



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

National Office : A Wing First Floor, Haji Habib Building, Naigaon Cross Road
Dadar (E), Mumbai – 400 014. Phone - 9969363065;

Delhi Office : 6/6 jangpura B, New Delhi – 110 014 . Phone : 9818905316

E-mail: napmindia@napm-india.org | Web : www.napm-india.org

Repeal AFSPA NOW !

Signature Campaign

May 22, 1958 Armed Forces Special Powers Act, a colonial legacy used against Mahatma Gandhi, was promulgated initially in the Naga areas of Assam (later divided between 4 states) and later in Mizoram, initially in parts of Manipur and later in all of Manipur. The Ordinance after a brief discussion in the Parliament was endorsed and got the status of Act on August 18, 1958, despite stiff resistance from various quarters who challenged it as a martial and draconian law. Since then it has been in force in one part or the other of the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir (since 1991). Even though continuation of the 'disturbed area' status under the AFSPA in many part of the country is illegal in view of the violation of the mandatory six monthly periodic review directed by Supreme Court in its 1997 Judgement.

AFSPA continues to be the most potent repressive tool of the Indian state that empowers even a non commissioned officer of the armed forces of union to kill on mere suspicion and provide legal immunity from prosecution, thereby causing untold misery and agony among the peoples of the affected regions. The imposition of AFSPA is synonymous to heavy militarisation in these states leading to gross civil and political rights violations including enforced disappearances, extra-judicial execution, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence against women, arbitrary arrest and detention. All this together has meant severe economic, social and cultural cost including erosion of civil administration, lack of access to education, basic health care, destruction of properties and sources of livelihood, and environmental destruction and 'normal' functioning of democratic institutions in these areas.

The continued and selective use of AFSPA against communities who have been demanding self-determinations rights is a cause of worry in the context of the increasing militarization of the society in the sub-continent especially after 9/11 and the growing communalisation of the polity in India as a whole and suppression of people's democratic rights in the name of national security.

This law is more draconian than its predecessor ordinance used by the British to suppress the Quit India Movement. In the pretext of controlling insurgency, this Act has only intensified the insurgency in the region and legitimised thousands of gross human rights violations like rape, torture, murder and “disappearances” of innocent people in the North East and J&K. The democratic movements in the North East and J&K have consistently demanded the repeal of the Act and demilitarisation for decades.

Continuing with our efforts for establishing the democratic values in the society and in solidarity with the struggles of democratic movements of North East and J&K National Alliance of People's Movement (NAPM) calls upon the Government of India :

1. To repeal immediately :

- The Armed Forces (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura) Special Powers Act, 1958 (as amended in 1972), and
- The Jammu and Kashmir Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1990

2. To refrain from inserting any part of the Acts into any other legislation granting unbridled powers to the armed forces of the union or the State police.

3. Immediately work out and announce a phased, time-bound demilitarisation plan to withdraw the Army and other para military forces from internal security duties in NE States and J&K.

It needs to be noted that AFSPA is not only opposed by the movement groups and the rights bodies but also by the Government's own commissions and committees appointed to look into the matter. For example, the Committee to Review the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, headed by Justice B. P. Jeevan Reddy in 2005, the Administrative Reforms Commission headed by Dr. Veerappan Moily in 2007 and several others have recommended and demanded the use of AFSPA and demanded immediate measures towards withdrawal from civil areas. Internationally, the UN bodies including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the U N High Commissioner for Human Rights and recently the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders have consistently urged for its repeal. However, all these have gone to the deaf ears of the Government.

Along with the struggles of millions of people against the militarisation and AFSPA, the hunger fast of **Irom Sharmila Chanu** has crossed 10 years. She has been force fed through her nose by the Government, arrested with charges for attempt to commit suicide, criminalised as a high security prisoner, denying her access to family, friends, supporters and the media. It is a shame that in this land of Gandhi, a non-violent protester has been subjected to such humiliation for more than ten years. Even as she continues her struggle along with many in the NE and J&K, we appeal to our comrades in human rights groups and people's movements across the country to demand for repeal of AFSPA along with other draconian laws like UAPA, MCOCA, CSPA and others and resist the increasing militarization of democratic spaces.

Continuing with various initiatives NAPM along with many other organizations have launched a three month campaign from October 2 to December 10 for repeal of AFSPA. One of such activities is to collect 10 lakh signatures to be submitted to President of India on December 10th.

Sign up demanding the repeal of AFSPA now, join us !

For details contact or write to napmindia@napm-india.org / 9818905316