



Banglar

Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha (masum)

40A, Barabagan Lane, Serempore,
Hooghly - 712 203 West Bengal, India

Phone : +91-33-2622-0843/45
Tele Fax : +91-33-2622-0843
E-mail : masumindia@gmail.com
Web : www.masum.org.in

29.07.2020

To
The Chairperson
National Human Rights Commission
Manav Adhikar Bhawan
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA
New Delhi-110023

Respected Sir,

I am writing this to focus on the life and situation of the poor and marginalized villagers living alongside the Indo-Bangladesh border of West Bengal. Through the several complaints we made throughout the years to your good office, it is now evident that the people of this border are living in acute crisis, not only from a financial perspective but also in terrible distress. The people of the border are devoid of their basic rights and are subjected to immense torture, harassment and restrictions mostly enacted by the Border Security Force personnel, who are supposed to be posted at the international borders with intentions to protect the Indian citizenry. However, on the contrary, incidents of victimizing Indian citizen are being witnessed at large by the BSF.

It has been witnessed in several instances that BSF is posted about 500 meters to 1 kilometer from the zero point inside Indian territory harassing, torturing and illegally restricting villagers of the border. In certain areas near the alluvial plains of the Padma river in Murshidabad district, the BSF is stationed about 5 to 15 kilometers inside Indian territory. Several villagers having agricultural lands beyond the BSF post face severe restriction, harassment, torture and even death from the BSF regularly during their ingress and egress into their own agricultural fields.

In such an instance, 2 villagers from Lalkup village under Sahebnagar gram panchayat of Jalangi block and police station area in Murshidabad district were arrested and taken in custody by the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) from inside Indian territory, when they were working in their agricultural fields situated at the border on 02.07.20.

On 02.07.20 morning, Mr. Nayan Sekh and Mr. Sahidul Sekh went to their agricultural field located near Rajsahi Khasmahal border pillar number 72/10-S. Earlier that day, BSF detained some Bangladeshi villagers for entering into Indian land for the purpose of agriculture. According to Mr. Nayan Sekh, at around 11:00 am some Bangladeshi person suddenly came to them with scythe in their hand along with some BGB personnel and threatened Nayan and Sahidul, with sharp-edged weapons to their throat to come with them. They were taken to Bangladesh and kept in custody of the Bangladeshi civilians, who told Nayan that if BSF releases the Bangladeshi villagers arrested in the morning, they will also be released. Later at around 2:00 pm they were handed over to the BGB and were in custody, spending that night at BGB camp. The next day on 03.07.20, BSF from Bamnabad BSF Border Outpost and BGB conducted a flag meeting by which the victims were released.

The villagers from several such border areas in Murshidabad district are living in terrible distress as such incidents happen often. In some cases, the victims doesn't even return. The BSF who is in charge of protecting the border of the country and containing such incidents from happening are being posted far inside Indian mainland giving free access to Bangladeshi intruders and risking the lives of several villagers of the border. The villagers are mostly scared to lodge any complaint against the BSF as they fear that they will be victimized by the wrath of the men in uniform.

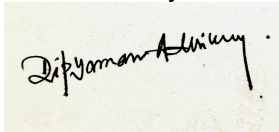
Several such incidents perpetrated by the Border Security Force in the bordering villages of Murshidabad indicate severe violation of various Articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; which the Government of India did ratify. The torture, harassment and illegal restrictions imposed upon the villagers of the border are also infringements of

the rights enshrined in the Article 19 and 21 of the Indian Constitution. The BSF also violates several Articles of the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials; Adopted by General Assembly resolution 34/169 of 17 December 1979 and the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988. The random actions by the BSF also violates the Goal numbers 8 and 16 of Sustainable Development Goal earmarked by United Nations and the government of India is a party and have agreement in this international instruments.

Under the circumstances, I would request the Commission to look into the matter and take necessary actions in order to resolve the issues of the villagers living at the border. I request your urgent intervention in this matter with our following long standing demands:-

- The BSF should be posted at the zero point and not inside villages to protect the Indian citizen from life threats
- The BSF authority must be directed to protect the interest of the villagers who are residing beside fence.
- Villagers of the border should be allowed to cultivate their own agricultural lands without any unreasonable restriction.
- Protect the life and livelihood and freedom of movement of the poor villagers residing at the border from whimsical and outrageous rules framed by BSF.

Thanking you,
Yours sincerely



Dipyaman Adhikary
Assistant Secretary, MASUM

Attached Document

Victim's statement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QP3msmLRhAw>