

Report from Punjab

UNITED MOVEMENT OF PUNJAB PEASANTS

THIRTY ONE Kisan Organizations came together and gave a Call to fight against the agriculture laws enacted by the fascist-type Modi govt. Around 100 small and large organizations of workers, employees, traders, Mandi Commission agents, youth, students and many more came in support of the peasants. It was a historic united action. The peasants had blockaded the Railway tracks for 3 days from 24 Sept. It was totally successful. The Sangharsh – committee has extended the rail block up to 29th.

Writers, singers and other cultural activists and organizations also came on the roads in support of Kisans. Women peasants in large number were in the forefront of struggle at many places. College and school teachers organizations, lawyers associations, Human Rights Organizations, Police pensioners association also participated in the struggle.

All the small and big Kisan Organizations of Punjab (31) came on one platform, except CPM led Kisan Sabha which is unfortunate. All about 10 Kisan Organizations led by the Communist Revolutionaries having 80% of total mobilizing capacity are in the forefront. Under the pressure of united Kisan movement various bourgeois parties like Akali Dal and Congress were forced to organize protest, but the people saw their move as a navtanki. Kisans in some districts have prepared the lists of BJP leaders and activists and gave the call for their boycott.

People of Punjab deserve commendation for organizing such a massive movement against the anti-people, anti-farmer ordinances and laws by the fascist-type Modi Govt. Its credit goes to the people.

31 Kisan Organizations coming together and organizing an untied movement is indeed historic. It shows a way to the peasants in our Country. Kendri Punjab Lekhak Sabha also joined the protest in support of Kisans at Jalandhar Punjab. On Sept, 24th, BJP leaders tried to hold a press conference in support of the agriculture ordinances in Sangrur Punjab. But the activists of Kisan organizations reached the spot in large number in tempos armed with flags and loud speakers and gheraod the hall. The BJP men had simply fled away abandoning the press conference.

People organized the mass dharnas, rail and road blocks at 400 places in Punjab on Sept 25th.

Though it was paddy harvesting season, the kisan Organizations have decided to completely block the rail traffic indefinitely from first October. They also decided that peasants and workers shall organize dharnas daily at the residences of BJP leaders till they denounce the black laws passed by the Modi govt. and come in support of agitating farmers. As decided by the Sangharsh committee of 31 Punjab Kisan Organizations and various kisan unions began putting boards to ban and boycott all BJP leaders if they visit their village.

Nukkad natak teams went to villages in Punjab to mobilize people against the anti-peasant and anti-workers laws. Punjab peasants have given the call to boycott businesses and products of Ambani and Adani. They sat in dharna at reliance petrol pumps and also posting Jio mobile numbers to other companies.

The representatives of 31 Kisan Organizations met the Punjab CM on his invitation. The CM promised to call Assembly Session soon and adopt a resolution rejecting all the three ordinances and laws passed by the Parliament. Later, the Kisan Organizations met and decided that all the 13000 Panchayats in the state shall call general body meetings and adopt unanimous resolutions rejecting the law passed by the Parliament.

The Kisans began to block rail traffic from October. No train is allowed to pass through Punjab. All malls owned by the corporates like Ambani, Adani and others were forced to shut down. People have taken control of toll plazas owned by the corporate and politicians. People are asked to pass without any fee. Youth and other organizations have joined in large number making it a people's movement. They have declared it will continue indefinitely till anti-farmer laws are not withdrawn. Peasants are continuing day and night sit in at Reliance petrol pumps and have forced them to shut down.

Employees of various unions under the banner of Democratic Mulazim Front are participating in large number in solidarity with peasants in dharnas at rail way stations to block the rail traffic in Amritsar district daily from 1 to 4.PM.

In Punjab it has taken a shape of mass movement. All sections of society are involved in one way or other in it. Participation of youth is increasing day by day.

It is Innovative

Kisan Organizations, especially those belonging to ML stream are adopting new methods to mobilise the wider masses of peasantry. They have women and youth wings of their unions. It helped them immensely in influencing the peasants, and mobilizing them into the movement. This is one reason of successful mobilization of peasants in Punjab. Other peasant organizations in rest of the country can learn from it.

Indian students held protest marches against the black laws and the opportunist policies of Badal and Captain Govt. From Sept 6th, the employees' organizations in Amritsar have moved into action in support of Kisan movement. The representatives of traders marched through bazaars in various towns to make people aware of anti-farmer and anti-people nature of central laws. Activists of Krantikari Kisan Union blocked the railway track at shambhu in Patiala district on 6th Sept. At the call of 17 Kisan organizations supported by students, youth and employees thousands of people in Sirsa, Haryana gathered to protest against the draconian anti-farmer, anti-workers laws on 6th Sept. Police used force, tear gas and water cannons against the peaceful protesters. This is being widely condemned by the people.

Jamhoori Adhikar Sabha has called the people to intensify the agitation. Kisan Organizations organized indefinite protest dharna at Ferozpur railway station in Punjab. Rail traffic was jammed at the call of 31 Kisan Unions.

Pro-NDA group-called BKU (Lokhoval) is thrown out of 31 Kisan Organizations Committee as he was hobnobbing with the Central govt. Its president Azmir Singh Lokhoval was the chairman of Punjab Mandi Board for 5 years during Akali govt. He represents a section of rich peasantry with a negligible following.

The Central govt. has invited the Punjab Kisan Organizations for talks to explain the benefits of agriculture laws. But all the kisan Organizations have rejected this invitation and expressed their determination to continue the agitation.

30 kisan Organizations met in Chandigarh on 7th Sept. They decided to block national high ways on Oct 9th in Punjab for two hours in protest against police repression on kisans of Haryana. They rejected the Central govt.'s invitation for talks. They gave 7days time to Punjab govt. to call State Assembly to pass a resolution rejecting the agriculture laws. Kisan organizations held dharnas at Rampur phool (Bathinda dist..) and Sangrur railway station and blocked the rail, malls, petrol pumps, godowns, toll plazas and other ventures owned by corporates like Ambani, Adani and others. Paddy harvesting season could not deter the peasants from continuing the protest movement. The peasants have taken it as a life and death question. They are showing all determination to fight the anti-farmer, anti-worker policies of the Indian rulers.

Mass Organizations in Barnala Punjab held a March in protest of Hathras rape and murder and sent a memorandum to the President of India through DC Barnala. 30 kisan Organizations jammed the national high ways in Punjab on 9th for 2 hours from 12 to 2. PM in protest against the police lathi charge on peasants in Haryana and Hathras crime. On 9th, peasants in Karnal Mandi in Haryana gheraod and threw BJP leader out who had come to take stock of paddy sales in Mandi. Anger of peasant is growing against BJP in Haryana. Punjab students union and Naujawan Bharat Sabha gave a call to gherao RSS office in Moga Punjab on 15th October.

At the same time Dalit organizations of Punjab had given Punjab Bandh Call on 10th October against Hathras rape and murder. Kisan, Youth and other organizations have also extended support. Kisan activists have blocked the high way in Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar district Punjab. Same day Jamhoori Adhikar Sabha activists in Bhathinda Punjab protested against Manisha's rape and murder in Hathras UP. Kisans in large number are sitting on indefinite rail roko dharna at almost all major railway stations in Punjab. People from the adjoining villages supplied Lunger, i.e. food and milk regularly to the protesting people. Kisans are also staging dharnas at Patanjali stores/ offices along with Ambani and Adani malls, godowns and petrol pumps in the state as part of their movement to boycott Corporates. They are holding more than 36 main railway lines and stations in their control. No traffic is allowed in Punjab. They have captured all toll plazas and made the passage free to commuters. They have closed malls of Ambani, Adani, Patanjali stores, godowns, petrol pumps of corporates and are picketing there day and night. They can close state and national high ways whenever they call. The people of all classes, i.e. workers, employees, students, youth, women, traders, shop keepers, Mandi commission agents and, of late, children are a part of the movement.

142 well known Punjabi writers pledged their support to the ongoing peasant movement. The students' movement against the denial of post-Matric scholarships to Dalit students is going on. Releasing the statement with names and signatures of writers, the general secretary of Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha Dr Sukhdev Singh sirsa asked the govt. to withdraw the agriculture bills.

Punjab CM has called a Special Assembly session on 19th October to negate the Central agriculture Laws. On 16th, large number of youth under the banner of Naujawan Bharat Sabha gathered in Moga. Youth marched in bazaar, reached the venue and picketed in front of RSS office and challenged them to come out. Earlier, Sanghis had announced that they will send the protesters back on stretchers. The challenge of youth went on for hours. Coward Sanghis locked themselves from inside in the presence of heavy police security. 30 Kisan organizations have declared to intensify their movement to gherao the BJP and RSS offices and the residences of their leaders and hold indefinite dharnas there.

Govts. May ask the Courts to issue directives to lift the blockade and use para-military forces any time. But the people are prepared to fight it. Punjab and Haryana people are on the tracks. It is for the people of other states too to rise and fight unitedly to defeat the fascist type and anti-people policies and designs of the Indian rulers.

[This report is put into wide circulation by Subodh Mitra, Convenor and S.Jhansi, Co-Convenor AIKMKS]

On 22 Oct after passing 3 laws by Punjab assembly and at the request of Punjab govt peasant organisations partially lifted rail roko dharnas. They agreed to allow goods trains only to carry coal to state owned thermal plants and carrying essential commodities, agriculture inputs and grain from FCI godowns by govt agencies but their dharna to block passenger trains continues.

The very next day northern railway started sending goods trains and it went on smoothly.

As part of their protest and struggle against corporates the peasants started dharna on rail tracks leading to private thermal plants owned by corporates and in Moga kisan unions captured a good train in ultra modern Godown of Adani which was to load grain. After intervention of police and civil administration peasants let the engine of train go but they locked the bogies in the godown. This was a big shock to Ambani, Adani and other corporate friends of Modi as peasants have already closed toll plazas, petrol pumps, malls, jio offices, godowns owned by them, they are running into loss day by day.

Then as part of their movement against Modi govt peasants who are gheraoing BJP and RSS offices and houses of their leader (some of whom have surrendered to peasants by resigning from BJP and promising to stand by kisan movement,).

Intensifying their movement and to mobile masses against black laws passed by Modi govt. peasants gave a call to burn effigies of Modi and corporates like Ambani and Adani, on Dussehra, which was a grand success as in all cities, towns and almost all villages people, young, women and children gathered in hundreds and thousands to burn effigies Modi and corporates instead of Ravan this time.

How could fascists Modi and corporates digest it.?

They issued verbal orders to northern railway not to send any goods train to Punjab till peasants allow passenger trains also to pass.

But the kisan organisations of Punjab are determined to carry their agitation against Modi govt and corporates to other parts of country till anti people black laws are withdrawn.

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