

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS



EIGHTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION

OCTOBER 24-26, 2010, BADWANI, MADHYA PRADESH

AN INVITATION : ALL ARE WELCOME !

TOWARDS PEACE, JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY...

National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM) is pleased to invite you to its Eighth Biennial Convention to be held in the Narmada Valley, at Badwani, Madhya Pradesh, from October 24th-26th. Narmada Bachao Andolan, which is entering in 25th year of struggle, and is one of the founding members of NAPM will be hosting us this time. The journey that started in 1992 and took the shape of NAPM in 1996 has today reached a critical stage.

We started when the processes of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation were beginning to take shape, Hindu Right was picking steam in the shadow of Babri Masjid demolition and TINA – There is No Alternative, was propounded as the mantra for the time. **Since then we have come a long way and have waged important struggles along with many other movements, voluntary organisations, federations and forums, sympathetic intellectuals, artists, students and others against WTO, World Bank, Enron, SEZs, big dams, rural and urban evictions and displacements, atrocities against women, adivasis, and Dalits and communalism.**

In 2003 we undertook ***Desh Bachao Desh Banao*** (Save the Nation – Build the Nation), a nation-wide campaign, aimed at evolving a national movement, to bring the ideal of an alternative world into reality, as a collective peoples political force, seeking to challenge and transform the existing political system that promotes a development paradigm that is anti-poor and anti-development. In 2007, ***Sangharsh / Action*** process was launched involving many other alliances, forums and federations which was another step in the direction of achieving a better world.

A decade after we met in the Narmada Valley, **we are meeting again at a time, which is the 'best of the times and worst of the times'**. The process of neo-liberalism which started then has now started showing its true colours, Corporations, Public and Private both, are not only grabbing the resources but the political space and even power through market and related mechanism. The investors – national to multinational have “privatized” each and every dimension of our society, polity and economy. **Transformation is today a much greater challenge to the imagination, because Global Warming and the Energy crisis are much more visible too.**

The State has become a mere mediator and given away the mask of welfare and benevolence, political class and a more articulate middle class has been completely sold to the ideology of market and neo-liberal models of economy and growth. We are witness to increased informalisation of labour as a result, 96% of workers today are in the unorganised sectors of work and there is enormously rising polarisation between the rich

and the poor and a steep rise in food prices, together with loss of food security and attack on agriculture. The political class rarely resolves the people's issues but rather exploits those towards vote banking, more crudely now than ever. **Public space, public interest, public domain and priorities are shrinking to the detriment of basic need fulfillment jeopardizing not only the present but also the future.** However, we cannot also forget that there is this growing trend towards "war on terror", militarisation and violence unleashed by the State making non-violent mass struggles more difficult, but at the same time making them more relevant too.

These times are not that bleak either, our collective efforts have not only led to enactment of progressive legislations like Right to Information Act, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Forest Rights Act etc. but also created a situation where people on the ground have challenged every single attempt at grabbing of our land, water, forests, minerals etc. We are standing amidst the victory of people's movements at Singur, Nandigram, Niyamgiri, Sompeta, Karla, Chamalapura, Chengara and many more such places of resistance.

The question of justice and equity have come to the fore like never before and the '*rights to and control over natural resources*' become the focal point of contestation today amidst, people, state and corporations. NAPM is not the only alliance today and there is a large *biradari* (family) beyond our fold all engaged in struggles and reconstruction through alternatives, committed to challenge the corporatization and globalization in the face of corruption, criminal acts and callousness of both the State and the corporates. We have always strived to create spaces for dialogue and coordination between them and also provide adequate space to diversity of resistances and ideologies existing in the country.

On a more positive note it can also be considered our collective victory that today social activists and human rights activists have become threats to the State and to their corporate designs, so much so, that they are falsely framing them as 'Maoists' or 'Terrorists'. The bogey of communalism has seeped through the veins of society and governance in numerous ways and demands a different understanding and strategy to fight them.

The armed conflicts imposed upon us by the state and counter violence by non-state and private vigilante forces are also creating a situation which is threatening the lives and livelihood of the millions of those living at the margins of this development process. Together the forces of communalism, corporatisation, and veiled casteism and patriarchy are not only threatening the framework of democratic society but has become an impediment to our collective efforts towards building a truly people's democracy unlike the existent bourgeois democracy.

The coming decade will see the fierce battles and struggles for asserting rights and control over land, water, forests, minerals and thereby making it more difficult to ensure justice to dalits, adivasis, women, minorities, workers, landless peasantry and others who are considered '*out-castes of the development*'. We continue to defy the principle of 'eminent domain' of State and challenge its power even when it has merely become a negotiator for the corporations and appropriate military strength to protect their capitalist interest. Whether it is land acquisition, displacement or rehabilitation-most issues today are politicized and polarized yet there is an urgent need for movements and supporters to evolve consensus on development planning to ensure equity and justice, through peace and democracy...hence the alliance !

It is in these turbulent times that NAPM invites you to its Eighth Biennial Convention in an earnest attempt of coming together by various people's movements and organizations to build a strong alliance of movements. The Convention aims to be a space where we can collectively discuss and debate on different issues, movements and civil society responses and work towards the challenge of initiating and strengthening a new political force with innovative strategies, with people's power and people's politics. For this and much more your presence and contribution is crucial. Do join us at the Convention!

Draft Programme

Sunday, October 24 2010

11:00 – 1:00 pm : Reflections on the Theme 'Towards, Peace, Justice and Democracy'

2:00 – 4:00 pm : State and Sectoral Reports

4:00 – 5:00 pm : Updates on Struggles Across the Country

5:00 – 6:00 pm : Discussing Alliance Building Process Today

7:00 – onwards : Cultural Programmes / Film Screening

Monday, October 25 2010

9:00 – 11:00 am Thematic Sessions (Proposed Themes)

- *Theme One* : World of Work and Workers
- *Theme Two* : Land Struggles and Forests
- *Theme Three* : Dams, Displacement and Development
- *Theme Four* : Energy Policy

- *Theme Five* : Education and Development
- *Theme Six* : Dalit Issues and Politics Today
- *Theme Seven* : Urban Development and Poor - Rebuilding Sustainable Cities
- *Theme Eight* : Communalism Beyond Ayodhya

[The sessions are subject to availability of resource persons and newer proposals which might be received by then.]

11:00 — 3:00 pm : Programme / Action Strategies

3:00 - 6:00 pm : Organisational Issues

- **Membership, expansion, state-wise offices, volunteers etc.**
- **Elections of Conveners**

In addition to the parallel sessions on day two we are planning to invite some of the practitioners of art, crafts and alternative ways of doing things to hold workshops for those who are interested in them.

Tuesday, October 26 2010

9:00 – 11:00 am : Discussing Future Campaigns for each State

11:00 – 1 :00 pm : Resolutions and Declarations

2:00 – 5:00 pm : Conveners Team Meeting

Directions to the venue and contact persons are given below. Please do not hesitate in contacting us for any further information or clarification. As always you are welcome to come and spend more time with us, work with us, volunteers with us, support us with resources, or just travel with us in this journey...

The Celebrations will be preceded by programmes marking 25 years of struggle in the Narmada Valley by Narmada Bachao Andolan. The inaugural programme will be held at Dhadgaon, Maharashtra on 22nd October and concluding programme will be held at Badwani, MP on October 23rd 2010. Separate invite has been sent for the same. For details write to nba.badwani@gmail.com | 25yearsofnba@gmail.com | 07290-222464 | 09423944390 | 09423965152 | 09420375730 | 02595-220620

Do inform us of your arrival, so that we can make adequate arrangements ... You can reach us by phone or write to us on napmindia@napm-india.org | madhuresh@napm-india.org | www.napm-india.org

In Solidarity,

NAPM Conveners Team ...

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