

NATIONAL FISHWORKERS' FORUM (NFF)

(A Federation of State Level Trade Unions in India)

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Resolutions adopted in the Annual General Body Meeting of National Fishworkers' Forum Trivandrum 7-9 December 2011

NFF resolves to –

1. Oppose Free Trade Agreements and Foreign Direct Investment in retail trade in the Fisheries Sector and demands that the Fishworkers must be consulted before entering into any trade agreement involving the Fisheries Sector.
2. Strongly oppose the establishment of Nuclear Power Plants and convey its solidarity to the people struggling against Nuclear Power Plants at Kudankulam and Jaitapur.
3. Strongly oppose establishment of thermal power plants with captive ports on the coast and further object to establishment of new private ports.
4. Strongly object the imposition of Marine Protected Areas with blanket ban on fishing at Gulf of Kutch in Gujarat, Malvan in Maharashtra, Gulf of Munnar in Tamil Nadu, Gahirmata and Bhitarkanika in Orissa and Sundarban Tiger Reserve in West Bengal; and demand consultation with and participation of the coastal fishworkers in the proposition and management of ecologically sensitive coastal areas.

NFF further resolves to engage with the preparatory process of the 11th meeting of the parties (COP-II) of the Convention on Biodiversity scheduled in October 2012 at Hyderabad in order to seek implementation of participatory and equitable forms of conservation and management of coastal and marine resources.

5. Demand establishment of a separate Fisheries Ministry in the Government of India as this sector involves more than 25 million people, vitally contributes to the food security of the country and is still neglected.
6. Demand a comprehensive legislation to rationalize the fisheries sector with reference to fishing vessels, gears, efforts and fish resources ensuring preferential access of small and traditional fishers to the stock of fish in Indian waters.

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7. Demand ban on Bottom Trawling and Purse-Seining in the territorial waters. In Maharashtra and Gujarat Bottom Trawling and Purse-Seining should be prohibited even well beyond the territorial waters, where traditional fishing takes place on large scale.
8. Demand ratification and implementation of ILO Convention No.188 for Work in Fishing for all coastal fishworkers of the country.
9. Demand immediate implementation of Unorganised Workers Social Security Act 2008 with reference to all fishworkers of the country.
10. Demand implementation of remaining 40 recommendations of Mondal Commission for Other Backward Classes (OBC).
11. Demand implementation of reserved electoral constituencies for coastal fisherpeople as recommended by the Mondal Commission.



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Annual General Body Meeting of National Fishworkers' Forum Trivandrum 7-9 December 2011

PRESS STATEMENT

December 10, 2011

Trivandrum: At the Press Conference held here today the National Fishworkers' Forum strongly condemn the policies of the Government of India and State Governments that are leading to marginalization and impoverishment of the fishing community both in the coastal as well as inland sectors.

NFF strongly object the establishment of Nuclear Power Plants in the country. NFF further objects establishment of Thermal Power Plants on the coast with captive ports that are coming up in large numbers which will destroy both the environment and the physical integrity of the coast adversely affecting the life and livelihood of millions of fisherpeople. NFF demands moratorium on the establishment of thermal plants and urge the Government of India to bring out a white paper on the cumulative impact of the existing and proposed Power Plants and Ports on the coast.

NFF strongly object the imposition of Marine Protected Areas with blanket ban on fishing at Gulf of Kutch in Gujarat, Malvan in Maharashtra, Gulf of Munnar in Tamil Nadu, Gahirmata and Bhitarkanika in Orissa and in Sundarban Tiger Reserve in West Bengal; and demand consultation with and participation of the coastal fishworkers in the proposition and management of ecologically sensitive coastal areas.

In view of large scale depletion of fish resources due to overfishing with unsustainable fishing gears NFF demands a comprehensive legislation to rationalize the fisheries sector with reference to fishing vessels, gears, efforts and fish resources ensuring preferential access of small and traditional fishers to the stock of fish in Indian waters.

In view of the long neglect of the fisheries sector NFF demands establishment of a separate Fisheries Ministry in the Government of India, it has been a long standing demand raised since last 25 years.

Trawling and Purse-Seining have led to large scale depletion of marine resources and ecology. NFF demands ban on Trawling and Purse-Seining in the territorial waters. In Maharashtra and Gujarat Bottom Trawling and Purse-Seining should be prohibited even well beyond the territorial waters, where traditional fishing takes place on large scale.

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In order to press for the demands of the fishworkers NFF has decided to –

- A. Launch a massive protest campaign along the East and West Coast starting from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu in the East and from Gujarat to Kerala in the West in the months of March-April 2012.
- B. Organise a protest dharna in New Delhi during the next Budget Session of the Parliament and call upon all the Members of Parliament from coastal areas to raise the demands of the fisherpeople in the Parliament.
- C. Hold a protest meeting in New Delhi against the imposition of blanket ban on fishing in marine protected areas in Gulf of Kutch in Gujarat, Malvan in Maharashtra, Gulf of Munnar in Tamil Nadu, Gahirmata and Bhitarkanika in Orissa and Sundarban Tiger Reserve in West Bengal.
- D. In view of the long standing neglect of the fish vendors and the new attack coming in the form of Foreign Direct Investment in Retail Trade, NFF will hold a National Convention of Fish Vendors in New Delhi and place the demands to the Government of India.

Matanhy Saldanha

Chairperson, NFF

Rambhau Patil

General Secretary

Vasudev Bloor

Secretary

T. Peter

Secretary

Pradip Chatterjee

Secretary

