



Sunday, December 16, 2018

## A Still Moment

By- Abimbola T. Alabi  
Take a moment.  
Put the worries behind.  
Take in the beauty around.  
Let it relax your mind.

Watch the golden glow  
Of the rising morning sun.  
Embrace the peaceful aura  
Of the break of dawn.

Savor the soft caress  
Of the gently moving breeze.  
Listen to its nifty tune  
Among the swaying trees.

Enjoy the lovely scene  
Of a floating butterfly.  
Graceful flight and happy tweets  
Of a bird perched up high.

Peruse the evening sky  
In its dazzling splendor.  
The wide and open pallet  
Merging shapes and colors.

Relish the loving sight  
Of children having fun,  
Skipping feet and carefree voices  
Under the setting sun.

Spare a still moment  
Every once in a while.  
Take in the beauty around.  
Take it in with a smile.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/a-still-moment>

## Wind On The Hill

By A. A. Milne  
No one can tell me,  
Nobody knows,  
Where the wind comes from,  
Where the wind goes.

It's flying from somewhere  
As fast as it can,  
I couldn't keep up with it,  
Not if I ran.

But if I stopped holding  
The string of my kite,  
It would blow with the wind  
For a day and a night.

And then when I found it,  
Wherever it blew,  
I should know that the wind  
Had been going there too.

So then I could tell them  
Where the wind goes...  
But where the wind comes from  
Nobody knows.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/wind-on-the-hill-by-a-a-milne>

## Name changed

I, the undersigned Sanjam Samarendrajit Singh of Khurai Thongam Leikai P.O. Lamlong, P.S. Porompat, Imphal East Manipur, 795010, do hereby declare that, I have relinquished and abandoned the use of my old name Sanjam Somarendra Singh, as I have assume my new name Sanjam Samarendrajit Singh. Hence I shall be called and known as Sanjam Samarendrajit Singh from today.

Sd/  
Sanjam Samarendrajit Singh  
S/o Sanjam Iboyaima Singh  
Khurai Thongam Leikai, Lamlong, Imphal East-795010

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# Arrest Of Mine Workers In Sukindavalley In Odisha

Courtesy Beyond the Horizon  
By: Dr. Malem Ningthouja

Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisation strongly condemns the arrest of three mine workers Rabi Murmu, Abhimanyu Mohanto and Ramesh Majhi on June 12, 2017 on false and fabricated charges of conspiring to wage a war against the Indian state and inciting violence. We understand this arrest and the imposition of severe charges as an attempt by the ruling BJD and BC Mohanty & Sons, the company operating the mine in Sukinda valley to intimidate and prevent the mine workers from forming a trade union and challenging human rights violations resulting from mass tribal displacement in the region. Rabi Murmu is the President and Abhimanyu Mohanto is the General Secretary of the Aancholikho Khoni Khadaan Mazdoor Sangh, a union that has been organizing in the pursuit of regularizing the wages of mine workers as well as their registration in the B Register. The union has also been drawing attention to rights violations of persons displaced by the mines, with

an eruption in mining licenses over the past few years in Sukinda valley, which is the chromite-rich belt of Odisha in Jajpur district. Odisha has 98% of the total chromite reserve in India, 97% of which is found in the Sukinda valley. Currently, there are 14 chromite mines in the Sukinda valley of which 12 or 13 are in operation. According to information gathered by us, on the morning of June 12, Rabi Murmu, Abhimanyu Mohanto and Ramesh Majhi had gathered at the gate of the Kamarda Chromite Mines Company to participate in a peaceful protest demonstration and were carrying with them a memorandum of demands on behalf of the workers. Before the protest could begin, police personnel from Kaliapani Police Station led by IC Yuvraj Swain arrived at the spot and threatened to book them under Maoist cases if they did not abide by the will of Pritiranjana harai, the local MLA from the ruling party BJD. In the week leading up to the protest demonstration, the workers had been getting threatening calls from local BJD supporters to back down on their demands. The Police

executed their threat, and arrested the three mine workers for possessing Maoist literature, and for inciting tribals to join their union to fight for their rights against displacement, under Ss. 25-27, Arms Act; and Ss. 147, 506, 121 (A), 124 (A), 120 (B) and 149 (17), IPC. See Odisha POST dated June 14, 2017: 3 Ultras held in Kaliapani. The said Maoist literature is, in fact, some copies of Nua Duniya, a weekly newsletter of the CPI, and a journal of the Chaasi Mulia Adibaasi Sangh. On June 19, 2017, Rebabati Murmu and Padmabati Mohanto, wives of Rabi Murmu and Abhimanyu Mohanto, respectively, petitioned the Odisha Human Rights Commission in Bhubaneswar demanding an inquiry into the arrest, and for proceedings to be initiated against the police personnel, in order to determine the complicity of political parties under whose direction the arrests have taken place. The petition further demands that all phone calls of the police personnel be tracked to establish the nexus of police, administration, mining authorities

and the ruling BJD MLA. CDRO unequivocally endorses the rights of workers to form a trade union as a fundamental right, to fight for their interests, engage in collective bargaining for regularization of wages and to improve working conditions. The witch-hunt launched against the workers, and the baseless accusations of being Maoists foisted upon them by the Police, are an assault on workers' rights, and is directed to prevent people from collectively struggling for their rights. The complicity of state authorities and political parties in such intimidation is a carte blanche to the mining authorities and the district administration to engage in further rights violations of the mine workers and displaced persons through exploitation and unfair labour practices. The Odisha police follows the old strategy of stifling any challenges to the ruthless exploitation of natural resources, displacement of peoples and the pursuit of unfair labour practices by simply labelling activists/dissidents as Maoists. **Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisations**

## What went with The ambedkar nagar demolition?

Courtesy Beyond the Horizon  
By: Dr. Malem Ningthouja

Large scale demolitions took place in Ambedkar Nagar basti at Cuffe Parade, Colaba from 3rd to 7th May, 2017. According to a media report more than 1000 hutments had been demolished during the drive. But the residents claim that at least 1500 houses were destroyed. The demolition was carried out under the supervision of Forest Department officials on the ground that the hutments were in violation of the Bombay High Court's 2005 order to protect mangrove cover in Maharashtra2. **Background** Ambedkar Nagar is located in Mumbai's A-Ward, close to Mumbai's prime residential and commercial area of Cuffe Parade. It has been in existence from 1980s. An overwhelming number of residents of this basti work in some capacity in neighbouring Cuffe Parade and Navy Nagar as domestic help, taxi drivers, street vendors etc. and in the nearby Sassoon Docks as daily wage labourers. The residents are a mix of Marathi and Hindi speaking communities. Many are from the Banjara and Buddhist community and belong to the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes categories. Over the years, Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport (BEST), a public sector undertaking has supplied their houses with electricity connections and Brihanmumbai Municipal corporation (BMC) has provided communal tap water connections and public toilet facilities to the residents here. The provision of various basic amenities to people by government agencies was perceived by people as a sign of security of tenure and thus many had taken loans to build puccahouses on the site they had been residing for years. Most of the residents have voting cards, ration cards, birth certificates of children, PAN cards and Aadhar cards with Ambedkar Nagar as the address. Their children attend various public and private schools in the area. It is not the first time that residents of Ambedkar Nagar have been left homeless. In November 2013, a massive fire gutted around 900 homes. While the official cause of fire was claimed to be gas cylinder blasts, a newspaper reported the claims of locals and politicians that the fire "could have been a sabotage as talks were on with two developers for a slum rehabilitation scheme on the site"3. In 2015, some 200 hutments were demolished in the basti. When the team spoke to the residents, it

was found that most of them had rebuilt their houses post the fire and the 2015 demolition. Given the provision of metered electricity, water and other facilities by the local government, an overwhelming majority invested in pucca houses by availing loans. In April 2015, the residents were issued a notice by the Forests and Mangrove Cell, Maharashtra government and were asked to submit the documents to verify their legitimacy, failing which they faced eviction. Many families had lost their proof of residence and their important documents in this fire. Yet, they submitted whatever documents they had to the said office. There received no further communication from the office. **Recent Demolitions** The demolitions began on 3rd May morning under the supervision of forest department officials and in presence of more than 100 police personnel. No notices had been issued beforehand. The people shared with us details of how, before the demolition began, trees were cut and debris were filled into the swamp under government supervision to make an access road for the bulldozers. The demolitions continued for four days, from morning till late evening during which the police dealt with excessive force against the people. People were at the receiving end of police abuse in the form of verbal abuse, beating, slapping, lathi charge, pulling of hair etc. A group of people who strongly objected the same said that they were picked up and taken to the police chowki near Mantralaya, Churchgate. Mobile phones of people who were recording the scene were confiscated. What stands out in peoples testimonies is that women and children were brutally mistreated by officials. Young children were also pushed around and suffered injuries during the demolition process. The team found that the demolitions were done in an arbitrary manner. The officials had marked some houses with red crosses before starting the demolition. However, the bulldozers paid no heed to the demarcation during the demolition, thus escalating the amount of destruction. Public and collective facilities like water taps, public bathrooms, places of worship, shops and even the aanganwadi structure were razed down. The collective economic loss that was faced by the residents has been huge, as none of them were allowed to remove any of their belonging from within their homes. Due to this demolition, hundreds of families are now being forced to live out in the

open with little to no protection from the environment. Almost all children have summer vacations from school and are extremely susceptible to heat strokes and other illnesses given the current weather. People here have strongly spoken against the apathy of the present corporator from A-Ward, Makarand Narvekar of the Bhartiya Janta Party. They say that no assistance or support has been provided from his end, even though he had campaigned excessively in Ambedkar Nagar for people's votes prior to the 2017 BMC elections. Likewise, no help has come forth from the MLA who is from BJP and the MP who comes from Shiv Sena. Moreover, the people have alleged that the so-called people's representatives are hand in glove with prominent builders of a luxury hotel being constructed in vicinity who wish to construct an approach road through the site where the basti is now settled. The activist from GBGBA has shared with us the details of the numerous demolitions of slum hutments that have taken place in the city using the Bombay High court order of 2005. The order which focuses of protection of mangroves, has been used a pretext for razing down slums, even though it does not recommend demolishing of bastis. On the other hand, massive destruction of mangroves has taken place at the hands of private builders for construction of housing, commercial and vehicular parking projects, such as in Versova, Thane, Gorai, Vikhroli, Dahisar, etc. **Conclusions From the above findings, it is clear that:** 1. The demolition was prima facie illegal as no adequate notice had been provided. 2. Undue excessive force was deployed to carry out the demolitions. 3. The forced eviction which has rendered thousands homeless constitutes violation of the Supreme Court judgments which uphold that the right to shelter as a constituent of the fundamental right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the constitution. 4. The demolition has affected access to education of the children in the basti and constitutes violation of fundamental right to education. 5. The Bombay High Court order against destruction of Mangroves is being used in an arbitrary and unjust manner against slum dwellers while exemptions are being granted to private builders. **Recommendations:**

1. There should be an inquiry against police personnel who used undue force against the residents and suppressed their rightful expressions of dissent.
2. The Forest Department should compensate the people for the economic losses incurred due to this illegal demolition.
3. The authorities should carry out a survey of the residents in the area along with the participation of people and draw a plan for rehabilitating and housing the affected. Lack of proof regarding cut-off date which is at present 1.1.2000 should not be used to delegitimize people's claims to avail rehabilitation.
4. Given the history of disruptions in the basti in last couple of years- the fire in 2013 and now the massive demolition- the actual motives for the demolition need to be thoroughly **Endnotes:** 1 'More than 1,000 illegal structures on mangrove area in Mumbai razed', Hindustan Times, May 7, 2017 2 Bombay Court order passed on Petition no 3246/ 2004 in October 2005. 3 1 dead, 900 huts reduced to ashes in Cuffe Parade blaze, Times of India, November 22, 2013, inquired into. 5. Sincere attempts need to be made to reconcile the right to shelter of the people with environmental concerns while projects by builders which impose huge environmental cost on the city should not be tolerated. **Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights** May, 2017 **Note:** The above text is the report of the five-member fact finding team constituted by Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR) to inquire into the demolition of homes and police harassment of residents of Ambedkar Nagar, Colaba between 3rd and 7th May, 2017. The Fact Finding Team members were Shradha (Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work), Tanmay (Tata Institute of Fundamental Research), Rossi (Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, TIFR), Priyanka and Paankhi (Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay). The team visited the site on 10th May, 2017 and spoke with the residents and housing rights activist, Bilal, working with Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan (GBGBA). After meeting with the residents, the team surveyed the site of the demolitions.