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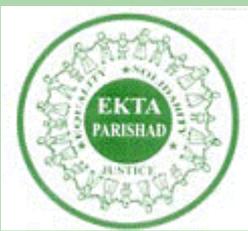
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Janadesh News

AUGUST 2008

When you scrub your dishes, think « Chhattisgarh »!

It is quite usual in western countries to use sponge iron to clean the resisting stains of dishes after a very good meal! But do we only think of what material we are using? Of course, it is not very easy to imagine how many people have suffered to allow us to scrub our dishes! Let us just take an example among hundreds. In 2003, Ekta Parishad has led a campaign against a company called Jindal.

Jindal Strips Ltd (whose name is now Jindal Steel and Power Ltd) came to Raigarh, Chhattisgarh, which is one of the biggest industrial area in this state, in 1991 by first establishing a sponge iron plant. If we consider that the year 1991 was the year of the new gov-

ernmental policy in favour of industrial growth in the country, it was not difficult for Jindal to start its activity. It started appropriating the maximum local resources in its favour. With the help of necessary capital, corrupted bureaucrats and anti-people policies of the state, JSPL began freely to handle the resources such as land, water, forest, and minerals. Jindal possessed 1 000 acres from 4 villages and got lease over roughly 1 700 acres for mining and setting up a power plant, leading to the displacement of nearly 10 villages and eviction of around 10 000 people of which most were small farmers. Many workers have lost their job and mineral excavation has degraded the land and polluted the air and water.

Nowadays, due to various industrialisation in Chhattisgarh, thousands of acres of 200 villages of Raigarh district including thousands of poor adivasis are now homeless and landless.



Farmers vs Industry—Photo: Simon Williams

Orissa: The sacred hill in Vedanta's hands

India's Supreme Court has said two huge and controversial mining projects can proceed in the eastern state of Orissa.

It means an arm of the British-listed mining giant Vedanta can now use bauxite from a mountain in Orissa which local hill tribes view as sacred.

In a separate ruling, South Korean steel firm Posco was given the go-ahead for a \$12bn plant in the same state.

Vedanta has an agreement with the Orissa state government to set up a bauxite refinery in the Niyamgiri mountains, as part of a vast project in Orissa, one of India's poorest states. Niyamgiri is rich in bauxite, from which aluminium is derived.

Vedanta has already invested \$1bn to build a giant alumina refinery close to the mountain.

The court has said Vedanta must invest at least \$2.5m in the area to help local tribes.

But leaders of the 8,000-strong Dongria Kondh say no amount of money can compensate for the damage to their sacred mountain and the forests they depend on.

They have vowed to "fight to the death rather than leave their sacred home".

Madhya Pradesh: Forest Department vs tribal people



Basna interviewed on his attack

On June 28th, some tribal went to cultivate their land as every day. But this day was not like every day. Basna, a man from the Bilh tribe woke up early to plough the forest land he is cultivating since many years. But this unfortunate day, the Forest Department had decided otherwise. They came and took all his bullocks and his tools. They brought him to the police station after taking his dress. He had to stay two days there without food and dress. When the villag-

ers learnt that, all of them collected money and gave Rs. 10 000/- as a penalty to Forest Department to free Basna. He was released but his bullocks and tools remained in the hands of Forest Department officers. This case shows once again how the government torture and exploit the tribals. Police has also pressurized Basna to avoid him to refer to the administrative officers. Due to this pressure, Basna tried to commit a suicide. When Ekta Parishad came to know this situation, activ-

ists went to this village. Srada, one of our activists, has taken Basna under her protection. At the beginning of August, Srada, Basna and 10 other villagers from other villages but who have been assaulted in the same way have gone to meet the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. It would be the right time to give them the pattas they are waiting for. At present, Basna and his wife are obliged to live in their daughter's village because they are threatened in their own village.

Bihar: new recommendations

"Blessed are the peacemakers on earth."

William
Shakespeare

"Admitting that land was the core of rural violence in Bihar due to iniquitous, in-egalitarian and exploitative agrarian asset holdings, the Bihar Land Reforms Commission has made a series of recommendations that if implemented, would transform the state.", said the Times of India on August 12th, 2008. These recommendations consist on evaluating the success of Bhoodan movement, mutation, share-cropping, ceiling, contract farming and rearrangement of land administration. In a view of making the land ceiling effective, the State Land Commission asked the Government to give between 0.66 and 1 acre to each of the 16.68 lakh households who constitute the lowest part of agricultural workers, and at least 0.1 acre of land to each of 5.84 lakh homeless non-farm rural workers. By the same way, the Commission also suggested to abolish the distinction made

between agricultural and non-agricultural land, simply to avoid people taking advantage ceiling provisions which are different between these two kinds of land. In the same way, exemptions for orchards and other special lands as plantations, fisheries... have to be removed.

Many other recommendations came into the discussion and should be implemented soon by the Government of Bihar. It is to hope!

Calendar 2009: Place your order!

Please note that the new Ekta Parishad calendar 2009 is coming soon with its great design and the wonderful pictures taken by Simon Williams.

This calendar is sold through friends of Ekta Parishad around the world (FDH, Peoples Solidaires, Ekta Canada, etc.) to help continue our struggle for land and justice. Please, while giving your order, make sure that the number of copies you need is sure.

Send your order from now at

janadesh2007@gmail.com

15 US\$
10 €
15 CAN\$



Mahila Shakti Zindabad!

2009

Free Bolivia Indigenous from violence and racism

The time has come for Bolivia to choose its course. On August 10th, Bolivians have voted in a referendum to determine (60% « yes ») the mandates of President Morales and those of his leading political opponents. It is hoped that this vote will help end U.S. –inspired right-wing violence and illegality against Bolivia's democracy.

Bolivia's Indigenous peoples are pressing for an end to racism and colonialism and for a new

inclusive democratic state. A meeting, sponsored by Toronto Bolivia Solidarity, on August 14th should consider their struggle and its meaning for Canada of what Judy Rebick, a Canadian journalist and political activist, called «Hope for the planet.»

Thurs., August 14
7:00 p.m.
Kerr Hall South
Room 25
40-50 Gould St.

(One street north of Dundas east of Yonge)

Speakers:

Judy Rebick, CAW Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, Ryerson University

Cynthia Cisneros Fajardo, Indigenous journalist and activist from Bolivia

Movie: Dancing With Evo [Morales]

Sponsored by Toronto Bolivia Solidarity
—torontoboliviasolidarity@gmail.com

Bolivia



Gandhi said:

« If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with the woman »

Watch Janadesh online Ekta Parishad online

The french association Loin de l'Œil is glad to invite all of you to watch on its movie « For a fistful of land » online. This professional movie has only been made by using freewares.

Find also other interesting videos and interviews on the website.

Simply follow:

<http://theyouwin.org>

Visit

www.ektaparishad.com

The new entirely redesigned website of Ekta Parishad. Find information about struggles and activities in every state of India. Download the newsletters. Learn more about land rights and non violence. Use the teacher's manual for peace and non violence education. Simply enjoy! Soon in French!

A World March for Peace and Non violence in 2009-10

From Humanist Movement—Canada: www.humanistmovement.ca

On October 2, 2009, about 50 people will set out from New Zealand to travel the globe by foot, bike, train, boat, plane, etc. and begin the World March for Peace and Nonviolence. Over the next three months, they will be joined by millions of people who want an end to wars and violence in all its forms, millions of people like you and I who

are beginning to feel a nonviolent consciousness forming in the hearts and minds of the peoples of the earth, and who feel like the time has come to make a truly evolutionary leap in humankind. After passing through 90 coun-

tries, all 6 continents, all climate zones, and over 150,000 kms by land, the March will finally end on January 2, 2010, in the Andes Mtns near the border of Argentina and Chile. The main March will arrive in NY City sometime early December, and we in Canada are organizing a stream to feed into it, with activities over the next year to build up for that occasion.

A first intro meeting in Toronto is scheduled for Sat Sept 6th, place and time to be announced soon.

(spanish only for now at www.marchamundial.org).

MARCHA MUNDIAL
POR LA PAZ Y LA NO-VIOLENCIA

2 OCTUBRE 2009
2 ENERO 2010

mundo sin guerras
y violencia



WORLD MARCH
FOR PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE

world without wars
and nonviolence

OCTOBER 2, 2009
JANUARY 2, 2010

At a Glance...

Land Commission



This month, the National Land Reform Commission has visited the field in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

In Uttar Pradesh, they have been to the areas affected by industrialisation where people have to endure lot of problems due to this.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Land Commission Members have met with the Senior Secretaries of Forest and Revenue Departments and discussed about main issues regarding forest and slum dwellers.

For the month of September, NLRC members have already planned some field visit in Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Madhya Pradesh: CM wants to withdraw tribal offences

A meeting has been held between Ekta Parishad activists and the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shiv Raj Singh. The major issue discussed after approbation of the Forest Tribal Act was about the tribal offences. There are many cases filled by Forest or Revenue officers against tribal people in the name of encroachment whenever the administration wants to take back a land cultivated for a long time by tribal farmers. This is only one example among hundreds but the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh has decided and promised to withdraw all such tribal offences. The State Administration has also agreed with this. Mr. Shiv Raj Singh has also announced that all equipments which have been seized, as for Basna's case (see article page 2), will be returned to their owner.

« A right delayed is a right denied. »

Martin Luther King Jr.

Youth camp in Kota

This early month of August, activists from Rajasthan accompanied with Rajagopal have held the first Youth Camp in Rajasthan. This took place in the city of Kota, an eastern-southern district of the state. More than

hundred youths participated in this 4-day camp, from August 10th to 13th. Soon after this first « concrete contact » between Ekta Parishad and Rajasthanis, our activists are going to start the land strug-

gle and projects in five districts, namely Baran, Karauli, Dhaulpur, Kota and Sawai Mahopur, which are, for this first step, districts situated in the eastern part of Rajasthan.

Gandhi. « Be the change
you want to see in the
world »

Ekta parishad

International Coordination

Janadesh 2007

2/3 A Basement

Jungpura A Block

New Delhi, 110 014

Phone : +91 11 243739 98/99

email : janadesh2007@gmail.com



Women attending an Ekta Parishad meeting in Madhya Pradesh

« Well being of all for the well being of
the last »

Questions or comments?

Contact Stéphanie at
janadesh2007@gmail.com

Portrait : Sannai village

How can the Government and landowners send hundreds of buffaloes to threaten villagers?

After an hour on a trashy road, you are still wondering whether you will find something at the end. The village of Sannai is situated at the top of a hill, under big trees. This village has settled on forest land in early 1980s. The 20 families which constituted at this time the whole village were leaving 100 km from where they are now. Their village has been displaced after the Government has decided to build the big Ban Sagar Dam in Satna District. For their resettlement, the Government gave 40 acres where they initially build shelters and strengthen them into mud houses. They started cultivation but the landowners of neighbouring village found unacceptable that these newcomers used the

lands around their new village as agricultural land. Thus they deliberately set their cattle loose the crops being cultivated by the tribals, and even burnt their huts. Forest



Department filled cases of encroachment and 18 men from this tribe have been sent to jail. While these tribal was imprisoned, the women have taken sticks of wood

and have kept buffaloes out of their village. Without their action and their courage, the village would have been completely destroyed by these hundreds of animals. Ekta Parishad

has come in this village many years later, in 1994-95. These new contacts have strengthened the villagers and specially the women. The resistance shown by adivasis and their association with Ekta Parishad has empowered them in a major way. As a result, the landowners are today friendly with them and villagers of Sannai are really determined

to get the titles for the 110 acres of land they cultivate. Men as well as women are full of enthusiasm when they shake our hands with a friendly "Jai Jagat"!