

Report from Odisha

People continue the Struggle in Sipasarubali area

For the last 7 years, the coastal people of Puri district of Odisha are in possession of over 3000 acres of land asserting their right over the land. From the beginning, the people, under the banner of Upakuliya Jami-o-Jangal Suraksha Samithi, are opposing the Govt's proposed move to give away this land to a tourism project called 'the Shamuka Hotel Project'. All these years, the Govt. has tried every possible method to disposes the people from the land, deny their just right over the land and push through their designated dream project. Even now, the project got no CRZ clearance and other environ-mental clearances. Yet, the Govt. is going for a global tender to invite a consortium of Hotels from abroad. The people continue to oppose these attempts and struggle to defend their right over the land.

On Sept 6th 2017, the people gheraoed the Sub Collector's Office in Puri opposing the govt's call for tenders for cashew crop in the area under the possession of people. More than 1000 people have taken part in this mass protest. The Puri District administration has finally withdrew the tender notice.

On Jan 6th, 2018, the people took out a big rally and held a mass dharna in front of the Brahmagiri Tahsil Office demanding the cancellation of permission given to a local sand mafia for sand mining in the land in the possession of people. The dharna ended only after the Tahsildar has declared the cancellation of permission with a letter of promise to the people not to give any permission for similar mining in private as well as govt. land in future.

On Feb 17th, 2018, more than 1000 men and women took out a rally in Puri and protest meeting in front of the District Collector's Office demanding the legal right over land and the withdrawal of the proposed disastrous Hotel project. The people also demanded the protection of forest and sand domes in this coastal area.
