



No 3rd runway Vienna 2017. Red line action by 'System Change, not Climate Change!' in May 2017

communities in similar situations and build connections, turning local problems into a stronger, growing movement.

To take India as an example, there is a multitude of airport expansion projects, which have devastating impacts on local communities by acquiring the land under their villages or the farmland they subsist and earn a living from. Plans for a new Bhogapuram Aerotropolis, or airport city, in Andhra Pradesh were fast-tracked in 2015 by the government, and required the acquisition of 15,000 acres of land. Sixteen local communities organised a series of actions together over the year to oppose this move, with as many as 3,000 local farmers, fisherfolk and daily wage labourers and activists blocking a national highway and gathering outside government offices, some even carrying out a hunger strike to show their opposition. In a partial success, the government has gradually announced that it will take possession of less and less land, down to 2,000 acres.

In Andal, in the Burdwan District of West Bengal, there are plans to build a new aerotropolis, on land farmed by sharecroppers. The planned airport began by announcing a land grab of over 2,300 acres, with a notice for anyone with objections to come forward. Even if we were to disregard the unfair process of forcible dispossession, there have been complaints that this notice was not even circulated through the local governments in the villages. This meant that many people did not hear about the plans and therefore have not raised complaints through the formal process. Of those who did, 250 sharecroppers have experienced delays in receiving compensation for the land lost. They have recently taken more action,

blockading the site to stop employees of Bengal Aerotropolis Projects Limited from entering the site.

In neighbouring Bangladesh, plans in 2011 for Bangabandhu Airport, which was to be built on the Arial Beel wetlands, included the destruction of around 25,000 acres, displacing farmers and fisherfolk as well as eradicating wildlife. Following rallies of as many as 30,000 people, and road blockades involving violent clashes with police, the government announced that no airport would be built there in the face of such opposition.

Around the world, each new airport or expansion project is different, but all share a disregard for and destruction of ecosystems, and the prioritisation of economic growth and globalisation over local people and place. Global capitalism is a feature in all airport expansion, and in resisting the airports, we all struggle against this same sociopathic ideology.

