

Press Release: 22/11/07

Mass Action Demanding Comprehensive Social Security for Unorganised Workers

SOCIAL SECURITY NOW

Today (November 22, 2007) unorganised workers from Delhi conducted a Dharna at ITO and G.T. Karnal By-Pass demanding the introduction of comprehensive Social Security for the Unorganised Workers Bill in the ongoing winter session of the parliament, under the banner of *Social Security Now*. It is a part of the nationwide Dharnas, demonstrations and rallies conducted by unorganised workers, peoples groups and civil society organizations. The social security bill for the unorganised workers in its present form, introduced by the government in the monsoon session of the parliament, is deficient, imperfect and excludes large section of unorganised workers from getting the benefit.

The Dharna urged the parliamentary standing committee to dump the bill and come up with a comprehensive legislation on social security for the unorganised workers immediately incorporating employment regulation, livelihood protection and dispute resolution based on the principle of social justice. The social security bill should affirm the rights of workers, in particular the rights of women, dalits, tribal and other marginalized groups and their representation in the social security boards and in the administration of the boards. It is not too much for the Government to earmark at least 5% of GDP to the social security needs of the more than 90 percent of the total workforce in this country.

The UPA government shamelessly offer charity in the form of welfare schemes and maintained a studied silence on crucial issues like tri-partite character of the Board, coverage, funding mechanisms and a time frame for implementation. 'If our demand for comprehensive social security legislation is not considered in the winter session of the parliament, we will intensify our agitation and mass action', said Shasi Pandit of Harit Recyclers Association during dharna.

Unorganised workers organisations Delhi Shramik Sangatan, Harit Recyclers Association and Centre for Education and Communication (CEC), Indian Social Institute (ISI), National Campaign Committee - Unions Sector Workers (NCC-USW), National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) and Programme on Women's' Economic, Social, Cultural Rights (PWESCR) have coordinated the demonstrations in Delhi (at ITO and G.T. Karnal By - Pass), as a part of all India programme of *Social Security Now*.

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Social Security Now is a consortium of more than 500 civil society organizations, peoples groups and a group of trade unions of unorganised workers. National Working Group of '*Social Security Now*' is comprised of; BIRSA (Ranchi); Center for Education and Communication (New Delhi); Delhi Forum (New Delhi); FEDINA (Bangalore); HRLN (New Delhi); Indian Social Institute (New Delhi); LAYA (Vishakapatnam); NAFRE (New Delhi); National Campaign Committee for Unorganised Sector Workers (New Delhi); National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (New Delhi); National Institute for Women, Child and Youth Development (Nagpur); Programme on Women's' Economic, Social, Cultural Rights (New Delhi); YUVA (Mumbai); Women's' Voice(Bangalore); National Hawkers Federation (Calcutta); Vigyan Foundation (Lukhnow); Nirmala Niketan (New Delhi); South Asian Study Centre (New Delhi); Revolutionary National Hawker's Federation (Mumbai); Delhi Shramik Sangathan (Delhi); Lok Sangharsh Morcha (New Delhi); and Nidan (Patna).