

Date: 09.03.2026

To,
Shri A. Revanth Reddy,
Chief Minister,
Government of Telangana,
Hyderabad

Sub: Urgent Appeal to Halt the Unveiling of Detailed Project Plans for Musi River Rejuvenation (Phase 1) on 13th March, 2026 – Ensure Prior Democratic Consultation, Comprehensive Review, Community and Civil Society Engagement.

Respected Sir,

I am writing to you in solidarity with the communities residing along the banks of the Musi River and the civil society of Telangana, organized as Musi Jan Andolan (MJA). As you are aware, this is a matter of grave urgency that warrants your immediate personal attention. While I would prefer to discuss this in-person, along with community and MJA representatives, considering the tight timeline, I am sending this letter over e-mail, confident in your commitment to addressing such concerns with the sensitivity and resolve that define your leadership.

I received an official invitation email from the Managing Director of the Musi River Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL), titled '*Invitation: Musi River Rejuvenation Phase 1 Unveiling by Hon'ble CM – 13th March at Taj Krishna*', announcing the unveiling of detailed project plans for Musi River Rejuvenation Phase 1. The programme is described as culminating in "partnership discussions" for "meaningful engagement with stakeholders and partners."

Regrettably, this framework starkly excludes grassroots and indispensable voices: directly affected families, particularly those served land acquisition notices; environmental experts and social activists; and collectives like the Musi Jan Andolan, representing upstream and downstream community concerns. In a democracy grounded in participatory governance, such omissions render the proceedings antithetical to true partnership, prioritizing elite consultations over the lived realities of the impacted.

The Musi Riverfront Development Project forms part of over 100 similar riverfront initiatives planned predominantly in states governed by the BJP and its allies, many of which have raised profound social and environmental apprehensions. The Sabarmati Riverfront in Gujarat, for instance, was subject to petitions before the Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat, resulting in several directives and corrective measures. In Telangana's context, the Musi project was first conceived during Shri Chandrababu Naidu's tenure as Chief Minister of the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh, but repeated challenges and protests by local residents from the Musi basin, since the 90s, led to its suspension across multiple iterations. The MRDCL, although set up under the previous BRS Govt in 2017, did not proceed with the Project on ground.

Under your administration, the revived project being taken up as a 'flagship programme', is of an enormous scale and is bound to have huge social and ecological implications. The Project is likely to displace thousands of households, including those of the urban working poor, middle-class families, retired officials, while endangering heritage structures such as the High

Court building. Recent demolitions have already affected approximately 300 homes, with the provided alternative tenements falling short of residents' needs and disrupting livelihoods. Many families, rooted in joint family traditions, previously resided in modest yet spacious accommodations built through lifelong savings. Such disruptions extend severe socio-economic repercussions to middle- and upper-class communities as well.

The recently notified Gandhi Sarovar Project, requiring the acquisition of 10.34 acres in Bandlaguda Jagir Village (as per the 11th February 2026 notification), has provoked unanimous opposition from residents of the Madhu Park Ridge Apartments (two G+5 blocks). Concurrent notifications for an additional 43.48 acres in Rangareddy District, alongside your request for the transfer of 98.20 acres of defence land and the invitation to the Hon'ble Union Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh for the foundation stone-laying on 12th February 2026, have further intensified public disquiet, all proceeding without due regard for democratic participation or procedural safeguards.

We unequivocally support the rejuvenation of every river, recognizing them as vital arteries of our ecosystems. The Musi, however, is already burdened heavily by toxic industrial pollution and encroachments by big structures (such as the metro station), demanding a restoration approach that avoids or at least minimizes displacement and destruction of people's homes and livelihoods. This also necessitates full compliance with the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (RFCTLARR) Act, 2013, a landmark legislation enacted under the UPA-II government following people's movements over decades and extensive consultations facilitated by the then Minister, Shri Jairam Ramesh ji, to centre concerns of affected communities and environmental safeguards. The Telangana state amendment in 2017 to the 2013 Central Act, inserting Section 10A, which permits exemptions from SIA- Social Impact Assessment (Chapter II) and food security provisions (Chapter III), unjustifiably dilutes this progressive framework.

It is deeply concerning that instead of repealing these amendments by the previous Govt, your government invokes this regressive provision, via Government Order Ms. No. 921, MA&UD (Plg-I) dated 16th February 2026, to exempt the entire Musi Riverfront Development Project and its components from mandatory social impact assessments, thereby backtracking on the Congress's own landmark reforms and resurrecting exclusionary paradigms. The said GO states that 10,000 structures and about 3,279 acres of land would be acquired, that too without an SIA!

The Environmental Impact Assessment process, moreover, reveals significant deficiencies, including incomplete public consultations and inadequate disclosure of land details and baseline environmental surveys. The piecemeal approach to the Detailed Project Report, without a Full DPR and Cumulative Impact Assessment of the Project is deeply disturbing. For a project of this scale, advancing without thorough, participatory deliberations with affected families and appropriate legal and clearance processes, would not rejuvenate the Musi, instead inflict irreversible harm on its ecosystem and Telangana's socio-economic fabric.

We expect your government to champion the betterment of Musi and its riverine communities, not at the expense of one another, and to reject any violence against living populations in Mahatma Gandhi's name. The Musi River remains an indispensable lifeline for Telangana, embodying the heritage and resilience of its people. We hope you will prioritize participatory

and decentralized development paradigm over mega infrastructure and commercialization, that will burden the state exchequer too.

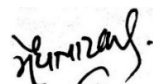
In this spirit, I earnestly request the following:

1. Immediate suspension of the 13th March, 2026 unveiling event. Instead, we would urge you to ensure a public release of a draft Detailed Project Plan for the entire project (only just Phase-I) in English, Telugu, and Urdu, with a minimum 60-day period, for submissions of suggestions and objections from all stakeholders.
2. Detailed Dialogue under your leadership with representatives of the affected communities and Musi Jan Andolan, along with MRDCL and other concerned officials, as well as holding Public Hearings in the Musi-affected communities.
3. Constitution of an independent committee for comprehensive review of the project, encompassing aspects of re-envisioning from a river basin approach (instead of a faulty river front approach), addressing alleged violations of the RFCTLARR Act, 2013; shortcomings in the Environmental Impact Assessment; and a holistic evaluation of socio-ecological consequences of the river front project, with full participation from the Musi Jan Andolan and affected communities.
4. Immediately withdrawing all land acquisition notices for the Musi River front Project, including those issued invoking the 2017 LARR amendments, as the same is violative of 2013 Act and is also causing a lot of trauma amongst affected people.
5. Passing a legislation in the Telangana State Assembly repealing the 2017 amendments to the 2013 LARR Act and restoring the 2013 Act passed by UPA-II in its original form.

Despite the concerns, we still remain optimistic about your administration's vision and actions, aligned with the ethos of 'Prajapalana' (People's Rule), which must be marked by transparency and accountability. Since some international financial institutions are being approached for this Project, they too would endorse these imperatives for socio-ecological compliances, as per their review mechanisms towards equitable development.

I repose faith in your conscience and leadership, and look forward to your prompt response, fair action and affirmative steps.

Thanks & Regards,



Medha Patkar

National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)

Email: medha.narmada@gmail.com

Copy to:

1. Shri Rahul Gandhi, Indian National Congress, New Delhi
2. Shri Jairam Ramesh, Indian National Congress, New Delhi
3. Ms. Meenakshi Natarajan, AICC In-charge, Telangana, Hyderabad