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Greens plan protest against tree felling



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Protesting and working independently in different parts of the state against the destruction of forests, several activists, for the first time, have come together to protest against unscientific infrastructure projects planned through the forests by both the state and the Central governments.

The projects, including road, energy and others, according to the activists, are likely to result in the axing of 21 lakh trees along the Western Ghats.

Coming under the banner 'United Conservation Movement', the activists from Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Kerala, led by environmentalist Suresh Heblkar, will hold a state-level protest at Freedom Park here on February 16. The collective coalition of activists is supported by various groups like the Centre for Environmental and Wildlife Studies, Coalition for Water Security, Forest First and others.

Heblkar said, "More than the Amazon's rainforests, the Western Ghats have the rich flora and fauna. There cannot be a better economic growth without the forests that provide constant resources. As many as 52 rivers take birth in the Western Ghats."

D Rajkumar, a wildlife activist from Mysuru, said, "More than the development, these projects appear to be like manifestations of the contractors' mafia. The government, in the interest of the future generations, must take a relook at these projects."

Reflecting on the large-scale destruction of forests along the Western Ghats, *DH* had reported an in-depth analysis of the projects listed out by the activists in its Insight article 'Rapacious projects imperil

Western Ghats ecosystem' on November 10, 2018. Joseph Hoover, the convener of the movement, said that they have written multiple letters to the state government to reconsider these projects.

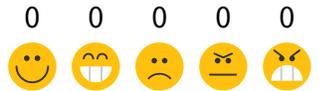
“Until this date, we have not heard from any of the agencies,” Hoover said.

Western Ghats

Tree felling



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