

*Français ci-dessous*

## **IN THE COVID CRISIS, SUPPORT INDIAN FARMERS**

### **UNJUST FARM LAWS MUST BE REPEALED**

India is in the grip of a Covid catastrophe caused by criminal inaction on the part of the national Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of Prime Minister Modi. It chose to prioritize its electoral and ideological agenda and disregard assessments and predictions based on Covid mapping scenarios by experts. This is consistent with the BJP's governance model since 2014 weakening and decimating every countervailing centre of power be it media, judiciary, opposition political parties, trade unions or human rights groups. These divisive governance practices negatively impact the working poor, the marginalized and oppressed sections of society, while providing huge dividends for their crony capitalists friends.

The current situation was not inevitable, proven by the state of Kerala where proactive measures resulted in them having a surplus of medical oxygen, or that the city of Mumbai chose not to dismantle large-scale temporary medical facilities created during the first wave because it foresaw a second coming.

In this context, we note the on-going struggle of millions of farmers demanding that PM Modi's government repeal the three farm laws passed in September 2020, without consultation or debate in the midst of the first wave of the Covid pandemic.

This farmers' movement, the largest and longest non-violent peaceful protest in world history, is now entering an unprecedented sixth month. Farmers rightly fear that these laws will empower corporations to seize their land, jeopardize their livelihood and deepen the agrarian crisis facing the country. Since November 2020, hundreds of thousands of farmers have camped at the borders of the capital New Delhi, in the bitter winter cold and now, the searing heat of summer, despite police tear gas, water cannons and barricades. Several hundred of them, young and old, men and women, have perished due to weather, disease, police violence and traffic accidents. Many have been injured by vigilantes of the ruling party. Yet the struggle endures and grows. But the Modi government continues to turn a deaf ear to their demands. With the current wave of Covid it is feared the government will opportunistically invoke public health and attempt to demolish the camps, just as it did last year, at the onset of the first wave of this virus, with the massive mobilization against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) designed to strip many Indians of citizenship. While the farmers know the health risks they face by staying encamped at this time, they remain resolute because it's a devil's bargain between threat of covid infection or farm laws that spell death for them.

The farmers' protest has garnered amazing support from all sections of Indian society and outside the country as well. In Canada, city councils such as Vancouver, Victoria, Burnaby, Port Coquitlam, Surrey, Brampton and others, along with many Canadian labor organizations, including Canadian Labour Congress, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Federations of Labour, and UNIFOR, have passed resolutions or issued statements in support of the demands of the farmers. In the midst of the second wave of the covid pandemic ravaging India, we the undersigned, call on the Indian government to pay

heed to the demands of the farmers and to ensure that the poor and the marginalized do not disproportionately bear the burden of the ferocious second wave. It is important to remember that farmers feed the nation and working people build it.

***IMMEDIATELY REPEAL the farm laws passed in September 2020 so the farmers can protect themselves from COVID and return to their homes, secure in the knowledge that the futures for themselves and their families are not jeopardized.***

***RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS being held under draconian laws and now also facing COVID infection.***

***FREE COVID-19 VACCINATIONS for all in India aged 18 and above.***

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## **DANS LA CRISE DE LA COVID, SOUTENIR LES AGRICULTEURS INDIENS**

### **LES LOIS AGRICOLES INJUSTES DOIVENT ÊTRE ABROGÉES**

L'Inde est en proie à une catastrophe Covid causé par l'inaction criminelle du gouvernement national Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) du Premier ministre Modi. Il a choisi de donner la priorité à son programme électoral et idéologique, et de ne pas tenir compte des évaluations et des prévisions basées sur les scénarios de cartographie Covid par des experts. Cela est cohérent avec le modèle de gouvernance du BJP depuis 2014 - orienté vers la logique de l'affaiblissement et l'anéantissement de tous les centres de contre-pouvoir, qu'il s'agisse des médias, de la justice, des partis d'opposition, des syndicats ou des groupes de défense des droits humains. La logique du BJP est aussi celle de pratiques de gouvernance divisionnistes ayant un impact négatif sur les pauvres, et sur les secteurs marginalisés et opprimés de la société, tout en procurant d'énormes dividendes à leurs amis et copains capitalistes.

La situation actuelle n'était pas inévitable. L'État du Kerala l'a prouvé avec des mesures proactives qui ont produit un surplus d'oxygène médical. Idem la ville de Mumbai, qui a choisi de ne pas démanteler les installations médicales temporaires à grande échelle créées lors de la première vague car elle prévoyait la seconde vague.

Dans ce contexte, nous notons la lutte continue des millions d'agriculteurs exigeant que le gouvernement du PM Modi abroge les trois lois agricoles adoptées en septembre 2020 sans consultation ni débat au milieu de la première vague de la pandémie.

Ce mouvement paysan, la plus grande et la plus longue manifestation pacifique et non violente de l'histoire mondiale, entre maintenant dans un sixième mois sans précédent. Les agriculteurs craignent à juste titre que ces lois autorisent les entreprises à saisir leurs terres, à mettre en péril leurs moyens de subsistance et à aggraver la crise agraire à laquelle le pays est confronté.

Depuis novembre 2020, des centaines de milliers d'agriculteurs campent aux limites de la capitale, New Delhi, dans le froid glacial de l'hiver, et maintenant dans la chaleur torride de l'été, malgré les gaz lacrymogènes, les canons à eau et les barricades de la police. Plusieurs centaines d'entre eux, jeunes et

vieux, hommes et femmes, ont péri à cause des intempéries, de la maladie, de la violence policière et des accidents de la circulation. Beaucoup ont été blessés par des miliciens RSS du parti au pouvoir. Pourtant, la lutte continue et se développe malgré le fait que gouvernement Modi fait toujours la sourde oreille à leurs demandes. Avec la nouvelle vague de la Covid, il est à craindre que le gouvernement invoque de manière opportuniste la santé publique et tente de démolir les camps, comme il l'a fait l'année dernière, au début de la première vague de ce virus, avec la mobilisation massive contre la loi d'amendement de la citoyenneté (CAA) conçue pour priver de nombreux Indiens de leur nationalité. Les agriculteurs connaissent les risques de santé qui les menacent en restant dans leurs camps de protestation. Mais ils demeurent résolus et déterminés car ils savent qu'ils sont coincés entre deux menaces diaboliques et mortelles : le virus létal de la Covid-19 et les lois agricoles qui signifient leur mort socio-économique.

La protestation des agriculteurs indiens a reçu un soutien étonnant de toutes les sections de la société indienne, et également à l'extérieur du pays. Au Canada, des conseils municipaux tels que Vancouver, Victoria, Burnaby, Port Coquitlam, Surrey, Brampton et d'autres, ainsi que de nombreuses organisations syndicales, y compris le Congrès du travail du Canada, le Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique, les fédérations du travail et l'UNIFOR, qui ont adopté des résolutions ou publié des déclarations à l'appui de leurs demandes. Au milieu de la 2<sup>e</sup> vague de la pandémie qui ravage l'Inde, nous, soussigné.e.s, appelons le gouvernement indien à tenir compte des demandes des agriculteurs et à faire en sorte que les pauvres et les marginalisés ne supportent pas de manière disproportionnée l'impact mortel de cette nouvelle agression covidienne. Il est important aussi de se rappeler que les agriculteurs nourrissent la nation et que les travailleurs la construisent.

***ABROGEZ IMMÉDIATEMENT les lois agricoles adoptées en septembre 2020 afin que les agriculteurs puissent se protéger du COVID et rentrer chez eux, en sachant que leur avenir et celui de leurs familles ne sont pas menacés.***

***LIBÉREZ TOUS LES PRISONNIERS POLITIQUES détenus en vertu de lois draconiennes et maintenant également confrontés à une infection au COVID.***

***VACCINATIONS COVID-19 GRATUITES pour tous et toutes en Inde âg.e.és de 18 ans et plus***

1. Feroz Mehdi, Alternatives International, Montreal, Canada
2. Catherine Pappas, Alternatives, Montréal, Canada
3. Mohammad Imran, Retired, NJ, USA
4. Patrick Farbiaz, PEPS-Pour une Ecologie Populaire et Sociale, Paris
5. Dolores Chew, Marianopolis College, Montreal, Canada
6. Sophie Toupin, University of Amsterdam, Montreal/Amsterdam
7. Ishita Tiwary, Concordia university, Montréal, Canada
8. Richa Nagar, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
9. Dipti Gupta, Dawson College, Montréal, Canada
10. Cory Legassic, Dawson College, Montréal, Canada
11. Rahul Varma, Teesri Duniya Theatre, Montreal, Canada
12. Prashant Keshavmurthy, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
13. Afshan Nasser, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
14. Sid Shniad, founding member, Independent Jewish Voices Canada

15. Jooneed J KHAN, Journalist and Writer, Montreal, Canada
16. Jaswant Guzder, child psychiatrist, Montreal, Canada
17. Chiara Letizia, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada
18. Bindu T Desai, Albany, CA, USA
19. Robert Apter, Retired UAW Local Rep, New York, NY, USA
20. Lakshmi Sharma, Montreal, QC, Canada
21. Jody Freeman, Montréal, Québec, Canada
22. Bill Skidmore, Carleton University (Retired), Ottawa, Canada
23. Anita Lal, Poetic Justice Foundation, Canada
24. Carmen Jensen, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
25. Pasha M. Khan, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
26. Adrienne Piggott, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
27. Sadeqa Siddiqui, IMA Quebec , Montreal Canada.
28. Robert Hornsey, President, Bergthorson Academy of Musical Arts, Maple Ridge, Canada
29. Malcolm Guy, International League of Peoples' Struggle, Montréal, Québec, Canada
30. Niti Sharma, Richmond, B.C., Canada
31. M. V. Ramana, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
32. Lavanya Narasiah, MD MSc, McGill and Sherbrooke University, Quebec, Canada
33. Steve Orlov, playwright, Montreal, Qc
34. Omer Morad, Montreal, QC .
35. Sushil Handa, Saint-Lambert, Quebec
36. Gilles Sabourin, Saint-Lambert, Québec
37. Daniel Guerrier, ancien délégué national Service civil international, France
38. Christiane Baril, Longueuil, Québec, Canada
39. Amrit Krishnan, Montreal, Québec, Canada
40. Vijay Kolinjivadi, University of Antwerp, Montréal/Antwerp
41. Caroline Kunzle, Montreal, Québec.
42. Debdeep Chatterjee, Concordia University, Montreal
43. Julie Vig, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
44. Ayesha Vemuri, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
45. Darin Barney, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
46. Freda Guttman, Independent Jewish Voices, Montreal, Canada
47. John Price, University of Victoria, Victoria, Canada
48. Gracy Fernandes -Haiti
49. Prashant Olalekar - India
50. Vinod Mubayi, Insaf Bulletin, New York, USA
51. Penni Mitchell, Herizons Magazine, Winnipeg, Canada
52. Anne Caines, RECAA, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
53. Judy Wong, Canada
54. Salman Kureishy, Mississauga, Canada
55. Burç Köstem, Montreal, Quebec
56. Samir Gandesha, Director, Institute for the Humanities, Simon Fraser University, Canada
57. Denise Nadeau, Concordia University, Montreal
58. Carrie Rentschler, McGill University, Montreal. Canada
59. Ian Angus, Professor Emeritus, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada
60. Jessica Fontaine, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
61. Stephen Aberle, Independent Jewish Voices member, Vancouver, Canada
62. Andrew Stuhl, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
63. Rana Khan, Working for Change, Toronto, Canada
64. Mark Stiles, Stiles Associates Inc., Ottawa, Canada

65. Sana Ahmad, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
66. David Barsamian, Alternative Radio, Boulder, CO USA
67. Koushik Ghosh, Central Washington University, WA. U.S.A.
68. Radhika Desai, President, Democracy, Equality and Secularism in South Asia (DESA),  
Winnipeg, Canada
69. R. Desai, Director, Geopolitical Economy Research Group (GERG), Canada
70. Nicole Ranganath, UC Davis, US
71. Jyotsna Vaid, College Station, TX, USA
72. Jeremy Isao Speier, Artist, Vancouver, Canada
73. Jerry Dias, Unifor President, Canada
74. V.K. Tripathi, New Delhi, India
75. Carolyn D'Cruz, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia
76. Svend Robinson, Former Member of Canadian Parliament, JS Woodsworth Resident  
Scholar 2020-21, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada
77. Rami Katz, Vancouver, Canada
78. Glenn D'Cruz, Deakin University, Melbourne
79. Hanako Hoshimi-Caines, Centre de Creation O Vertigo, Montreal, Canada
80. Aparna Sundar, Toronto, Canada
81. Chantale Ismé, Montréal, Canada
82. Roonjit Sahota, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada
83. Tanveer Sahota, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada
84. Navkiran Poonia, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada
85. Jaspreet Singh, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
86. Dilsher Athwal, Simon Fraser University, Surrey, Canada
87. Kishore Gajbhiye, Mumbai, India.
88. Gurman Sahota, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, Canada
89. Jean-Claude Icart, sociologue, chercheur autonome, Montréal, Canada
90. Harjaap Singh, Simon Fraser University, Canada
91. Anjali Choksi, Dawson College Montreal, Canada
92. Saleha Athar, Toronto, Canada
93. Patricia Gruben, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada
94. Sadaf Rathod, UMass, Amherst
95. Madhumita Dutta, Columbus, Ohio, USA
96. Geneviève Rail, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
97. Chinnaiyah Jangam, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.
98. Anthony Dias, SJES SAsia, Delhi
99. Prabhjot Parmar, SANSAD (South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy),  
Vancouver, Canada
100. Natalie Kouri-Towe, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
101. Norma Rantisi, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
102. Sharanjit Kaur, University of British Columbia, Canada.
103. Kris Foulds, The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford, BC Canada
104. Olivia Daniel, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, BC Canada
105. Mo Dhaliwal, Poetic Justice Foundation, Canada
106. Renel Exentus, doctorant en études urbaines, Montréal, Canada
107. Alain Saint-Victor, historien, Montréal, Canada
108. Hassan Yussuff, President, Canadian Labour Congress, Ottawa, Canada
109. Stephen von Sychowski, President, Vancouver and District Labour Council, Vancouver
110. Ian Rocksborough-Smith, University of the Fraser Valley, Canada
111. Gian Sihota, VP Richmond South Centre Constituency Exec. BC, Canada
112. Stefan Kipfer, York University, Canada

113. Ilan Kapoor, York University, Toronto, Canada
114. Sima Aprahamian, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, Canada
115. Kajri Jain, University of Toronto, Canada
116. Rachel Berger, Concordia University, Canada
117. Bianca Mugenyi, Director, Canadian Foreign Policy Institute
118. Dimitri Lascaris, lawyer, journalist, activist
119. Antonio Torres-Ruiz, Centre for Critical Development Studies, University of Toronto,  
and Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean.
120. Guillaume Bernardi, Drama Studies Program, Glendon College, York University.
121. Steven Bush, Senior Lecturer (rtd), University of Toronto, Canada
122. Bhavani Raman, University of Toronto, Canada.
123. Prabhjot Parmar, University of the Fraser Valley, Canada
124. Sedef Arat-koc, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada
125. Katharine Beeman, Alternatives, Montréal, Québec, Canada
126. Evelyn Mondonedo, PINAYQuebec, Canada
127. Radhika Desai, President, the Society of Socialist Studies, Canada
128. Sejal Lal, South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD), Vancouver  
Canada
129. Radhika Mongia, York University, Toronto, Canada
130. Mustafa Koc, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada
131. Ravindra K. Jain, Retired, JNU, India
132. Amanda R. Shankland. Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
133. Rachel Portinga. Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
134. Navjotpal Kaur, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's NL Canada
135. Marie Boti, Women of Diverse Origins, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
136. Maria Worton, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
137. E McLean, Winnipeg, MB, Canada
138. Kora Liegh Glatt, Victoria, BC, Canada
139. Ambrose Pereira, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
140. May Chiu, Montreal, Québec, Canada
141. Barbara Parker, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
142. Bertrand Guibord, Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain - CSN, Montréal, Québec
143. Eric Shragge, Immigrant Workers Centre, Montreal, Quebec
144. Bryan Dale, University of Toronto Scarborough, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
145. Monika Korzun, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
146. Ryan J. Phillips, Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
147. Lionel Fernandes, Ontario, Canada
148. Omar Latif, Committee of Progressive Pakistani-Canadians, Toronto, Canada
149. Nilambri Ghai, Ottawa, Canada
150. Dominique Daigneault, Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain - CSN, Montréal,  
Québec
151. Christine Marrewa-Karwoski, Columbia University, NY, US
152. Malcolm Bincow, Retired, York University, Toronto, Canada
153. Doreen Fumia, Associate Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Ryerson University, Canada
154. Michelle Smith, Dawson College, Montreal, Quebec
155. Aziz Choudry, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
156. Stefan Christoff, Artist, community organizer and student
157. John DMello, PEACE, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, US, 33410
158. Nazila Bettache, MD CM, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Université de  
Montréal, Canada

159. Odile Hélier Paris France
160. Waheed Mukaddam, Cambridge, MA, US
161. Jean Swanson, Councillor, City of Vancouver, Canada
162. Mei-ling Wiedmeyer, MD, CCFP, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Family Practice, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
163. Shireen Hamza, History of Science, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US
164. Antonio de Jesus, Centre for Philippine Concerns, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
165. Vijay Puli, South Asian Dalit-Adivasi Network (SADAN)
166. Robyn Andrews, Massey University, NZ
167. Kamala Visweswaran, Rice University, Houston, TX
170. Elena Razlogova, History, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
171. Martha Stiegman, Environmental & Urban Change, York University, Toronto, Canada
172. Lauren Kepkiewicz, Department of Geography, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada
173. Lorelei Hanson, Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies, Athabasca University, Athabasca, Canada
174. Francis Cody, University of Toronto, Canada
175. Rajee Paña Jejishergill, NSCAD University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
176. Jennifer Chew, Montreal, Canada
177. Elaine Power, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada
178. Kelly Tracey, University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, BC, Canada
179. Between the Lines, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
180. Larry Brown, President, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), Canada
181. Andrea Yovorsky, EcoTrust Canada, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Canada
182. Syeda N Bukhari, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
183. Ravneet Sidhu, Simon Fraser University, BC, Canada
184. Iris Yellum, South Asian Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US
185. Clarisse Wells, South Asian Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US
186. Catie Peters, American Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US
187. Anelyse Weiler, Sociology, University of Victoria, BC, Canada
188. Richard Swift, New Internationalist Magazine
189. Harnek Dhaliwal, Punjabi Literary and Cultural Association, Winnipeg, Canada
190. Mukhtiar Singh (Retired), University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada
191. Donna Denina, International Women's Alliance, Seattle, WA US
192. Amélie Nguyen, Centre international de solidarité ouvrière (CISO)
193. Caroline Quesnel, Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ-CSN)
194. Paritosh Kumar, Global Development Studies, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada
195. Marie Stuart, Montréal, Québec
196. Marguerite Kephart, Montréal, Canada
197. Sheetal Lodhia, Toronto, ON, Canada
198. Shree Mulay, St. John's NL, Canada
199. Maurice Dufour, Montreal, Qc
200. Bhajan Gill, Secretary, Progressive Cultural Association, Calgary, Canada
201. Harcharan Singh Parihar, Editor, Sikh Virsa, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
202. Vrinda Narain, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
203. Kaleem Siddiqi, McGill University, Montreal, Canada
204. Harbans Singh, Editor, Sarokaran Di Awaaz, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
205. Gurcharan Brar, Punjabi Cultural Association of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada
206. Gurvinder Gill, Secular People's Association, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

207. Dr. Shaheen Ansari, Arkitect India, New Delhi
208. Mritiunjoy Mohanty, CERIAS, UQAM, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
209. Jodi Koberinski, SSHRC Doctoral Fellow, University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
210. Nancy Sears Barker, teacher, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
211. Jonathan S. Barker, professor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
212. Laird Cronk, President, BC Federation of Labour, Vancouver, Canada
213. Sussanne Skidmore, Secretary Treasurer, BC Federation of Labour, Vancouver, Canada