

# Delhi Shramik Sangathan

## *Protest over **cash for food** scheme*

Mass rally & Public meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct'09 from Mandi House to Jantar  
Mantar at 10am

Dear Friends

Zindabad!

Greetings from Delhi Shramik Sangathan!

The Below Poverty Line (BPL) families living in slums areas, J J Colonies & unauthorized colonies are forced to come on the roads to protest against the “**cash for food**” proposal of Delhi Government. Delhi CM & Minister of Food & Civil Supplies have announced a scheme of providing cash of Rs.1100/pm to BPL families instead of ration & kerosene oil. They have proposed the scheme to the Planning Commission. The protest is being organized by **Delhi Shramik Sangathan** and supported by several other organizations, trade unions and individuals. The protests have been organized in series at Traffic signals of Sector-I, R K Puram, Uttam Nagar and Peera Garhi on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> Sept'09 respectively by the residents of slum communities of R K Puram, Peera Garhi, Paschim Vihar, Sultanpuri, Jwalapuri, J J colony, Hastasal & Vikaspuri. The protest was a symbolic protest where around 300 affected poor families assembled and formed human chains demanding

- 1) Abolition of **cash for food** scheme immediately as it goes against the basic objective of Food Dept to provide subsidized food to the needy & poor families of the state.
- 2) The income criteria for identifying BPL families to be changed as it is very old, unrealistic and half of the minimum wages of Delhi. **We demand income criteria for identifying BPL families should be equal to the minimum wages of the state.** The present criterion is reducing the actual number of BPL families & that the Government wants.
- 3) **Universalization of Public Distribution System** (PDS) as 80% of the nation population need subsidized food from PDS. (Refer to the Arjun Sen Gupta committee report)
- 4) **Abolition of categorization of Ration cards** as it has divided the poor and left many poor out of its purview.
- 5) Increased participation of poor in **making the system more transparent and poor friendly.**
- 6) **Strict action against corrupt politicians, Food Dept officials & ration dealers** as it will boost the morale of the poor consumers.

The Government arguments that the corruption is the main basis of withdrawing subsidized food from PDS (means closing or reducing the size of Food Dept) & proposing cash scheme and if it becomes the principle of removing corruption from the institutions then DDA, MCD, slum & J J wing, Delhi Police are the most corrupt institutions in Delhi. Why not these institutions should be shut down? Now why Government has opened 22 new police stations? Do they want to legalize the corruption?

If there is corruption in Food Dept, then we want to know that how many disciplinary actions have been taken by the Government to check the corruption against the bureaucrats & shop keepers. This should be made to the public. DSS and its members have filed hundreds of RTIs & complaints against the corrupt shop keepers & officials and no actions have taken by the Government. What does it indicate?

The hidden agenda is something else which Government does not want to expose & that is withdrawing support from the welfare measures/schemes. This is being done as part of the New Liberal Economic Policy of the Government under the pressure from the International financial institutions. If this experiment becomes successful then the Government can play the same card for education & health sectors.

Another fact is that only 39% of the BPL families have received BPL cards so far in country. The rest 61% identified BPL families are still waiting for the cards. The poor women & children are the victim of malnourishment & hunger. If the subsidized food scheme is closed down then the poor women & children will be the most affected and there would be no control on market, prices on the basic food products etc.

Another question is that who will control this money & for what use? At present, women go to the fair price shop to collect the food grain & kerosene oil but once this scheme is implemented, the slum women have fear that the money might be used for purposes other than ration & kerosene oil.

**Delhi Shramik Sangathan is organizing these protests in series from 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept to 5<sup>th</sup> Oct'09 at major traffic signals of the city and it will culminate in a mass rally & public meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct'09 from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar at 10am. We want a debate on the proposed scheme in the city.**

**Please join the rally & Public meeting.**

Schedule of symbolic protest and Human chain at pavements of traffic signals/squares:

SN	Date	Venue	Timings
1	23.09.09	Sector-I Traffic signal, R K Puram	4pm-6pm
2	24.09.09	Uttam Nagar Traffic Signal	9am-12 noon
3	25.09.09	Traffic signal, Peera Garhi	4pm-6pm
4	30.09.09	Traffic signal, Richi Rich, Shalimar Bagh	9am-12 noon
5	30.09.09	Rampura, near petrol pump	4pm-6pm

6	01.10.09	Okhla roundel, ph-II	9AM-12Noon
7	5.10.09	Traffic signal, Mayapuri chowk	9am-12 noon
8	5.10.09	F- block Traffic signal, Mangolpuri	4pm-6pm

Ramendra/Anita

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