

Support Indian Farmers/Farm labourers' Bharat Bandh (Shutdown) across All India – 27 September 2021

Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) coalition of farmers unions has called for a complete shutdown across India (except emergency services) on 27 September against Modi's three farm laws which will open the floodgates to corporations undermining food security and livelihoods of millions of people, and the destruction of the soil and the climate. The shutdown will be from 6am-4pm (India time). SKM say: "This would include all government and private offices, all educational and other institutions, all shops, industries and commercial establishments, all public events and functions. Public and private transport shall also come to a halt during this period."

The Indian farmers' and farm labourers' 10-month confrontation with agribusiness and Modi's right-wing government is a huge power and our point of reference for international movements for food and social and environmental justice everywhere. We must do everything we can to support them.

Community organisations, unions, [progressive states](#), millions of people are coming out in support of the shutdown. While governments discuss climate change at conferences like [Cop 26](#), we say listen to the Indian farmers and listen to mothers, without whom there would be no population!

"Industrial food systems and increasing corporate control of food chains are responsible for existential threats faced by our populations and planet, including the climate crisis, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, land degradation, water pollution and countless human rights violations....and has produced a food system that leaves over a billion hungry, under-nourished, and economically destitute..."

(Opening Declaration of the Counter-Mobilization to Transform Corporate Food Systems (<https://www.csm4cfs.org/final-declaration-of-the-counter-mobilization-to-transform-corporate-food-systems/>)).

By contrast "70% of the world gets food from the peasant food web, which works with only 25% of the resources. Millions of smallholder farmers, fishermen, pastoralists, agricultural and rural workers and entire indigenous communities practice agroecology, a way of life and a form of resistance to an unfair economic system that puts profit before life. As countless experts have attested, agroecology improves nutrition, reduces poverty, contributes to gender justice, combats climate change, and enriches farmland..." *(People's Autonomous Response to the UN Food Systems Summit (<https://www.foodsystems4people.org/about-2/>))*

People across all continents are fighting for survival and against environmental destruction. Africa demands **food sovereignty** for all: "... to put the control of seeds biodiversity, land and territories, waters, knowledge, culture ...in the hands of the peoples who feed the world." (<https://www.foodsystems4people.org/africa-responds-to-the-un-food-systems-summit/>)

The effects of climate change are hitting farmers in India hard, as everywhere, and threatening life. Drought and lowering water levels [have destroyed crops](#). (<https://thewire.in/agriculture/odisha-depleting-ground-level-water-drought-like-situation-paddy-farmers>) And the government has targeted discriminated groups: [Modi's farm laws endanger millions of Adivasi farmers and labourers](#). (<https://www.survivalinternational.org/articles/modi-endagers-tribal-farmers>)

Corporations like Adani, hand in hand with Modi's government, exploit their position of power by determining the price of crops, eg apples. Farmers have protested [Adani](#) who set the market prices at lower than last year which will impoverish



yet more farmers, especially in Kashmir. (<https://thewire.in/agriculture/adani-in-the-eye-of-the-storm-as-himachal-apple-prices-crash>)

“Women hold up the back: collecting food and funds, talking to the press, and mobilizing crucial support for the movement in the families. As such, they are essential, doing the critical, largely unsung, work.... Women have brought with them their varied experiences of being landless laborers; having lost husbands, fathers, or sons to deaths by suicides and forced to pick up the responsibilities of farming, repaying debts, and demanding state compensation; preventing forcible evictions from land; and their experience of fighting against sexual violence and its tolerance in society. With women joining, the farmers’ movement’s claims on the government have expanded.” (Navsharan Singh, 12 August 2021 <https://www.alterinter.org/?Agrarian-Crisis-and-the-Longest-Farmers-Protest-in-Indian-History>)

Dalit and Adivasi women in rural Chhattisgarh in our network, including farm workers say: “As part of the Bharat Bandh, women farm labourers in the village areas refuse to work on the landowners land (it’s plantation season). We give our solidarity to all the women Kisan groups. We don’t want the government’s farm laws and agricultural policy. 100 Adivasi women in our group are doing cooperative farming on forest land. They have been fighting to keep their land and have won their land rights papers. They say this is our land!

The climate is very changed, when it’s very hot we don’t have water facilities on our land to grow rice and dahl. This time it’s rainy season but the temperature after the rain is higher than usual and people are suffering with more viral fever, malaria, typhoid.”

The farmes’ movement has organised against divisions incited by Modi’s government: Muslim, Sikhs, Hindus and people of all religions, and none, have been fighting together against the farm laws and labour codes and despite increasing state and **police violence** the farmers/labourers’ movements are taking actions constantly across all India including **defeating the BJP in state elections**. (<https://thewire.in/politics/farmers-protest-bengal-bjp-defeat>), (<https://thewire.in/agriculture/in-show-of-strength-muzaffarnagar-mahapanchayat-farmers-say-they-will-oust-divisive-bjp>)

The Indian farmers and farm labourers, women, men, children, people of all genders, are fighting for their survival, the survival of their families and communities, and generations to come, against the blood-sucking corporations hand in hand with governments. They are defending life itself. They are showing us:

“All progress in capitalist agriculture is a progress in the art, not only of robbing the worker, but of robbing the soil; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a given time is a progress towards ruining the more long-lasting sources of that fertility...Capitalist production, therefore, only develops the techniques and the degree of combination of the social process of production by simultaneously undermining the original sources of all wealth – the soil and the worker.” (Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol.1, Penguin Books, 1976, 638)

Victory to the Bharat Bandh! Victory to the Indian farmers and farm labourers!

Global Women’s Strike
www.globalwomenstrike.net

Women of Colour Global Women’s Strike
womenofcolour@globalwomenstrike.net

What you can do:

- Retweet [Kisan Ekta Morcha](https://twitter.com/Kisanektamorcha) Farmers unions official twitter account. (<https://twitter.com/Kisanektamorcha>)
- Email the Indian High Commission where you are supporting the great Indian strike **against** the three farm laws and the takeover of agriculture by multinationals away from the Indian farmers and farm labourers on the land, and **for** the climate, the soil and the workers.
- Your Union can pass a resolution in support of the strikers
- Your Mosque/Gurdwara/Synagogue/Church/can pass resolutions supporting the strike, thanking the Indian farmers/farm-labourers movement for protecting the soil and workers on the land.
- Contact your local press telling them why you support the Indian strike
- Please circulate this information as widely as possible. They are fighting our battles against the multinationals and for food sovereignty and decent wages, starting with pay equity for women farm workers.