

Bangladesh/India/Nepal: South Asia Climate Justice, Gender and Food Sovereignty Caravan from Kolkata to Katmandu

Sunday 23 November 2014, by [BKF](#) (Date first published: 23 November 2014).

On 16 November 2014 in the morning the South Asia Climate Justice, Gender and Food Sovereignty Caravan attended by USA, UK, Australia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippine, Sri Lanka, Sweden, New Zealand crossed the India border and arrived Kolkata on the same day in the evening.

On 18 in the afternoon, National hawkers' Federation led by great leader Shaktiman Gosh welcomed the caravan with participation of more thousand people hailing from different sectors of Hawkers' community.

On 18 in the afternoon there was a exchange views meeting with leaders of Informal Sector Labor Action Alliance (Asangathito Khethra Sramik Sangram Manch). Moreover, there was an evaluation meeting on the caravan activities of Bangladesh part. The entire participants were divided into 4 groups on language base. The outcomes of the group discussion was back to the plenary.

On the same day in the evening the caravan started off for the Indian and Nepali border arrived in the afternoon on 19 November 2014. All participants entered to Nepal except 18 participants who did not have the Nepali visa in their passport because of new circular of India authority. The immigration advised them to fly as there is no legal barrier for this. Finally 8 persons out of 18 decided to fly and would arrive in Kathmandu tomorrow in the afternoon. The remaining 10 decided to go back the county. They could have crossed the border but they did not want to break the immigration law. However, they chanted the slogan for a visa free South Asia which is more urgent in the context of climate change. By the way, those who entered Nepal were warmly received by the grass-root movements of Nepal at the border.

On 20 November in the morning there was a seminar in Kakarvitta, Nepal on Climate Change and Food Sovereignty. Dr. Keshab Khadka conducted the meeting while the ANPFA Vice-President presided over the seminar. Badrul Alam as the key leader of the caravan explained the aims and objectives of the caravan. Besides, representatives from UK, Australia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka. Philippine, Nepal spoke the topic. All the speakers explained the dreadful consequence of the impact of climate change in South and South East Asia as well. Badrul Alam said that we have to have a strong solidarity among the movements in South Asia in order to realize the climate justice in the form reparation from the industrially developed countries. He told the audience that the reparation is our right; their historical and ecological dues, not sympathy to the global south at all. He also criticized the the developed countries if there remains no significance emission reduction although the are committed in doing so every year. On the same day the caravan arrived in Sharlahi, Kalikapur. Here the grass-root people gave the caravan traditional reception with the support of mother's community in Nepal and organized a roundtable on the caravan issue. On behalf of the caravan Badrul Alam depicted the caravan' aims, objectives and goals. After the caravan there was dairy farm visit where the participants found milking cow, bio-fertilizers made of cow-dung, bio-pesticide, etc.

On 21 November 2014, in the morning the caravan left for Kathmandu. It is unfortunate that 7 out of 8 persons wishing to fly to Kathmandu buying ticket were intercepted at the airport immigration. They faced further loss of money with non-refundable air ticket. By the way, the caravan arrived in Kathmandu in the evening on 21 November 2014 and stayed in the Natinal Agricultural Research Centre in Nepal.

On 22 November 2014 at 10:30 am a people's march took place towards the venue of peoples SAARC. A warm reception to the caravan people had proceeded with floral wreath before the march started. During process toward the P-SAARC Pakistan delegates joined the caravan. The caravan joined the inaugural function of the P-SAARC.

Badrul Alam as the leader of the climate caravan was one of the panel speakers in the inaugural where the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Bam Dev Goutam were present and made an opening speech for the P-SAARC. Badrul Alam explained the experience of the caravan in details. He demanded the visa free South Asia in the interest of lasting peace and democracy within the region. Mr. Alam requested the official SARRC to demand climate justice to the northern developed countries for the benefit of climate affected people in the global south. He asked SAARC to strengthen the food and seed bank mechanism to ensure food sovereignty which will remove the hunger and poverty from South Asia which is home of one-fifth of world population. [1]

On 23 November 2014, the caravan participants attended to major workshops [2]. One is on the review of SAARC declaration and statement on climate change and another one on the farmers' capacity enhancement and South Asian Peasants' movement.

On 24 November 2014, there were two workshops on food sovereignty, right to food and peoples movement in South Asia; and agriculture and food security in Asia where the caravan participants attended and contributed. In the morning there was a closing ceremony of South Asian Climate Justice, Gender and Food sovereignty Caravan at Conference Hall of Staff College in Kathmandu attended by Netra Timsina who is the member of the organizing committee of P-SAARC and by Mr. Balram Banskota who is the organizing Secretary of ANPPFa. The country-wise caravan delegates made comments, suggestion and opinions.

Badrul Alam of BKF made a speech explaining the challenges of climate change in South Asian region as well as in the world. He asked the people to get prepared to combat the long term effect of climate change as there is no short cut way to recover. He added that the major emitters will be held responsible in different ways. They will not be given the scope to evade their historic and ecological dues. All peasants, indigeneous people, Dalit, marginalised, subaltern, fisherfolk, pastoralists, herders, plantation workers, agricultural workers, agricultural farm workers, women, youth are becoming united consciously. That is why, very strong movement and campaign should be built in South Asia, added Mr. Alam. He reaffirmed that the struggle would continue and eventually victory is with the people. He read out a caravan declaration adopted. [3]

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Footnotes

[1] The full version of the presentation of Badrul Alam has given is available on ESSF (article 33610), [From Bangladesh to Nepal, the South Asian climate Justice Caravan in Katmandu:](#)

[Presentation to the inaugural of PSAARC.](#)

[2] See on ESSF (article 33644), [Kathmandu: Alternative People's regionalism, visa-free South Asia, food security and climate justice.](#)

[3] The declaration can be read on ESSF (article 33658), [From Bangladesh to Nepal: Declaration of the South Asian Caravan 2014 on Climate Justice, Gender and Food Sovereignty.](#)