

Asia Regional People's Assembly 2024

11

SEPTEMBER 2024

2.30 – 4.30 PM
BANGKOK TIME



ZOOM



COMMUNITY VOICE



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Asia Regional People's Assembly 2024 (Virtual)

Programme Schedule and Concept Note

Programme Schedule

Date: September 11, 2024, 2.30 – 4.30 PM Bangkok time. (Your country time [here](#))

Zoom link (please register): <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlc--spjMrHNfrl-NbGOt2G7cUinwc89N>

Welcome and Introduction (2 min): Pradeep Baisakh, Asia Coordinator, GCAP

Session 1 (30 minutes): Voices on social protection and civil liberties

Key question: *The issues and challenges the communities are facing relating to poverty, hunger, access to health and welfare schemes, exclusion, human rights etc and what are the key demands*

Moderation: Beena Johnson, Chairperson, Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF)

Keynote speaker: Dr. Devinder Sharma, Food and Trade Policy Analyst on “The Great Indian Divide: Opulence and Starvation” (10 minutes)

Community voice 1: Exclusion from the Social Protection in Pakistan (3 min)

Community voice 2: Voice of a Human Rights Defender from Myanmar (3 min)

Community voice 3: Exclusion and discrimination of the Dalit community (3 min)

Community voice 4: Youth from Bangladesh (3 min)

Session 2 (35 min): Members of Parliament and UN representatives responding to people's issues and concerns

Moderation: Maneesh Pradhan, ActionAid International – Asia

1. Preet Kaur Gill, Member of Parliament, UK (Or her video message) (5 min) (*tbc*)
2. MP from Pakistan (7 min) (*tbc*)
3. Dr Rojnath Pandey, Secretary of Parliamentary Committee of Nepal (7 min)
4. Hitomi Rankine, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNESCAP (7 min)

Session 3 (35 min): Voices of the CSO leaders

Key question: *Sharing on issues of economic justice, institutional reforms and democracy and human rights*

Moderation: Beckie Malay, PRRM

1. **Poverty and Vulnerability in South Asia:** Arjun Karki, SAAPE (5 min)
2. **Reform of the WB and IMF:** Mae Buenaventura, APMDD (5 min)
3. **State of democracy in Asia:** Ichal Supriadi, ADN (5 min)
4. **Rising Inequality in Asia:** Farooq Tariq, Fight Inequality Alliance (5 min)
5. **Can implementation of the SDGs be expedited:** Speaker, ADA (5 min)
6. **Proposed global campaign on Economic Justice:** Arjun Bhattarai, NFN/GCAP (5 min)

Session 4 (15 minutes): Discussion on the People's Declaration

Moderation: Anselmo Lee, APSD Coordinator

Draft presentation by Maryam Khan followed by discussion

Thank giving: Jyoti Prakash, Aide Et Action

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1. **Drafting committee of Regional People's Declaration:** Anselmo Lee, APSD coordinator, Chalitha Auesiritrakul, PVA Asia Coordinator, Praman Adhikari, SAAPE, Maryam Khan, PDA, Pradeep Baisakh, GCAP Asia Coordinator
2. **Social media/Communications support:** Pragati Prava, GCAP Communication Officer

Concept Note

The world has set back by 15 years in fight against hunger, stated the UN report on [State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#). Between 713 and 757 million people faced hunger in 2023, equivalent to one out of 11 people in the world. The report said inflationary pressures, mainly the increases in the relative prices of food, continue to erode economic gains in many countries, as the world is still struggling to recover from the global pandemic.

The world is facing a Debt Crisis!

As it stands now the visionary promises made under Agenda 2030 of economic, social and climate justice and a just world will not be fulfilled. According to the UN only 17% of the 17 SDGs will be achieved by 2030. Loss of livelihoods, climate change, wars and conflicts, shrinking civic space and press freedom, and critical gaps in healthcare and social protection are pushing excluded people further to the margins and making our planet uninhabitable. The issues of unemployment has affected the youth leaving them in hi and dry.

The current Debt Crisis is a crisis of humanity – many countries are paying more for debt services than for health and education. The impact in countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan and other Asian countries is disastrous for people and impacting climate change as well. The World Bank and IMF are not solving the intersectional debt crisis we face, instead their conditionalities and policies are increasing the crisis and suffering of people. The international community has to find a different solution for the debt – cancel unsustainable and unjust debts and create a fair debt mechanism under the UN. We need new solutions to protect nature and finance climate solutions, including the loss and damage already incurred by those most vulnerable to climate shocks.

Governments must have enough resources to spend in quality public services like health care, education and universal social protection and invest in the climate transformation. Sustainable development will be possible only if the services are universal – including all women, and discriminated and excluded groups.

Some countries in Asia are forced to take austerity measures cutting spending on social protection, health and education. The Right to Public Services and fully functional social protection ought to be in place instead of taking austerity measures. Elderly people, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, communities discriminated by work and descent, migrants, women, transgender people, youth and children are suffering in multiple ways.

Multinational companies and rich people have to pay their taxes to finance this. However, today they are paying minimal taxes or are dodging it. As a result inequality is growing. The

richest 1% get richer. The same 1% richest are contributing as much to climate change as the poorest 50% of humanity. The transformation of the International Financial Architecture is a condition for change. It's time to call for Economic Justice!

The role of human rights activists, defenders of democracy – mainly the youth, the civil society and media has taken a severe beating in the recent days. The human rights of the most marginalised groups like the indigenous communities, Dalits and CDWD (Communities discriminated by work and descent), persons with disabilities, women and girls have been violated with impunity.

It's time to demand a public funded Universal Social Protection Floors in the Asia countries. The Asia governments should take adequate measures to work towards the achievement of the SDGs, protect the human rights and democratic spaces, engage youth in the process of development and secure economic justice!

The Summit of the Future is taking place on 23-24 September 2024 to have a consensus on how to deliver a better present and safeguard the future.

In this context, the Civil Society coordinated by the Global call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), will organise a Physical [Global People's Assembly](#) on 22-24 September 2024.

In Asia we will organise a **Virtual Asia Regional People's Assembly on 11th September 2024** to discuss various issues of the communities, seek responses from the Members of Parliament and prepare a People's Declaration to be submitted to the governments and the UN systems to act.

We call upon all the concerned actors to join and substantively contribute to the Assembly deliberations. Our regional issues and demands will be shared in the Global People's Assembly.

Objectives of the Regional People's Assembly:

- To bring together community, constituency representatives and the youth from across the region together in a broad dialogue
- Discuss the worsening food, hunger, poverty and debt crisis, widening inequality and demand Universal Social protection Floors, Climate Justice, protect democratic space and achieve SDGs, after all to seek economic justice!
- Invite the Members of Parliament face to face with the people to hear and respond to their demands
- Prepare a Regional People's Declaration to be shared with the governments, UN systems and the Global People's Assembly.

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Organisers:

1. Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) (Coordination)
2. Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF)
3. Global Forum on Communities Discriminated by Work and Descent (GFoD)
4. Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development (APSD)
5. Asia Democracy Network (ADN)
6. Asia Development Alliance (ADA)
7. People's Vaccine Alliance (PVA), Asia Chapter
8. OXFAM-Asia
9. South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)
10. ActionAid International - Asia Region
11. Aide Et Action – International
12. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan
13. NGO Federation of Nepal
14. Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)
15. Noakhali Rural Development Society, Bangladesh
16. Sri Lanka United Nations Friendship Organisation (SUNFO)
17. Sanayee Development Organisation, Afghanistan
18. Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA)
19. ONE Singapore
20. Africa Japan Forum
21. Coordination Committee of Cambodia (CCC)
22. Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organisation (APCASO)