

## **Farmers' Protests in India: Planned Actions and Escalation of Demands**

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), is set to intensify their protests against the Centre. The renewed agitation is a result of the SKM General Body meeting held on 10th July in Delhi, where key demands, including a guaranteed Minimum Support Price (MSP) Law, loan waivers, crop insurance, pensions for farmers and farmworkers and the rollback of power sector privatization, among others were discussed.

Starting August 1, farmers will demonstrate against new criminal laws. The agitation continues on August 9 with the 'Corporate Quit India Day,' calling for India to exit the World Trade Organization. Further, a nationwide tractor march to Delhi is scheduled on Independence Day i.e. August 15. On August 17, the focus shifts to protests outside the residences of Punjab AAP ministers.

Moreover, a milestone will be marked on August 31, celebrating 200 days since the resurgence of the Farmers' movement in February 2024. Further escalating their actions, the farmers have planned rallies on September 15 and 22 in Jind and Pipli, Haryana.

During previous protests of 2020-2021, the farmers' demonstrations at Shambhu, Tikri and Singhu borders disrupted daily life and had considerable economic and logistical impacts. These protests often led to major road blockages, affecting not only local commuters but also the transport of goods across states, thereby impacting businesses and supply chains.

The proximity of these protest sites to New Delhi also meant disruptions in the capital. Given the scale of the planned protests for August 2024, there is a strong potential for similar disruptions to recur. The ongoing protests at these borders are likely to impact daily activities and mobility. The SKM aims to mobilize farmers, coordinate with trade unions and other mass organizations, and continue their fight for farmers' rights and livelihoods.

As of March 2024, trade bodies have estimated daily losses of about ₹500 crore for local industries, particularly micro, small and medium businesses, in states such as Punjab, Haryana and border areas of the National Capital Region (NCR). This highlights the substantial economic impact of disruptions on businesses and the consequent need for informed risk management strategies.