



ASIA/INDIA - The marginalized communities march to protest against the exclusion from the development of the country

New Delhi (Agenzia Fides) - About 35,000 people left yesterday from Gwalior, a city in the center of northern India, to reach New Delhi in a 350-kilometer march. About 100 000 Indians are expected to arrive to protest the plight of marginalized communities excluded from the development of the country. Promoted by the activist group Ekta Parishad, the march involves odd job workers, farmers, fishermen, itinerant workers and the unemployed from all over India, who march with green and white flags. In all they will cross 5 states and walk along national roads where they will stop. Before reaching Delhi they will pass Agra, Mathura and Faridabad. This is the second march of this kind, after the one in 2007, where 25 000 farmers, the poor and indebted took part, who walked the same route on foot to put pressure on their land rights.

Due to the industrialization of the country, agricultural land tends to be for factories. Approximately 73% of the Indian population lives on land, but the major industrial projects, seen by the government as crucial to the creation of new jobs, are often canceled or set aside for land acquisition problems. The economic boom in India has taken off in the last 20 years, bringing the illusion of a country that is emerging after decades of poverty. Foreign companies and the most powerful of India have invested heavily, selling large quantities of cars, luxury goods and products to the increasing Western middle classes. However, a poll conducted by a non-governmental organization in January, found that 42% of children under five are underweight. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 04/10/2012)