



Banglar

Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha (masum)

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25.01.2022

To

The Chairman

National Human Rights Commission

Manav Adhikar Bhawan

Block – C, G.P.O. Complex, INA

New Delhi – 110023

Respected Sir,

I want to attract your kind attention upon the incident of illegal restrictions and severe harassment upon the villagers of Khalpara village under the Haldibari Block and Mekhliganj sub Division in the district of Cooch Behar, West Bengal by the Border Security Force personnel attached with Khalpara Border Out Post, Battalion Number-15. The villagers are restricted to enter to their respective agricultural fields.

Khalpara village is located at the Indo–Bangladesh international border. The distance between International Border Pillar and the Border fence is about 150 to 200 meter. The village has a population of around 2000 people out of which 980 are female and 970 are male. It is a Hindu majority area of about 85% people is belonging to the Hindu community and rest 15% are belonging to Muslim community. The primary occupation of the villagers is agriculture. Average monthly income of the villagers is less than 3 thousand rupees. There are about 300 bighas of cultivable land situated in this area between the border fence gate number 2 and the International Border Pillar. The government did not provide any irrigation facility for the Agricultural purpose of that particular area. Total about 100 families have their agricultural land in that particular area.

BSF personnel attached with Khalpara Border Out Post, Battalion number 15 imposed severe restrictions upon the livelihood of the farmers in this area while undertaking agricultural activities in their own fields. The villagers are not allowed to enter their own fields whenever required. Villagers generally cultivate paddy, chili, corn, jute, tomato etc. BSF personnel did not allow them to cultivate those agricultural crops. BSF opens the fencing gate three times in a day for just only one hour each time. For this whimsical attitude of the BSF personnel, the whole agricultural activities have been hampered. Moreover, villagers are not allowed to grow profitable crops like corn, jute etc on either side of the border fence.

Few days ago, from 12.11.2021 to 18.11.2021 BSF personnel attached with Khalpara Border Out Post closed the fencing gate number 2 and therefore, the farmers did not able to access their agricultural land as per their need. As for this the villagers have to cross 1 kilometer distance to collect their Amon paddy from their own agricultural field.

For this illegal and arbitrary restriction imposed upon the farmers of the Khalpara village, they suffered about Rs. 8,000 to 10,000/- per bigha financial loss.

The BSF officials have imposed the rule that the villagers cannot pass through the fencing gates without taking permission from the BSF. Even prior permission must be taken from the BSF authority for entering any agricultural equipments and tractor.

Due to high level of cross border smuggling through this border, BSF people without going to the actual International Border Pillar, they are patrolling the village at night. As for this reason, the villagers cannot go out from their house after evening.

In this village there are five to six members in each family. Due to arbitrary and illegal restriction imposed upon the life and livelihood of the villagers, people in this area are being migrated to different states for working purpose by risking their lives.

On 22.11.2021 villagers and farmers submitted a mass petition before the Block Development Officer, Haldibari Block regarding the said issues. The letter was received by the officials of the Haldibari Block Development office but no action has been taken by the concerned authority for removing this arbitrary restriction by the BSF upon the life and livelihood of the villagers.

Due to this unnecessary harassment, several villagers are facing extreme difficulty in cultivating their own lands. Following are some of the villagers who face difficulty in carrying out agriculture:

Name	Dagh No.	Khatiyon No.	Mouza
Paritosh Roy	26262	6030	Dakshin Baro Haldibari
Dipak Roy	26238		Dakshin Baro Haldibari
Ashis Roy	26154		Dakshin Baro Haldibari
Amal Roy	26252		Dakshin Baro Haldibari

Not only are these four persons but there more than hundred people who are victimizing illegal and arbitrary restriction upon their agricultural activities by the BSF personnel.

This whimsical actions and arbitrary restriction imposed by the Border Security Force personnel of Khalpara Border Outpost upon the farmers of Khalpara village is not only challenging their life and livelihood but also violating the Article 21 and Article 19 of the Constitution of India which reads as "No person shall be deprived of his life and liberty except according to procedure established by law" and "All citizens shall have the rights to move freely throughout the territory of India" respectively. The action of the BSF is also violating Article 12 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The incident also violates Article 6 and 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Goal number 8 and 16 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which Government of India has taken pledge to adhere with.

I request your urgent intervention in this case by fulfilling these demands of the villagers:

- The Commission must initiate an independent investigation over this matter and take necessary steps.
- The Border Security Force should be posted at the zero point and not inside the village.
- BSF should not restrict the life and livelihood of the villagers particularly of the farmers.
- The villagers should be provided with agricultural support.
- Immediately take action to open the fencing gate daily for twelve hours (6 am to 6pm) for easy access of the agricultural activity of the farmers.

Thanking You,
Yours Sincerely

Dipyaman Adhikary
Assistant Secretary
Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM)

Copy of complaint sent to Block Development Officer, Haldibari

To the Block Development Officer
Haldibari, Cooh Behar PIN-735122
West Bengal - Date - 22-11-2021

Sub:- আশ্রমের প্রায় ১০০ জন (B.O.P) BDF
কৃষক কৃষিক্ষেত্রে প্রায় ১০০ জন (আশ্রম)

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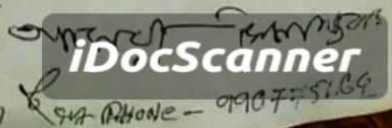
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Haldibari

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