

# **Report on the Brutal State Violence Against Farmers in Dadri, U.P.: The Government of U.P. Protects Interests of Reliance, Not Farmers**

Thursday 13 July 2006, by [Movements \(India\)](#) (Date first published: 8 July 2006).

To,

Justice (retd) Anand,  
The Chairman,  
National Human Rights Commission  
New Delhi.

The farmers and farm labourers of the rural hinterland surrounding Delhi are fighting for their survival, amidst the growing vulcanization and expanding megalopolis at their cost. Their struggle seems to be with their basic right to live with their agrarian economy and rural natural environs on one hand and to demand fair, just and humane treatment granting democratic rights and civil liberties even when the State decides to acquire their resource base and evict them for transferring the same to the corporate sector in the name of development. When thousands of acres of land, where populated villages and prime agriculture have thrived for generations, is being handed over to the giant companies, Indian multinationals, whose money, muscle and market power is well known, around the ever expanding Delhi, in the adjacent districts such as Ghaziabad in U.P. the struggling farmers have questioned the deals that the companies or the states on their behalf are engaged in. The State is forcing them to give away their livelihoods and lifestyles by compelling them to sell the land and everything attached; houses, civic amenities, cultural monuments, communities, and common property resources.

It is this struggle that has witnessed the worst of the attacks by the State Government of U.P. (most probably, as per the peoplesí narration, hired goons) on July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> on which we have

conducted an urgent enquiry and report to you herewith. We request and demand that the NHRC undertake an in-depth investigation at the earliest and ensure that the guilty are punished and the farmers, villagers receive compensation for their losses and justice in the deal related to their lands and properties. With the violence unleashed by the state and the corporates, their lives are under threat and hence they need full protection not just physical, but of their right to life and livelihood. The above incidence being only a part of the large-scale trampling upon the agrarian life around the mega-cities all over the country, including Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata, we would expect the NHRC to take a position on the issue of urban development and its impact on the hinterlands. We would also like to remind you of our petitioning on the issue of development-induced displacement where neither public interest nor just and timely rehabilitation with alternative livelihood is ensured. Maybe expect an immediate action on these issues.

Sincerely,

Justice Rajendra Sachar (Retd.), People's Union for Civil Liberties

Kuldeep Nayyar

Medha Patkar, National Alliance of People's Movements

Thomas Kocherry, National Fishworkers Forum

Kamal Mitra Chenoy, JNU

Pradipto Roy, CSD

Vimalbhai, Matu Jan Sangathan

Rajendra Ravi, Lokayan

Denzil Fernandes, Indian Social INstitute

Madhuresh Kumar, CACIM

Bhupendra Rawat, Jan Sangharsh Vahini

Faisal Khan, NAPM, Asha Parivar

Bedoshruti Sadhukhan, Human Rights Law Network

Joyson Mazamo, NPMHR

## **REPORT ON THE VIOLENCE**

Dehat Morcha, Jan Morcha, Rana Sangram Singh Sangharsh Samiti, and other organizations under the leadership of Shri V.P. Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, Shri Raj Babbar, M.P., and supported by various political organisations, have been demanding a fair deal for the farmers of 7 villages in Gaziabad district whose lands

have been grabbed for the Reliance power plant in Dadri. To cut short the long history of their 2-3 year struggle, they were being compelled to surrender 2,500 acres acquired at a price much lower than the market price in the area. This is also a known story for other companies who too have taken over large chunks of land (30,000-35,000 acres each) at a very low price, which is a small percentage of the price that companies are reselling land for (the instance of Uppal and Chadha company, one of those in the 'High-Tech City' in Gaziabad, selling hundreds of acres of land in some villages at the rate of Rs. 14,000 per square yard, without purchasing or legally acquiring it through 'pre-launching' as it is called, is shocking). This is done obviously in connivance with the State using the 'laws' but violating the constitution and fundamental rights.

The farmers, laborers, traders and others in the villages affected by Reliance power project received a very low cash compensation of Rs. 150 per square yard but were compelled to accept the same under the age-old Land Acquisition Act (1894) still in practice, and using intimidation tactics, about 3 years ago. Soon after a few were compelled to accept it, they realized the loot and began the agitation. It was in February 2004, at the time of the inauguration, that Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, CM of U.P., publicly announced that they would be given a better price, up to Rs. 310 per square yard, even when the market price is at least Rs. 500 per square yard and in the High-Tech city a few kilometers away, it is many times higher. There was no fulfillment of the promise and the farmers had to resort to a number of protest actions and started a peaceful sit-in since November 2005. Later, Shri. V.P. Singhji intervened and compelled the Chief Minister of UP, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, to promise them a rate of Rs. 310 per square yard by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

However, this did not materialize and the Reliance Company with a huge subsidy granted in various forms, kept the 2,500 acres of land unused during these years. It was their attempt to establish the plant now that led to the villagers feeling compelled to intensify their agitation against the betrayal beyond the

ten-month long dharna in village Bajeda. The peaceful nature of the movement is obvious from the fact that they never resorted to violence even during such a long agitation. Later, they planned a program of symbolic ploughing of their own land only to assert their rights on July 8<sup>th</sup>, which was an open declared form of protest, under the leadership of Shri. V.P. Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, Sri. Raj Babbar, MP, and supported by various political organizations. The events related to the program, which indicate brutal violence and show the inhuman face of the state, are described below.

1. On July 6, late night around 11pm, a few policemen came to the village and began asking the people sitting in the square to get dispersed. When the villagers refused, the police returned back.

2. On July 7, the police tried to locate the leaders of Dehat Morcha, probably to arrest them, but could not. It was just before midnight that a contingent of PAC arrived at the main square of village Bajeda in tens of vehicles along with senior most officials, including D.M., SSP and others. In the late night, the villagers could not identify but there were a number of cars with red and blue light as reported. There were only about a hundred villagers sleeping at the dharna site (i.e. main square), and 10-20 were awake. On seeing the vehicles from a long distance, they shouted and called the villagers. When men and women gathered, they protested peacefully, asking the police not to enter the village and expressing determination that they would not move. The police instead threatened them of using force and without a formal warning, started firing. During 4-5 rounds of firing, three youths named Prempal, Vinod, and Naresh got wounded. We could meet them in the jail hospital where the wounds were bandaged and the case papers recorded i wounded with blunt objects.

3. After the firing, there was a sudden stone-pelting and the village leaders could see and conclude that the same was started by some plainclothesmen who accompanied the police in uniforms. The villagers identified them as the goons brought along by the police. After about an hour-long confrontation, the police returned

back.

4. On July 8<sup>th</sup>, it was in the early morning at six a.m. that a large contingent of police in the vehicles arrived again. Parking the vehicles a little away, they all marched into the village when there were not more than 100 villages sitting at the square. A number of officials were accompanying them and when they started approaching, one of the leading villagers, Former Major Himanshu, requested the villagers not to protest or stop them, but to allow them to come in and be prepared for a dialogue. The villagers did so, but the police entered and without even a warning resorted to lathi charge, brutal and severe.

5. Shri. V.P. Singh, Shri. Raj Babber and others were stopped from entering the district Gaziabad with barricades and an order of preventing their entry for one month under Section 151 IPC was clamped upon them. They and others squatted on the roads in protest, were arrested and then released. This stern action is obviously unjustified considering the nature of the agitation planned. It also seems to be the State's weapon to weaken and break the people's organization. We might also remark on the strangeness of the state resorting to such tactics against a former Prime Minister of India, showing the lengths to which it will go to serve corporate interests.

6. There was apparently a court order obtained by Reliance Energy against the action program of July 8<sup>th</sup>, which we were told happened after midnight. However, instead of merely serving the orders or informing the villages about the same, the state attacked the community with the police force. It was totally unjustifiable and inhuman, violating the human rights and encroaching upon the civil liberties.

7. The police fired tear gas and then, wasting no time, resorted to brutal, unlimited lathi charge, breaking the heads and hands, causing fractures as well as injuries.

8. We met Subhash Zamadar, Monu, Manoj, and others, who had fractures. There were others like Charan Singh and Dinesh who had serious head injuries due to beating with sticks. Both of

them were in Gaziabad Jail, amongst 80 others who were arrested on the 8<sup>th</sup> morning, but shifted to jail around 11pm at night.

9. The police also entered the houses and broke the wooden doors, brick walls of a few houses, chulhas (cooking stoves of mud), material such as radios and glass windows, and scattered grains. A few shops, such as those of Suresh Sukhbir Singh, and Satish Chandra Garg (both arrested and in jail), in the village were fully destroyed along with the materials and stored money was taken away.

10. We met in Bajeda village a boy of ten-twelve years whose whole body had the burns due to the tear gas shell. Sunil Giri had his eye seriously wounded. Sheilaben, a widow living with her daughter and child, was beaten up by the police who entered her house and beat her on the head, injuring her eye too. She was found bedridden and, as others, was not capable of reaching the hospital on her own. Many women, including Biroben, Parvati Birpal, and Seema Gopal showed the marks on their thighs, backs, and hands, which proved a serious beating. Even the small infants of a few months were thrown away from their mothers by the police who pulled the women by hair and broke many things and furniture inside their houses.

11. Almost all the beaten up villagers confirmed that they were not in any action when the police attacked them. It was early morning and they were engaged in their household chores. Some were eating, while others were with their children or cattle. The police loosened the cattle and let them go in order to get the men out of the house to be beaten up and then entered the house to take care of the women.

12. The worst part of the operation was the beating and abuse unleashed on women, who were pulled by their hair and pushed against the wall. The women also complained of molestation since their saris were torn and they were pushed and pulled by the men police. A number of women lost their earrings, many of gold, since policemen pulled them out forcibly. The pain and wounds were unlimited. They also described how the men officials were laughing and passing sarcastic comments and policemen abusing them in filthy

language.

13. Amongst the beaten up and arrested were villagers who had nothing to do with the agitation, including an old landless laborer, Tuki Chhidda, Shishupal Jagdish of Dhamdoj village (District Gurgaon), who had come to take his wife back from Bajeda, the three young men operating the microphone system at the village square, and young students such as Manu in the 9<sup>th</sup> standard who were all in jail.

14. It was against this we were shocked to know that out of 80 persons arrested, most (who were beaten up and pulled from their houses) were charged under Section 307. Many other sections, we were told, are also applied against them. Seven or eight of them have three cases of Sec 307 and two have four cases as if they tried many times to commit murder. Eight children below 21 years were amongst those in jail. Obviously all the cases filed are false and are merely a strategy to justify the beating and firing by the police.

15. On visiting the Gaziabad Jail in the afternoon of July 9<sup>th</sup> with Raj Babbar, Kunvar Sareraj Singh, MP, and others, we found that about 20 persons were hospitalized and almost all sixty men sitting outside the hospital also had marks of severe beating. They had pains in the bodies and many could not even sit or speak properly. There were aged farmers about 70 years in age, and some children below 16 years who were also beaten up above the waist, and on their backs, hands, and heads.

16. We found that the single doctor in jail was unable to take care of so many patients with so many wounds and full treatment had not been provided until we met them, but the minimum was taken care of. We saw a number of patients with their shirts full of blood, indicating the bleeding they had undergone. They were all extremely worried about the women and children at home who were beaten up and some also left unconscious in front of their eyes.

17. It should also be noted that a press reporter (Dainik Jagran) and media persons (of NDTV) were beaten and their equipment damaged, mainly to suppress information as repeated in the

village.

All this and much more was narrated to us and observed by us during our full-day investigation on July 9<sup>th</sup>. We expect the NHRC to take the severest action possible against this incidence of forcible possession and occupation of the land and everything attached to land, using the British-days act, from the farmers and others villagers. Such a war against the farming communities that are already indebted due to the unequal price and wage policy, is resulting in nothing less than killing the living communities.

Development-induced displacement as it may be called is to be seriously reviewed since affected people rarely get their due in rehabilitation and their resources are diverted to fulfill more the private interests than the public. NHRC must therefore take a broader view of what is happening in the name of development that is pushed by the corporate and political powers jointly using the money, market and mafia forces.

The state violence against the non-violent agitations may seem to be bringing the results to those who are all out to suppress the agitating farmers but, we would like to warn, can create a worse problem of land and order unless the constitutional authorities and the NHRC intervene with the right spirit to protect the people's rights.

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**P.S.**

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