Members of the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) Call for the Repeal of the Indian Agriculture Acts of 2020

The ANGOC network stands in solidarity with farmers and groups from rural India, who call for the repeal of the Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, collectively known as the new Farm Laws or Agriculture Acts of 2020.

More than half of India’s workforce rely on agriculture as a source of livelihood. With the outbreak of COVID-19, more people have turned back to agriculture amid livelihood insecurity in urban areas. Yet low financial returns from agriculture, insurmountable debts, coupled with vulnerability to the effects of climate change on their livelihood, have led many farmers in India to take their own lives out of desperation.

Small producers should be supported by the government for their livelihood to thrive and for food security to be ensured, and not be treated like fodder for a globalized, neoliberal food market. With the enactment of the Farm Laws, farmers will be further left to fight losing battles against larger, more affluent producers and corporations: market competition will be a farce in deregulated markets outside of mandis; farmers of non-essential crops will also succumb to lower returns; and direct contracts with agribusinesses will enable unjust prices and terms.

We also denounce the apparent decay of democracy in India. It is appalling that in the world’s largest democracy, farmers were largely left out of consultations on these laws that directly affect the majority of its people. Since November 2020, the persistent uproar from uncompromising farmers is in response to this series of deprivations. Unfortunately, protests have been met with indifference and even violence.

We call on the government of India to demonstrate that it puts the rights and needs of its people before unequitable economic gain. Revoke the Indian Agriculture Acts of 2020! Protect democracy!

Food and freedom!
Jobs and justice!
Land and labor!
Peace and prosperity!

Signed:

Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)
Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Bangladesh
Community Development Association (CDA), Bangladesh
STAR Kampuchea, Cambodia
Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD), India
Ekta Parishad, India
South Asia Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA), India
Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (KPA), Indonesia
Bina Desa, Indonesia
Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC), Nepal

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