



Association for India's Development

MIT & Boston Chapters

PO Box 390884, Cambridge, MA 02139

www.aidboston.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACTS: Mona Mandal

Samujjal Purkayastha

(732) 423 6662 info@aidboston.org

(617) 605 3086 shayan@aidboston.org

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR MONDAY, MARCH 23rd

MEDHA PATKAR TO SPEAK ON PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS: THE STATE AND THE CIVIL SOCIETY

Known and loved by millions of villagers and urban poor throughout India and the world over, Medha Patkar, 54, is the leader of the Save the Narmada Movement and the National Alliance of People's Movements. After earning an M.A. in Social Work, she worked with voluntary organizations in Bombay slums for 5 years as well as in the tribal districts of Gujarat state. She left her position on the faculty of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, as well as her unfinished Ph.D., to found an alliance with the millions of villagers who were uprooted and made homeless by the Sardar Sarovar Dam and other large dams along the Narmada River of Central India. Among India's most dynamic activists, Medha knows the Narmada Valley village by village. Veteran of several fasts, protests and campaigns on the banks of the rising Narmada, her uncompromising insistence on the right to life and livelihood has compelled the post-Independence generation in India and around the world to revisit the basic questions of control over natural resources, human rights, environment, and development. Despite many police beatings and jail terms, she continues to believe in the inherent goodness of people and the democratic system. She has served as a Commissioner to the World Commission on Dams, the first independent global Commission constituted to enquire on the water, power and alternative issues, related to dams, across the world.

Many peoples' movements in India today continue to draw inspiration from her as she has come to represent the voice of the marginalized people of India.

WHO: Ms. Medha Patkar

Convener, Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the Narmada Movement) and the National Alliance of People's Movements. Winner of the Right Livelihood Award, the Goldman Environmental Prize, Amnesty International's Human Rights Defender's Award and the BBC Green Ribbon Award

WHAT: Talk on: People's Movements: The State and Civil Society

WHEN: Monday, March 23rd 2009, 10:30 AM

WHERE: MIT, Earth Sciences Building, Building 54, Room 100