

## India: Historic Victory for Farmers of Maharashtra

By [Countercurrents.org](http://Countercurrents.org)

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*The farmers in Maharashtra won a historic victory after 50,000 farmers threatened to siege the state assembly. The **Devendra Fadnavis** government of Maharashtra has agreed to the demands of protesting farmers.*

A committee has been set up, which will consider all aspects of their demands, which includes loan waiver, free electricity and a higher price for their produce. The government has given its acceptance in writing, said state minister **Chandrakant Patil**, after a delegation of farmers met government representatives this afternoon. Mr Fadnavis said the Chief Secretary will do the follow up.

The Fadnavis Government has decided to table a bill in the Monsoon session of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, which will assure minimum price for agricultural products. If traders offer lower price below minimum price then it will be considered as a criminal act.

The Maharashtra Government is also planning to revise milk prices and appoint an independent observer for dairy business to help farmers. The decision on hiking milk prices would be taken by June 20.

The Government has also agreed to waive off penalty and interest on pending power bills and also look to set up more cold storages and agro-processing units in the state.

Nearly 50,000 farmers assembled in Mumbai after a grueling 180-km, six-day march from Nashik, with plans to gherao the assembly. The protest was called off after the government's acceptance.

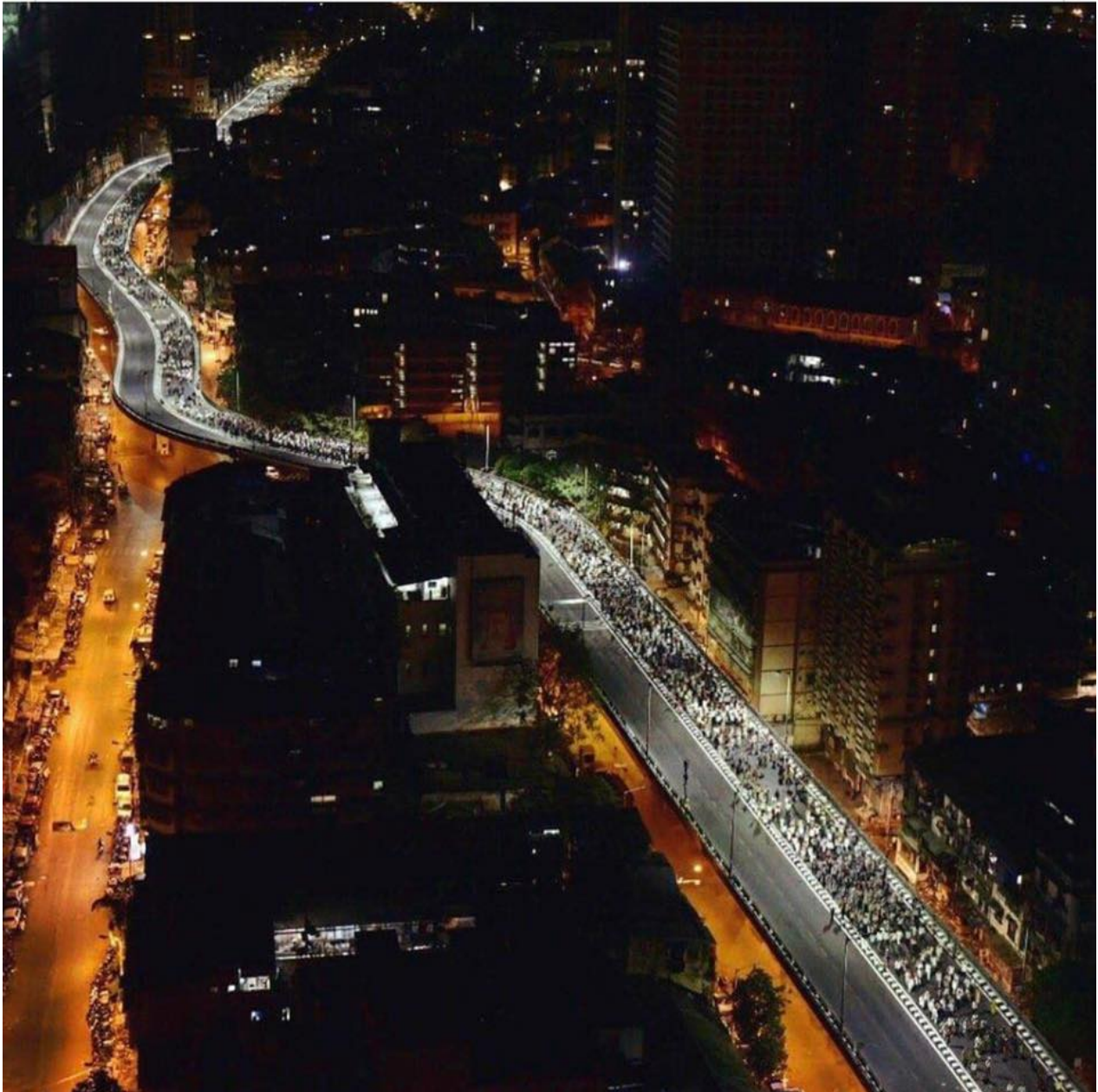
The Left-affiliated All India Kisan Sabha or AIKS, which spearheaded the march, wants the implementation of recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission that mandates farmers be paid one-and-a-half times the cost of production and the Minimum Support Price be fixed for their produce.

The adivasis or tribal cultivators, who joined the march in huge numbers, want the land they have been tilling for years to be transferred to their names and implementation of the Forest Rights Act, which they say will benefit them.

The farmers want the state government to stop forceful acquisition of farm lands for projects such as super highways and bullet trains. Inter-linking of rivers and to discontinue sharing of waters with Gujarat was another concern that they wanted to discuss.

They also want a compensation of Rs. 40,000 per acre for farmers whose crops were hit by

hailstorm and pink bollworm.



Source: Countercurrents

Even though the farmers planned to begin their march towards the Vidhan Sabha after 11 am, they chose to walk at night so that the students appearing for their Board exams weren't affected and the traffic ran smoothly.

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