

# Appeal to Observe Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda, November 15<sup>th</sup> by Burning Copies of Pro Corporate Forest Conservation Rules 2022

An All-India joint program against Forest Conservation Rules 2022 will be organized on November 15<sup>th</sup> on the occasion of birth anniversary of Birsa Munda. We request everyone to participate and contribute to this program and make it a success. Some successful programs were already conducted at Parvathipuram, Srikakulam etc. by AIKMKS. We call upon all state units of AIKMKS to make success this program.

**Subodh Mitra**, Convener, AIKMKS

**S. Jhansi**, Co-convener, AIKMKS

## Dear Friends,

The Govt. of India is preparing to launch another violent attack to uproot and displace Adivasis and other forest dwellers from vast areas of forest land in order to hand over forests and forest land to big corporates and multinational companies. For this they have placed Forest Conservation Rules 2022 before the Parliament. It is likely that they will stand approved during the Budget session of 2023.

### **Forest Conservation Rules, 2022:**

These rules, the FCR 2022 will take away the statutory authority granted to Gram Sabhas of tribals and other traditional forest dwellers under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, the PESA Act 1996 and the Land Acquisition Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act 2013 which decide on matters related to settlement of land, community and forest rights and approval to projects on their land. These rules override the earlier amended FCR 2003 along with the FRA 2006, which commanded the Govt to take approval of Tribal and Forest Gram Sabhas before 'diverting' and 'declassifying' forest land in favour of a 'User Agency', meaning a private or public company. Now Forest Rights will be considered only after 'in principle' and 'final approval' was already granted and the company has already deposited the Net Present Value of the forest land.

### **Attacks on Adivasis:**

Attacks on Adivasis are not new. In 1980 when the Forest Conservation Act was made; in 1988 when the National Forest Policy was framed; in 2001 when the Supreme Court ordered eviction of all 'encroachers'; when Tatas, Posco, Reliance and Vedanta etc. were being given land; when the Santhal Pargana and Chota Nagpur Tenancy Acts were changed in 2017; each time the plan was to evict Adivasis. But Adivasis fought back bravely, as we had done during the British Rule.

### **Need to Protect Environment, Climate:**

Modi Govt is desperate to sell forest resources and land to companies even though the need is to preserve forests and greenery, to protect our climate, prevent floods, droughts

and cyclones, protect the flora and fauna and biodiversity and ensure the livelihood of 40 crore people of India who depend on forest produce. But corporate grabbing of land, forests, water and mineral resources is part of the RSS-BJP led Modi Govt's core agenda. It wants foreign investments as it is now in deep financial crisis after spending the govt fortune on companies and the rich. Its debts are rising, dollar income is falling and trade deficit is increasing. So, it now wants to sacrifice the livelihood resources of Adivasis and non-Adivasis, the poorest sections of Indian people, to cover up its losses.

**We must fight back as we did in the past:**

Birth anniversary of the Great Hero of anti British struggle, Birsa Munda is approaching. He was born in the village of Ulihatu in the Lohardaga district, Jharkhand, on 15th November, 1875. The Munda revolt was against the 'unfair land grabbing practices' by colonial power and local authorities, that demolished the tribal conventional land system'. Its main slogan was "Abua raj ete jana, maharani raj tundu jana", ie, "Let the kingdom of the queen be ended and our kingdom be established".

Around 7,000 men and women assembled around on Christmas of 1899 and marched to begin the Ulgulaan (revolution) which soon spread to Khunti, Tamar, Basia, and Ranchi. More than 4 police stations of the British were attacked. It ended in arrest and prosecution of Birsa and more than 460 Adivasi leaders. Birsa died in jail on June 9, 1900 along with some others.

**In memory of these heroes and in support of our struggle for Independence from Company Raj let us burn an effigy of the copies of the Forest Conservation Rules 2022 with mass protests on November 15, this year all over the country.**

**Issued by :**

Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA);  
National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM),  
Adivasi Adhikar Rashtriya Manch;  
Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan (JADS);  
All India Kisan Mazdoor Sabha, AIKMS;  
Satyashodhak Shetkari Sabha, Maharashtra;  
AIKMKS,  
Malkangiri Jilla Adivasi Sangh;  
AIKMS, AIKMS (Vidyanagar), AIKF,  
Telangana Rayitanga Samiti;  
Telangana Girijan Sangham;  
Indian Nationalist Movement; and others.