



The Future of Urban Commons: Notes to both Fears and Possibilities?

Organiser(s): **Champaka Rajagopal**
Institution(s): **Azim Premji University**



Commons have been under siege for centuries. Well documented in the Enclosure movement in England in the 15th century, the methods of primitive accumulation have only evolved in devouring commons. The scholarship on primitive accumulation has progressed to argue that primitive accumulation is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process. On the other hand, the literature on commons too has made significant inroads to argue that commons are not merely a rural phenomenon, but also deeply urban.

Commons are much beyond resources “held-in common”. They are also associated with a strong sense of community, because essentially, it is about “being-in-common”. Holding resources collectively, commons are equally about innovative and culturally embedded processes. The commons operate as the most crucial hinge of their social and cultural habitus. Which is why, the usurp of the common is more than always an economic loss. It is also a cultural and a social loss. Extensive studies on land acquisition have exhibited the same. But understanding commons as also urban tells us a story more complicated than the rural being made into urban. The story of urban commons also point to us the ways in which such collective methods of belongingness, have existed despite the force of capital. And despite the pressures they face, they have been able to show us new collective methods, a different negotiation with nature and even innovative methods of confronting the state.

This panel is therefore an attempt to inquire into the question of urban commons from different entry points- land governance, tourism, environment and real estate without necessarily romanticising it. We hope to collectively open up the different ways in which urban commons negotiate with the city and interrogate what place they occupy and in what form, in our urban futures.

Session Plan

12-Mar-19

Panel 3: The Future of Urban Commons: Notes to both Fears and Possibilities?

11.30 - 13.00 Hrs



Azim Premji University

Chair

Champaka Rajagopal, Senior Practitioner, Urban Design and Planning & Visiting Faculty, Azim Premji University, Bangalore

Abhayaraj Naik: Lawyer, Environmental Activist and Visiting Faculty at National Law School of India University. Governance of Urban Environment: Commons in Indian Cities

Sushmita Pati, Assistant Professor, Azim Premji University, Bangalore
The Privatisation of Commons, Land, Real Estate and Politics in South Delhi

Swati Sehadhri, Equitable Tourism Options
Tourism Planning and Land Governance: A case study of Dharavi Bet

