

**SUPPORT THE OBJECTIVES OF HIMALAYAN
INSTITUTE OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (HIAL),
RATHER THAN HARASS IT!**

by
Vikalp Sangam General Assembly*

25 Aug, 2025

As constituent organisations of the Vikalp Sangam General Assembly, we are shocked at the Ladakh UT Administration's move to revoke the land lease of the Himalayan Institute of Alternative Learning (HIAL). Vikalp Sangam is a national forum of about 85 organisations and networks seeking just and sustainable solutions to problems of basic needs, livelihoods, inequality and injustice. We urge the Administration to immediately take back its order, move to resolve whatever legal issues there may be in an amicable manner, and instead support the innovative work that HIAL is doing.

We are aware that Ladakhi people have been demanding Constitutional safeguards, especially recognition under the 6th Schedule, and statehood. As Vikalp Sangam we have supported this, as we feel these are essential conditions for democratic self-governance, to protect the fragile ecological and cultural heritage of Ladakh.

The latest move by the UT Administration, given its timing, appears to be more a move to silence voices such as those of Sonam Wangchuk, founder of HIAL and one of the prominent spokespersons of the movement, rather than simply a step to enforce the rule of law.

We are aware that HIAL has been doing much-needed work in educating and training youth (from Ladakh and elsewhere) in finding solutions to the severe problems that the region faces – ecological destruction, recession of glaciers, lack of livelihood options, decline in agricultural productivity and in pastoralism, growing energy needs, shortage of water, and others. Many of us have visited the HIAL campus and seen some of this innovative work. This is the kind of initiative that both the UT Administration and the Ladakh Hill Council need to support, not try to undermine.

On the larger issues being raised by Ladakh's people, the Government of India also needs to honour the commitment made by BJP, to provide it with 6th Schedule status, without further delay.

* The Vikalp Sangam General Assembly (VSGA) is the coordinating mechanism for the Vikalp Sangam process (www.vikalpsangam.org), which aims to network movements, organisations and individuals working on alternatives to unsustainable, iniquitous development. It contains about 85 organisations and networks across India, listed below. The views in this statement are not necessarily endorsed by all listed organisations. Previous statements on Ladakh issued by VSGA are available at: <https://vikalpsangam.org/vikalp-sangam-statements/>

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Vikalp Sangam General Assembly Members

Action for Community Organisation, Rehabilitation and Development (ACCORD)
 AGRAGAMEE
 Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA)
 Alternative Law Forum (ALF)
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 Bhoomi College
 Blue Ribbon Movement (BRM)
 Centre for Education and Documentation (CED)
 Centre for Environment Education (CEE)
 Centre for Financial Accountability (CFA)
 Centre for Pastoralism
 Chetna
 CGnet Swara
 Dakshin Foundation
 Deccan Development Society (DDS)
 Deer Park
 Development Alternatives (DA)
 Desert Resource Centre (DRC)
 Dhaatri Trust
 Dharamitra
 Ektha
 Equitable Tourism Options (EQUATIONS)
 Forest Rights Coalition - JK
 Fridays for Future – India
 GEN Bharat
 Gene Campaign
 Goonj
 Greenpeace India
 Ideosync Media Combine
 Inner Climate Academy (ICA)
 Margshala Foundation
 Jagori Rural
 Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP)
 Kalpavriksh
 Khudai Khidmatgar
 Kriti Team
 Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation (LAMO)
 Let India Breathe (LIB)
 Local Futures Ladakh
 Maadhyam
 Maati
 Mahagram Sabha, Korchi
 Mahila Kisan Adhikar Manch (MAKAAM)
 Mahalir Association for Literacy Awareness and Rights
 Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)

Movement for Advancing Understanding of Sustainability and Mutuality (MAUSAM)
 National Alliance of Peoples' Movements (NAPM)
 National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR)
 National Coalition for Natural Farming (NCNF)
 National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW)
 Nirangal Charitable Trust
 Non-timber Forest Products Exchange Programme India (NTFP-EP India)
 North East Network (NEN)
 Organic Farmers Market (OFM)
 People's Resource Centre (PRC)
 Peoples' Science Institute (PSI)
 Pipal Tree
 Regenerative Bihar Collective
 reStore
 Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRA)
 Rythu Swarajya Vedika
 Sambhaavnaa
 Foundation for Economic and Ecological Development (FEED)
 Sahjeevan
 Sahodaya Trust
 Sambhaav Trust
 Sangat
 School for Rural Development and Environment (SRDE)
 Shikshantar
 Shramik Mukti Dal
 Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust (SLC-IT)
 Sikkim Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association
 Social Entrepreneurship Association (SEA)
 Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management (SOPPECOM)
 South Asian Dialogue on Ecological Democracy (SADED)/ Harit Swaraaj Samvaad
 The Himalaya Collective
 Titli Trust
 TN Women's Collective
 Travellers' University
 Tribal Health Initiative (THI)
 URMUL Seemant Samiti
 Watershed Support Services and Activities Network (WASSAN)
 Women's Collective
 Youth Alliance
 Yugma Collective
 Yuva Ekta Foundation
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