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## 28.03.2020

The Chairman National Human Rights Commission ManavAdhikarBhawan Block-C, GPO Complex, INA New Delhi-110023

Respected Sir,

Through this complaint, I seek to draw your attention to the villagers of South Dhadiyal, who have been suffering due to restrictions on their livelihood by the Border Security Forces (BSF) and arbitrary construction of fences without sticking to the rules laid down by the Government of India. Lack of basic amenities, welfare schemes and undue, despotic restriction is a severe issue that the villagers face. The village is situated under Nakati Gach Gram Panchayat, Tufangani Police Station and Nakati Gach Post Office in the District of Cooch Behar. The village has a population of around 1470 people out of which 700 are female, 770 are male and 190 are children. The village has about 570 Hindus and 900 Muslims. The village has about 350 families out of which 200 are Muslim families and 150 are Hindu families. About 1170 voters are present in the village. The chief occupation in the village is farming and daily wage labour with an average income of Rs.3000 per month. Cultivable land is about 200 acres. The distance from the International Border Pillar and the border fence is about 200-500 meters.

There are a few facts in concern here, firstly being the distance at which the fence is constructed. The fence is supposed to be constructed within 150 yards as per the rule laid down by the government but such has not been followed in this case and the BSF has put the fences at a distance of 200-500 yards from the International Border Post..The BSF of Krishnapur ghonapara, BOP 62, Batallion COY 'C' Company, doesn't allow them to cultivate their lands freely. The farmers have their lands within the fence and need tractors for farming on their land. The BSF informed them that due permission is required for using vehicles. The villagers have requested for permission over and over again but the BSF continues to give lame excuses and delays this procedure. They cultivate crops like coffee, mustard, potato, etc. This restriction has incurred heavy loss and destroyed all their crops due to the unavailability of adequate equipment. These villagers are highly dependent on agriculture and that is the only source of their income.

In 2017, a new Border Out Post was being constructed near gate no. 3 in Krishnapur Khonapara and the construction is done over the only road available to the villagers that take them to their respective cultivable land. The BSF gave a provision to the villagers that they can use the Camp field that leads to the road alongside the border that further takes them to their own cultivable land. Therefore, the villagers started availing the field within the camp to go to work. On 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 the BSF ordered the contractor in charge of the construction in that area to cut off the road by digging a pothole so that the villagers are unable to use that road which was clearly overreaching their power. This strategized illegal restriction has created massive difficulty for the villagers. As the villagers approach the BSF regarding this problem, they refused to listen to this problem and further threatened them. The villagers were troubled and hence they approached the Company Commander, GI branch and C.O to help them out which was blatantly disregarded by these authorities, leaving the villagers helpless. They then filed a written complaint to the B.D.O and S.D.O, Tufanganj but even they turned their face away paying no heed to their problems. Later, these helpless villagers took aid of the media and it was further learnt that the B.D.O and S.D.O completely denied all allegations against them. As this news spread out in the village, in the month of February, 2020, the B.D.O and S.D.O held a meeting with all the Chair of Panchayats of the village regarding the difficulties faced by the people at the border but there has been no solution to this yet.

Some people of South Dhadiyal (Mouja) who have been restricted arbitrarily by the BSF are:

- 1) Munu Sheikh, 30
- 2) Abdul Chader, 40
- 3) Pulin Barman, 41
- 4) Najrul. 51
- 5) Naseeruddin, 60

The villagers have provided with a written complaint to the following authorities:

- 1. Sub Divisional Officer on 13.01.2020
- 2. Block Divisional Officer on 30.12.2019

No action taken report has been received by the above authorities. This sudden intervention by the BSF obstructing the pathway causes massive damage to their crops incurring heavy losses to the farmers. It is the duty of the Government to provide uplifting opportunities and to remove all economic impediments faced by these poor marginalized people but the reality seems to be far from the truth.

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

- The Border Security Force should be posted at zero point.
- The BSF should keep the gates open at the border fence from 6 am to 6 pm.
- The illegal obstruction of roads created by the BSF must be removed immediately.
- The BSF ordered the contractor to dig an abrupt pothole on the road thereby enforcing indirect illegal restriction. The commission must enquire into the extent of power abused by BSF in this respect.

- It must be duly noted that the concerned authorities blatantly disregarded the problems of the villagers and strict action must be taken against them.
- The Border Area Development Program (BADP) funds should be utilized for the benefit of the Border villages

Thanking you.

Yours truly

Dipyaman Adhikary

**Assistant Secretary** 



**Attached Documents** 

Mass Deputation of villagers

To the s.D.O

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