



## Colloquium: Land as Commodity

Event Sub Title:

A comment on The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013

Speaker:

Dr. V Krishna Ananth, Associate Professor, Department of History, Sikkim Central University, Gangtok

Date / Time:

January 30, 2014 - 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Venue:

10th Floor, Pixel A, Azim Premji University

Abstract:

The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, replaces the Land Acquisition Act, 1894. It is held that the infirmities in the 1894 Act that led to class anger as witnessed in Singur, Nandigram, Kalinganagar and elsewhere during the past couple of decades have been taken care of. The new law is projected to firm up the path of industrial development as well as render justice to the farmers whose land will be acquired.

This, however, is doubtful. If the 1894 Act was rooted in the logic of a colonial politico-legal premise, the 2013 Act is a product of the logic of a neo-colonial politico-legal set-up. In other words, if the 1894 Act was consistent with the Right to Private Property as fundamental to the system, the 2013 Act, in fact, denies to the land-holder any such fundamental Right. It denies the land-holder such protection that was conferred upon the farmers by the Supreme Court in recent times. The 2013 law also seeks to delegitimize any struggles against land-acquisition in the days ahead.

Therefore, it makes sense to look at the new law, compare it with the old and see how different it is for the land-losing farmers.

A Note on the Speaker:

Dr. V. Krishna Ananth obtained his Master's degree, M.Phil. and Ph.D. from the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He joined The Hindu in 1991 and worked with the daily for 13 years. During his stint there, he wrote on political and other matters. He continued writing for The Economic Times, The New Indian Express and the

Economic and Political Weekly since he left his job in The Hindu in February 2004.

Dr. Ananth practiced law for a while at the Madras High Court and was Fellow at Nehru Memorial between 2009 and 2011. During his fellowship, Dr. Ananth researched on Property Rights, the Constitution and the politico-legal aspects of Land Reforms in India.

He was an adjunct faculty at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai for a decade from 2000 and has authored three books: India Since Independence: Making Sense of Indian Politics (both in English and Tamil), Emergency: Nadanthathu Enna (Tamil) and Arasiyal Suvadugal (Tamil). Dr. Ananth has also contributed to edited volumes.

Presently, he is Associate Professor, Department of History, Sikkim Central University, Gangtok.