

'Hul Jharkhand Kranthi Dal Demands'

Anti-Adivasi, Anti-Nature and Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023 should be Withdrawn

On 4th March 2024, Hul Jharkhand Kranthi Dal organised a Dharna at Dumka before the Commissioner of Santhal Pargana office against the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act 2023, to give back the looted land of Adivasis and Mulavasis and for implementation of PESA act. Despite the heavy rain the cadres from Palamu, Singhbhum, Ranchi, Dumka, Deoghar, Godda and Pakur took part in the program. The Dharna was converted into a mass meeting which was presided over by Com. Shankar Nayak and Com. Lalita Soren. At the outset Com. Birsa Hembram the State President of HJKD addressed the meeting enthusing the comrades. The Vice President Com Thakuran Soren rendered revolutionary songs & speeches in Santhali language.

The meeting was addressed by the founder member of HJKD Com. Shambhu Mahato, HJKD State Secretary Com. Karnelus Soren, secretary Com. Vardul Bhuiyan and Sunni Ram Murmu, Co-Treasurer Com. Lalita Soren, Office secretary Com. Subhas Murmu along with Tribal activists Daniyal Murmu and Raju Murmu. The speakers stated that today the existence and identity of Adivasis and Mulvasis are at stake. The existence of tribal society is banked on Jal-Jangal-Jameen and self-rule. But the RSS family and some bureaucrats and MNCs have managed to convince the Supreme Court that the residents of the forest are themselves the destroyers.

The Modi govt. drafted the amendment of Forest Conservation Act in 2019 and in 2023 again the same was enacted. In this way the preparations were made to handover the forest to the corporates denying the history, tradition and the century old rights of the tribals.

The speakers referred that history speaks despite the existence of Forest Act made in 1927. In presence of this act during 30 years i.e. 1950 to 1980, in the name of development 45 lakh hectares of land have been seized. After that during the New Economic Policy 2018-19 to 2022-23, the 90 thousand hectares land had been snatched from the tribals.

These amendments will further increase the crisis. This is an indication of danger not only for the tribals but for the entire mankind.

On the Land Bank issue, they cautioned that only 83% of peasants of Jharkhand hold sheer 2 hectares of land. According to Dr.Swaminathan only 0.69% of peasants do possess more

than 10 hectares of land and out of that in more than half, they themselves do not cultivate. In fact in absence of their improved purchasing capacity the products of agriculture and industry and services sector would be deprived by majority of the people. Therefore, the speakers explained that in Jharkhand land reform is needed not land bank.

The meeting demanded unanimously that the move of Land Bank should be withdrawn and the acquired land to be returned to the respective farmers and to the villages. The famous 2nd doctrine of Panchashil envisaged by Pt. Nehru, also speaks for maintenance of rights of Adivasis on land and forest.

In violation of 5th Schedule of our Constitution and CNT-SNT Act, the lands of Adivasis and Mulvasis were captured. During the erstwhile Bihar govt. regime some Mulvasis were excluded from CNT Act and for that lakhs of acres of land were captured. That was not rectified subsequently. In this way the urban land of Santhal Pargana was transferred illegally.

The speakers also narrated that as Adivasis are scared of complexity of court of laws, they should resort to PESA. Speaking on the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act the speakers added, this was in defence of Adivasis in the context of their lost world due to Imperialist design of plunder. PESA came as a boon to them in 1996 but the brutal repression of Pathalgarhi movement in Khunti brought to an end in which thousands of youths were jailed. Hemant Soren govt. was entitled with compliments which released those youths after withdrawal of cases. The meeting strongly demanded for more autonomy for Adivasis and Mulvasis without which even the PESA, CNT, SPT acts would not be beneficial to them truly.

The meeting also resolved that unless the imperialist-capitalist system was not defeated, there could not be end to the exploitation and neither the doctrine of Panchasil nor PESA would be implemented TRUE to their character. At the end of the meeting Com. Birsa Hembram, the President and Com. Kanelus, the General Secretary of HJKD brought a resolution- like the Mizoram govt. Jharkhand govt, must introduce a bill for repealing the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act 2023 and declare the act anti Adivasi and anti-nature. At the end, a memorandum addressed to the Chief Minister was submitted to Commissioner of Santhal Pargana, incorporating the above demands.