt their hardened hearts and draw the support and sympathy of the people in general. These forms include: parading the skulls of 20 peasants who committed suicides in Tamil Nadu; rolling on the roads with folded hands; going half- naked; climbing trees and raising slogans and begging on the streets with begging bowls. The peasants demand a package of Rs 40,000 crores from the Centre as drought and debt relief; reasonable price for the agricultural produce; 5000 monthly pension; setting up of a Board to oversee the distribution of Kaveririver waters as directed by the Supreme Court and the cancellation of Hydro-carbon Project, etc., The protesting peasants sought to meet and present a Memorandum to the PM. But he found no time to meet them. The police even lathi charged the protesting peasants at the Jantar-Manter.

The protest of Tamil Nadu peasants received wide support and solidarity from the people in the Country. Several political and mass organizations have extended their support. Hundreds of peasants in UP, Haryana and Punjab came out in solidarity actions. Rallies were held in several States. In Madurai and other several Cities the students have come out into the streets in support of TN peasants.

The problems of Tamil Nadu peasants, in reality, are the problems of all peasants of our Country. The peasants in different States are in struggle for similar demands. When it comes to showing concern and generosity towards the MNCs and Indian Corporate Houses, the rulers in our Country go all out in dolling out the subsidies, concessions, loans, writing off the debts, supplying the raw material and natural resources at throw away prices, and in allowing to exorbitantly hiking up the prices of industrial goods and agricultural inputs, etc.,but they show stony hardness, utter callousness when it comes to the question of addressing the most urgent and life and death problems of peasants and common people. The forms of protest chosen and adopted by the Tamil Nadu peasants are really pathetic, humiliating and unbearable. They are a shame on the Indian ruling classes, because it is they who have pushed the peasants into such a pathetic state. The Indian ruling classes and their regimes cannot get away with this kind of criminal callousness. The patience and endurance being shown by the peasants too have a limit. They cannot escape a day when the peasants and all the distressed classes of people would raise their united and mighty voice.

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