





ANTI- DEVELOPMENT BANK?



Indigenous Peoples Movement
for Self-Determination & Liberation

IPMSDL

ADB: ANTI-DEVELOPMENT BANK?

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a bank that provides loans, technical assistance, grants, and guarantees investments to governments in Asia Pacific. It aims to accelerate economic development and to eradicate “remaining poverty” in the region. But at the same time, it heavily favors a market-oriented approach in the economy by promoting big, private businesses and corporations driven by their interest to gain profits.

ADB was formed in 1966 under the initiative of Japan with a huge back-up from the United States (US) and the World Bank (WB). Japan wanted to maintain and expand its colonial control over the economy and politics in the region; similarly, the US, after the Vietnam War, also wants to ensure its economic and political interest over South East Asia. These two imperialist powerhouses also schemed to pulverize the growing liberation and freedom movements in Asia.



Nakai Plateau www.forum-adb.org/visual-testimony

Now, ADB has 67-member countries which gives capital to the bank – 48 of which are Asian countries and 19 are imperialist nations including the US and the United Kingdom (UK).

Japan and US dominate the operations of ADB, each having 15.6% capital shares. Although each member country has one representative in the “Board of Governors”, Japan and US remain most influential in terms of decision making and voting power. All of the past presidents of ADB are from Japan, and most of them worked and trained in the WB and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

No wonder, concomitant to all loans of countries from the ADB are the conditionalities and guidelines to enforce the neo-liberal agenda of world capitalist powers such as liberalization, deregulation, and privatization.

The primary agenda of ADB is to support the intense intervention of the private sector to national economies – mainly of big corporations. This includes pushing for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in infrastructure and social services that -ironic to ADB's mandate- traps peoples in Asia in mired poverty and worsening exploitation.

ADB 2030: AN INVITATION FOR FURTHER CORPORATE PLUNDER IN THE REGION



Mae Moh power station, Thailand www.forum-adb.org/visual-testimony

The 51st Annual Governors Meeting of ADB in 2018 is themed “Linking People and Economies for Inclusive Development”. This year’s agenda claims to renew the bank’s commitment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and other global commitments.

In the draft of their 2030 vision and direction entitled “Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, Sustainable Asia and Pacific”, the following priorities were identified:

1. Addressing remaining poverty and rising inequalities
2. Accelerating progress in gender equality
3. Tackling climate change, building climate change and disaster resilience, and enhancing environmental sustainability

4. Making cities more livable
5. Promoting rural development and food security
6. Strengthening governance and institutional capacity
7. Fostering regional cooperation

Following its history of operations in the region, ADB is expected to promote and strengthen the transfer of natural wealth and resources, and public assets to private companies ruled by big corporations. In the guise of eradicating poverty, private companies remain as the ones that dictate development directions. This is evident in their manifesto stating their intent to create a “business-friendly” Asia Pacific region.

ADB, through loans, financing, and technical assistance, creates conditions for privatization to attack all facets of social service sectors: energy, agriculture, water, environment, transportation and communication, education, health, urban development, and finance.

One of the highlights of Strategy 2030 is the priority given to regional integration and cooperation through physical connectivity of countries. The following are some of the mega-infrastructure projects under the initiative of ADB that have already resulted to massive displacements of Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities, destruction of ancestral and sacred lands, and other environmental catastrophes.

- Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Project – Luang Prabang Airport in Laos
- South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Project – Imphal Ring Road in India
- Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) – Southern Thailand Forest Area Project
- Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA)– Palm Oil Development and Processing in Mindanao, Philippines

ADB desires to create a region of global “value-chains” transforming countries into market hubs of natural resources and cheap labor desirable for transnational corporations. These integration projects tilt the balance of labor and production from self-sufficiency towards servicing the trade demands of regional and global market.

TRENDS AND HISTORY OF ANTI-PEOPLE ADB PROJECTS



Tata Mundra www.forum-adb.org/visual-testimony

Key projects and policies of ADB focus on priorities and needs of the global market, and are biased in favor of transnational corporations and big companies.

In reality, the market-driven development of ADB projects has negative implications on working conditions, communities, environments, and social services. As highlighted in ADB's history, "development projects" majorly resulted in worsened conditions of IP in the region, plunder of ancestral lands, and blatant disregard of their rights, culture, and ways of life.

On its initial decades, ADB funded loans and technical assistance to boost agricultural production in the region through *Green Revolution*. High-yielding varieties of crops and exportable cash crops were prioritized than staple crops needed by the local population. The following are some of the significant impacts of the Green Revolution on Asia's agricultural sector:

- Induced total dependence of local agriculture sector to fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, most of which are controlled by agrochemical industries of multinational corporations. No significant change in land ownership, land distribution, and assistance in capital and mode of agricultural production. Bankruptcy of small local farmers by burying them into unpayable debts that eventually forced them into selling their farmlands. Destruction of lands, biodiversity, and deprivation of soil nutrients. Increased dependence of countries on crop importation vis-à-vis the declining cost of exported crops along with increased international debts.
- Disregard of the natural agriculture of each nation including the cultural and religious rituals connected to their agriculture. In Bali, Indonesia, "Subak", the UNESCO-recognized traditional irrigation system for rice terraces from a single dam was destroyed because of irrigation projects.

implemented by the state to force Green Revolution.¹ The ADB acknowledged the failures that caused the Subak catastrophe but no cases were filed against the bank.

In 1970s, ADB's *Extractives and Energy Projects* formed the power subsector and explored the local energy sources during the time of energy and oil crises in the region.

Major projects emphasize policies and conditionalities to governments in creating "foreign investment-conducive" atmosphere. Large-scale energy projects ended up creating social and environmental havoc and violating IP rights.

The Nam Ngum Hydropower Project in Lao's Peoples Democratic Republic (1974), the Mae Moh Power Project in Thailand (1978), and the Coal Development Project in Korea are some of the initial projects that have victimized IP.

Collective rights to territories, ancestral lands, and resources have been denied as ADB funded projects that were operated by big corporations. Instead, there were forced displacements, loss of traditional livelihoods such as agriculture, hunting, and fishing, and failure to conduct Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) in the communities. The ADB has also paved the way for foreign investments and companies to intrusively explore and utilize the regions' natural resources. Under the conditionalities from loans and financial grants, ADB recommended deregulation and privatization by having corporations take over energy and extraction projects. With this, governments' safeguard from foreign powers weakens resulting to bigger economic debts and environmental destruction.

CASE STUDIES

MANIPUR, INDIA

IMPHAL RING ROAD PROJECT & MAPITHEL DAM

1. A Road to IP Landlessness: ADB-financed Imphal Ring Road Project in Manipur
 - The hundreds of million USD road projects between the Indian Government and the ADB² were pursued under the SASEC Regional Road Connectivity.
 - The project aims to connect hundreds of kilometer roads to and from Imphal in Manipur. The project funded by loan from ADB is pursuant of India's Act East Policy for connectivity and trade with South East Asia.

¹ <http://eclectic.ss.uci.edu/~drwhite/Anthro129/balineseWatertemplesJonathanSepe.htm>

² <http://www.realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Reality-Check-May-2016ebook.pdf>



Imphal construction <http://www.thehansindia.com>

- The IP communities where the road was built slammed the project due to its unilateral processes, absence of FPIC, limited impact assessment, as well as the undervaluation of their assets.
- Kongba Nandeibam Leikai, Langthabal, Langol, and Kairang Villages in Imphal West and East Districts are the major affected villages.
- People were not informed of the details of the rehabilitation and resettlement plans for the affected communities.
- The project uprooted several villages along Langol area, Patsoi, Langthabal, and more in the periphery of Imphal.
- On top of the displacement of 500 families and the clearing of 100 acres of agricultural lands, the project is also set to destroy sacred sites in Langthabal, Langjing, Chingmeirong Cheiraoching, Langol Hills, as well as adjoining forests which are all associated with the history and folklores of Meitei and other IP resulting to the extinguished habitation space and IP identity.

2. Drowning an Entire Culture: The Mapithel Dam Project

- The Thoubal River Valley Multipurpose project, now known as Mapithel Dam, is a mega-dam project³ targeting to irrigate 21,000 hectares of cultivable land besides giving 10 million gallons of drinking water every day and 7.5 MW of power supply. It is one of the biggest dams in the North-East India.
- Construction began in 1990, ignoring the rights of the IP communities over the resources and without seeking the FPIC of the affected communities.⁴ The procedures mandated by India's Land Acquisition Act were unfollowed.

³ <https://ejatlas.org/conflict/mapithel-dam-manipur-india>

⁴ <https://cramanipur.wordpress.com/2014/02/10/land-and-its-people-whats-in-mapithel-dam/>

- The rights and welfare of the tribal communities were curtailed with severe impacts on their livelihood, creating confusion and insecurity among the Tangkhuls and the Kukis in the Ukhrul District.
- Most of the village communities in the downstream have been living by collecting sand and stone from the rivers.
- Massive soil erosion, receding of water level, loss of fish habitat, and scarcity of water rendered agricultural lands unfit for cultivation
- 164 children from two villages situated downstream of Mapithel Dam reportedly dropped out of their schools as they are forced to evacuate.
- The project site has been militarized in order to pacify the resistance and ongoing self-determination movements of the affected villagers and ethnic.

SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

IP RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVASTATION FROM THE BAKUN DAM PROJECT

- Bakun Dam is a 45-million US Dollar project of the ADB and Chinese State-owned dam builder, Sinohydro. ADB and China are currently the biggest funders of dams in the region.⁵



Bakun Dam *Wikipedia*

- The project looks forward to constructing 10 dams by 2020 including the 1200 MW Baram Dam.
- In 2011 the Malaysia and Sarawak State Government completed construction of the 2400 MW Bakun Dam and 944 MW Murum Dam.⁶
- Bakun Dam ravaged rainforests in this part of Southeast Asia, which has some of the highest rates of plant and animal endemism i.e. it is home

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/aug/09/hydroelectric-dams-tribal-people>

⁶ <http://www.modernpowersystems.com/news/newsadb-under-pressure-over-dam-loan-4408041>

to species of flora and fauna that cannot be found anywhere else.⁷

- There were reports of corruption, irresponsible project management practices, and human rights violations.
- More than 9,000 residents, mainly Kayan/Kenyah, were forced to relocate as the area will be flooded.
- 10,000 Penan people, nomadic IP living in the lands of Sarawak, are in fear of genocide after forced resettlement and detachment from everyday hunting.⁸
- Many of the IP have been relocated to Sungai Asap which is now referred to as a “resettlement disaster.”
 - The 10 acres of farmland per family that the communities were promised turned out to be 3 acres of often rocky, infertile, and sloping land located half day’s journey away from their new homes.⁹ Many families are not yet compensated at all.
 - Bakun Dam has polluted the Balui River - poisoning the water source and killing the fish the residents depended on for food and income.
 - Sungai Asap is surrounded by oil palm plantations and the people no longer have access to their former hunting grounds.
 - The transmission lines carrying electricity from the Bakun Dam pass directly over Sungai Asap but the villagers cannot access the power for which they were displaced.
- There are 12 more hydroelectric dams, posing similar risks for tens of thousands of Indigenous peoples in Sarawak, who make up 48% of the state’s population and is comprised of many distinct ethnic groups, including Iban, Kenyah, Bidayuh, and Ukit.

⁷ https://web.archive.org/web/20120321020400/http://www.asiasentinel.com/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=4033

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/aug/09/hydroelectric-dams-tribal-people>

⁹ https://web.archive.org/web/20120328035908/http://www.sarawak-hidro.com/2010/article_100.html



Lower Se San II Dam *mekongeye.com*

STUNG TRENG, CAMBODIA

THE LOWER SE SAN II DAM – ADB BACKED CHINA'S EXPANSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

- Lower Se San II Dam, a part of ADB GMS Project, is Cambodia's largest dam so far with a flood plain of 335 square kilometers. The project is endangering the lives of roughly 4,000 families it will forcibly displace.¹⁰
- Two indigenous communities in Stung Treng province that for years have been defying the construction of the Lower Sesan II hydropower dam now face the immediate prospect of having their homes submerged in water¹¹, together with their ancestors' graves and sacred sites flooded.¹²
- There are ongoing forced evictions of communities in Stung Treng constituting an outright and grave violation of the national and international human rights obligations of Cambodia, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of IP which it is a signatory to. 9% of the fisheries for the entire Mekong River would be lost.
- For two years, children in the villages have not been able to go to school
 - Government teachers who dared teach there would be fired from their jobs. Students are held hostage in their villages.
- There are no health services, and authorities have made no effort to maintain roads to the villages.
- Bridges connecting the communities to the rest of Stung Treng town was removed with no discussion of options for those who choose to stay or leave.
- 23 IP traveling from Monduliri to show support to the communities of Stung Treng were detained (July 2017).

¹⁰ <https://www.voanews.com/a/cambodia-indigenous-minorities-fighting-tide-of-development/4004979.html>

¹¹ <https://aippnet.org/cambodia-communities-risk-further-flooding-lower-sesan-ii-dam-closes-gates-authorities-detain-indigenous-peoples-civil-society-representative-way-stung-treng/>

¹² <http://iphdefenders.net/cambodia-authorities-ignore-sesan-villagers/>

TARLAC, PHILIPPINES

NEW CLARK CITY – A CITY OF IP RIGHTS VIOLATIONS (INSERT PICTURES FOR EACH PROJECT)



Clark Green City *ifprs.wordpress.com*

- Tens of thousands of Aeta, Indigenous Peoples who live in the mountainous parts of Luzon, face displacement, dislocation, and genocide as the government pushes for the construction of the New Clark City.
- Dubbed as 'The City of The Future', the ambitious project aims to be a "high-tech green city promising science-fiction-worthy technology, from robots to drones to self-driving vehicles."¹³
- The project is seen to be the venue for 2019 SEA Games.
- This 2018, access roads construction has already destroyed some mountains.
- Several hundreds of hectares of crops were put to waste and destroyed by bulldozers.
- The project will be occupying 9,500 hectares of agricultural and ancestral lands in the provinces of Tarlac and Pampanga.¹⁴
- The project commenced and continued despite non-acquisition of proper and binding FPIC and bogus permits. The IP's right to self-determination was intentionally disregarded.
- There were records of death threats and harassments of Aeta tribe leaders and elders.
- The ADB-funded project aims to transform former military bases and properties into premier centers of economic growth in partnership with the private sector¹⁵

¹³ <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/10/the-philippines-is-aiming-to-build-a-city-of-the-future.html>

¹⁴ <http://kamandag.net/new-clark-city>

¹⁵ <https://newclarkcityph.com/about/the-developers-profile/>

THE IP'S VERDICT – ABOLISH ADB!

The continuous testimonials and glaring evidence on the destruction of the environment along with the lives of the IP in the region underscores the systematic maldevelopment and violations of rights carried out by ADB with its projects. The loans and grants are nothing but tools to further serve the profit-driven interest of imperialistic financial institutions and transnational corporations.

ADB policies further breed inequality. It promotes greater economic displacement for the people of the Asia Pacific Region. Their projects tend to undermine human rights, democratic ownership, and communities' access to basic social services, especially in IP communities.¹⁶

The International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation upholds the call of the 2009 People's Tribunal on the ADB for its serious consideration on human rights concerns and environmental impact of their development projects in the region. We call for the dismantling of ADB and give way to a pro-people, pro-IP economic cooperation system that truly serves the development of the region without jeopardizing the life and welfare of its peoples. Justice must be served for all the anti-people and anti-development policies and conditionalities of ADB that trapped the poverty-stricken countries in Asia Pacific. The abolition of ADB will be a beacon for an alternative financial cooperation that places the rights of the IP and the people in the front and center of development. The atmosphere for policies and economic conditions must first and foremost advance the respect and protection of the IP, along with other marginalized sectors, and the environment.



news.abs-cbn.com

16 <http://www.realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Reality-Check-May-2016ebook.pdf>

