

## On the road with the Jan Samvad Yatra, a year-long route through India

Promoting non-violence and Rights to land & livelihood | Mobilizing for the March Jan Satyagraha 2012 | October 2011 - September 2012



WANT TO SUPPORT  
JAN SATYAGRAHA ?  
FIND ALL THE WAYS TO  
DO IT [here](#),  
AND JOIN  
THE MOVEMENT !

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JAN SATYAGRAHA  
2012 ?  
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2012](#)

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

### THE GRAINS CHALLENGE

#### RICE AND FLOUR FOR THE MARCHERS

**In one month, 27000 Euros have been collected,  
that is about 123 tons of rice and flour !  
Such a support is a great encouragement for the marchers  
and activists, thank you for your generosity !**

**We have now 370 tons of grains to finance in order to feed the  
100 000 people who will start to walk on October 2nd.**

**With 1500 INR / 22 € / 17.5 £ / 26,5 CHF / 28 CAD,  
you can provide 100 kg of grains to the marchers  
(100 kg of grains feed 400 marchers for one day!)**

**To make a donation, please visit our website:  
[www.ektaparishad.com](http://www.ektaparishad.com)**

**Thank you for your support ! Jai Jagat!**

### “DO OR DIE” : AN APPEAL TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT IN VIDEO

“Do or Die, the plight of indigenous people” is the new video launched by Ekta Parishad and Ekta Europe on the occasion of the International Day of Indigenous People (August 9<sup>th</sup>). It shows the dramatic reality of indigenous people in India and around the world, pushed into poverty because of land-grabbing. But it is also a message of hope : thousands of people, all around the world, have chosen to struggle non-violently against this injustice. And it is an appeal to join them ! Less than 2 months before the beginning of the march Jan Satyagraha 2012, your support is more important today than it ever was, in terms of advocacy, communications, solidarity actions and donations. This struggle is a common one, and we hope to engage it with you. Find the video and many ways to support us on the websites of Ekta Parishad ([here](#)) or Ekta Europe ([here](#)). **Let's walk together !**



### THE YATRA IN GUJARAT

Gujarat is a state of western India, boarded by the Arabian Sea. Its economic growth, which is the fastest of the country, is mainly based on industrial development, including mining, cement factories and refineries. This development leads to large-scale displacements of rural people, pollution and deforestation.



**Deforestation and tree plantation.** In the district of Dang, Adivasis Bheel and other Adivasis communities are cultivating land since centuries. They are now witnessing the destruction of forest due to linkages of rivers and dams projects which aim to increase the water supply to cities and industrial areas. With organizations of the region, they launched a campaign against this deforestation which is threatening the environment, their livelihood resources and their way of life. At the same time, in other districts, the Forest Department is planting trees on land that Adivasis are cultivating and for which they have made an application to get land titles under the Forest Rights Act. On one hand, forests are destroyed, and on the other hand, trees are planted on cultivated land...

stop activists by assimilating them to violent groups. Because of the presence of social organizations struggling for the rights of people displaced by dams, sanctuaries and tourist spots, the government of Gujarat declared Dang as a violent prone region. Those who work for the displaced people are often branded as Naxalites (armed groups also called “Maoists”) and put behind the bars.



Students participating in a march of the Jan Samwad Yatra, Gujarat, June 17th, 2012

**Activists behind the bars.** In Dang district, like in other regions in India, authorities try to discredit and

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Meeting with the yatra, Gujarat, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Displacements in Gujarat.** During the last 50 years, around 3200000 acres (13000 ha) of land have been acquired by industries and state, leading to the displacement of 4 million people, among which 1 million belong to Adivasis communities. As no proper rehabilitation plan has been proposed by the government, most of these people finally settled in urban areas. How many of them are living in slums now ?



### THE YATRA IN RAJASTHAN

Rajasthan is a state in the Northwest part of India, well-known for its forts which attract many tourists in cities like Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Udaipur... Agricultural and pastoral activities are the base of the economy of this state where 80 % of the population lives in rural areas. Several factors, like drought, but also land acquisitions for industrial or infrastructure development, are pushing a large part of rural population into poverty and food insecurity.



**The difficulty to claim for rights.** Dungarpur is the most backward district of Rajasthan. This area dominated by Bheel tribes didn't get the benefit of any governmental development schemes. Land is acquired for infrastructure projects, like the Udaipur-Mumbai national highway or the Udaipur-Ahmadabad railway track. People of the region claimed land titles under the Forest Rights Act, but the process is very difficult. First, because the administrative procedure to claim land is complex, requiring many papers and certifications from different instances. Secondly, because corruption is affecting the all system, and bribes are demanded by the local administration, the forest department, etc. Therefore, for a person who received few or no education and who is poor, claiming for its rights is really challenging.

**The government is misleading the farmers.** In the district of Chittaurgarh, the Indira Sagar dam was built to provide water to the farmers of the region. At the same time, the government passed an agreement with private companies to set up 29 industrial units. 14 villages have been displaced to make place for these industries. In compensation, people received 100 000 to 200 000 Rupees, but their land was sold between 2 to 4 million Rupees to the private companies. Farmers who were not displaced can't irrigate their land, as the dam is in fact supplying the industries. Those who dared to oppose this process have been charged with false cases framed by the government.



Public meeting, Rajasthan, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Against a project of extension.** On July 7<sup>th</sup>, the yatra attended a meeting in the village of Bilanda. Two years ago, Aditya Birla Cement factory was established in the area. The activity of the factory is polluting, creating health problem to local people and affecting the crops of farmers, who see their production decreasing. The company is now asking the government to allocate 1000 acres more for its extension project. Farmers of the village fear the consequence it would have on them, and therefore launched a movement to counter this project. The government is stating in favour of the company.

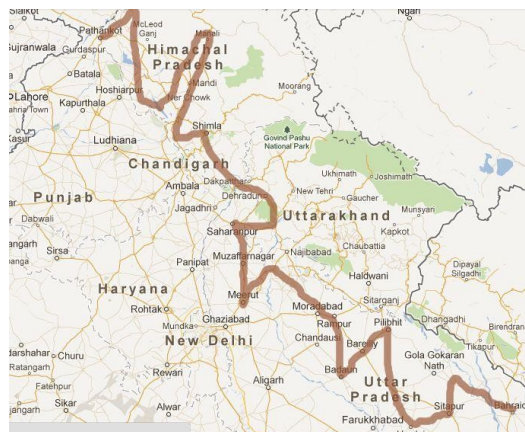
### ROUTE OF THE YATRA IN AUGUST

August 3<sup>rd</sup>, PUNJAB : Pathankot

August 4<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, HIMACHAL PRADESH :  
Chamba | Una | Bhakhra | Manali | Bilaspur |  
Nalagarh | Shimla | Renuka

August 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, UTTARAKHAND : Dehradun | Haridwar

August 19<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, UTTAR PRADESH :  
Saharanpur | Muzaffarnagar | Meerut | Bijnor | Moradabad |  
Rampur | Badaun | Bareilly | Pilibhit | Hardoi | Sitapur |  
Lakhimpur |



MANY SUPPORT ACTIONS  
TO JAN SATYAGRAHA  
TAKE PLACE IN  
THE WORLD !  
SEE THE MAP  
BY CLICKING ON THE  
GLOBE :



## WOMEN LEADERS MEETING : ENSURING THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE



Ekta Mahila Manch, the women wing of Ekta Parishad, organized a meeting of women activists in Jaipur, Rajasthan, on July 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. The meeting gathered 98 people from all over the country, representing 39 different organizations. The meeting had the main objectives to ensure, increase and prepare the participation of women in the

march Jan Satyagraha 2012 and to review the land rights for women, especially in the draft Women's Entitlement Bill submitted to Parliament in May 2012. The women leaders who attended the meeting are working on various issues like women land rights, land grabbing, social and economic empowerment, domestic violence etc. They are all witnessing the fact that the situation of women at the ground level is very hard, and ensuring land rights to women appears as a key to bring a positive change in their life, as land is a source of livelihood, but also of security and dignity. This meeting also

showed the importance of women in non-violent struggles for justice. All the women leaders present at the meeting have experienced long struggles. For example, Lily Kujur, from an Adivasi organization working in Sundergarh (Odisha), narrated her struggle against the Orissa Cement Limited which was trying to acquire land of farmers through abusive ways. With activists, she could convince people to come together and finally save their agricultural land. During this long struggle, she faced attempts of murder twice.

Therefore, as women land rights are a key of development and justice, and as women are major actors of non-violent struggles, it is of great importance to give a wide place to women in the march Jan Satyagraha 2012. This will be ensured by the strong commitments of the participants, who, in states groups, planned how they will increase women participation, from the present 35-40% to 50%, and which actions would be done at the local level for women who will not attend the foot march from Gwalior. After these two days of interaction, one can only be impressed and inspired by the strength, the courage and the determination of these women to raise the voice of poor and marginalized people, women and men both.

## JAN SATYAGRAHA AND THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT : GLOBALIZING SOLIDARITY



**Global Movement 2012** Ekta Parishad was encouraged to join international processes, and finally this kind of global networking showed that globalizing solidarity should become a priority activity, especially with networks that had worked on human and peasant rights to land. This process led to the emergence of the Global Movement 2012 : based on a three-years programme starting with the March Jan Satyagraha 2012, the movement has been born because of a global emergency, as everywhere, poor rural communities are losing their land and livelihood resources to the benefit of states and corporate houses. The Global Movement is designed to make sure that the voices of all are heard at global level as a way to put pressure on national and international decision-making, and also to encourage the exchanges of best practices, especially around non-

violence and local leadership. Ekta Parishad is actually building partnerships with different organizations in the world, and 4 movements and networks are already involved in the Global Movement 2012 :

**Kenya Land Alliance.** After a seven year struggle KLA has been instrumental in coming up with a National Land Policy document. This movement aims to establish constitutional provisions around land laws.

**SONED.** In Senegal the SONED struggles against the present paradigm of commoditising land and natural resources, with the view that communities should be considered as managers of these resources with no right to exclude anyone whose livelihood and dignity depends on these resources.

**Community Self-Reliance Centre, CSRC.** In Nepal the CSRC aims to change the existing pattern of elite-dominated power relations by organising and mobilising marginalised groups of people, especially tenants and farmers who have no, or nominal, land.

**Ekta Europe** is a network of NGOs and individuals from Europe which primary goal is to provide moral, political and financial support to social movements which assist deprived people to achieve control over their means of livelihood such as water, land and forest.

Chai, samosas, idlis, thalis, mango lassi... In July, the Madras Café, thanks to more than 80 volunteers, served meal to approximately 2500 people during the 3 days of WOMAD festival in UK ! This action permitted to raise awareness about Ekta Parishad and to collect money for the march Jan Satyagraha 2012. Thank you to the wonderful team of Madras Café !



In coming weeks many other support actions will take place around the world : **The Meal** (Sept.15<sup>th</sup>), **March le Croisic-Paris** (departure on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>), **Support March** in Belgium, (Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>)... Find them all here : [Map of solidarity actions](#)



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