



Sunderlal Bahuguna: Chipko Movement

Why in News

Recently, **Sunderlal Bahuguna**, the Gandhian who was the driving force behind the [Chipko movement](#) died due to [Covid-19](#).

Key Points

▪ Chipko Movement:

- It was a **non-violent agitation** which originated in Uttar Pradesh's **Chamoli district** (now Uttarakhand) in **1973**.
- The name of the movement '**chipko**' comes from the word '**embrace**', as the **villagers hugged the trees** and encircled them to prevent being hacked.
- It is best remembered for the **collective mobilisation of women** for the cause of preserving forests, which also brought about a change in attitude regarding their own status in society.
- It's biggest victory was **making people aware of their rights to forests**, and **how grassroots activism can influence policy-making** regarding ecology and shared natural resources.
- It led to a **ban on commercial felling of trees above 30 degrees slope** and above 1,000 msl (mean sea level) in **1981**.

▪ Sunderlal Bahuguna (1927-2021): [//](#)



- **Initiated the chipko movement to guard the trees on the Himalayan slopes.**
- Known for coining the Chipko slogan '**ecology is permanent economy**'
- After the Chipko movement in the 1970s, he **gave the message across the globe that ecology and ecosystem are more important**. He was of the opinion that **ecology and economy should go together**.
- **Campaigned against the Tehri Dam on River Bhagirathi**, a mega-project with devastating consequences. He undertook one of **India's longest fasts after**

Independence, over 56 days.

- Took **4,800 km Kashmir to Kohima padayatra (foot march)** in the early 1980s to bring attention to the entire Himalayan region.
- Supported **women-led movements** against the liquor mafia in the hills, and for the **Beej Bachao Andolan**, a movement to save Himalayan agricultural biodiversity from being wiped out by the unsustainable, **chemical-intensive [Green Revolution](#)**.
- He was awarded the **[Padma Vibhushan](#) in 2009**.

Major Environmental Movements in India

Name	Year	Place	Leaders	Details
Bishnoi Movement	1700	Khejarli, Marwar region, in Rajasthan	Amrita Devi	
Chipko Movement	1973	Uttarakhand	Sunderlal Bahuguna Chandi Prasad Bhatt	Used to hug trees to stop their felling The main objective was to protect the trees on the Himalayan slopes from the axes of contractors of the forest.
Silent River Valley Project	1978	Kantipuzha river in Kerala	Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad Sughathakumari	To protect the Silent Valley, the moist evergreen forest from being destroyed by a hydroelectric project. In November 1983 the Silent Valley Hydroelectric Project was called off. In 1985, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi formally inaugurated the Silent Valley National Park.
Jangal Bachao Aandolan	1982	Singbhum district of Bihar	Tribals of Singbhum	Against governments decision to replace the natural sal forest with Teak.
Appiko Movement	1983	Karnataka	Lakshmi Narasimha Yuvak Mandali Pandering Hegde.	To stop felling of natural trees. Against commercial forestry of teak and eucalyptus trees
Tehri dam	1980s to 1990s	Bhagirathi and Bhilangama rivers at Tehri in Uttaranchal	Tehri Badh Virodhi Sangarshan Committee Sunderlal Bahuguna and Veera Dutt Saklani	
Narmada Bachao Aandolan	1980s to present	Gujarat Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra Total 33 dams Two main are Sardar Sarovar Dam and the Indira Sagar Project	Medha Patkar Arundhati Roy Sundarlal Bahuguna Baba Amte Arundhati Roy	

Recent Movements



Name	Year	Place	Leaders	Details
Climate Action Strike	2019	Students in metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Chennai	Greta Thunberg, Bittu KR	
Right to Breathe Protest	Nov 5, 2019	New Delhi India Gate.	Leonardo Di Caprio posted about this movement	New Delhi has been the world's most polluted city for the past 2 years. Its Air Quality Index (AQI) plummeted to 494
Save Dehing-Patkai	April 2020	Tinsukia district of Assam	Rohit Chaudhary Adil Hussain, Randeep Hooda, and Joi Barua. Jadav Payeng, known as the Forest Man of India, All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and All Assam Matak Youth Students' Union	This movement began as a protest against the April 2020 decision by the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) to allow North-Eastern Coal Fields (NEC) to do opencast mining in 98.59 hectares of Dehing-Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary. Known as the 'Amazon of the East.'
Save Aarey	2019-20	Aarey National Park in Mumbai		Against the felling of the Aarey Colony for the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited's (MMRLC) metro 3 car-shed.
Save the Sundarbans	May 2020	The Sundarbans are the largest mangrove forest in the world. They are located in the delta region of Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers	A campaign emerged online to #SavetheSundarbans.	The recent cyclone Amphan in May 2020, the worst cyclone since 1737, left a trail of misery in the Sundarbans.

Source: IE

PDF Referenece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/sunderlal-bahuguna-chipko-movement>

