

Agitation for Rights to the Land and Rehabilitation of Polavaram Project by Girijans in Andhra Pradesh

An indefinite Dharna was conducted under the auspices of Agency Girijan Sangham and Rythu Coolie Sangham (A.P.) before the collector office at Eluru with hundreds of Girijans. Permission for dharna was given by the local police officers after laying several sanctions. Hundreds of acres of farm land which belong to girijans is still in the hands of ex-jamindar Hotha Sriramachandra Murthy in Jillelagudem, Pragadapalli panchayats of Polavaram mandal. Though all this area comes under Scheduled Area, 1/70 Act is not being implemented here. So all the lands that were being cultivated by girijans for over years were converted as his own farmlands. Thirty years ago girijans fought in a big way against exploitation and atrocities of Hotha Sriramachandra Murthy and in that agitation the Agency Girijan Sangham lost one of its militant female activist by name Com. Karam Parvathi. From that time onwards they have been cultivating those lands which once they lost. They have been agitating continuously demanding the legal rights on those lands. Yet the government is not willing to grant at least the right to cultivate in those lands. The rulers who are boasting of enacting several acts in support of girijans and dalits are refusing to solve the just demands of girijans.

Moreover recently under the Jagananna scheme of granting permanent rights on land the state government is trying to grant rights to Hotha Sriramachandra Murthy after doing survey. As a result of this hundreds of girijans started agitation demanding all kinds of rights on those lands.

Under Polavaram project girijans of Kondrukota and Tellavaram villages lost their houses and lands. Though project is not completed, all the villages in the revenue area are being inundated for the last 4-5 years. The rulers are not in a position to hear the demands of girijans for proper rehabilitation. So they started an indefinite dharna demanding proper rehabilitation. It has become a practice of the rulers to solve the problems of people only when they agitate. Democrats, intellectuals are to support these people who are struggling for their just demands.