

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; the Special Rapporteur on the right to education; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

REFERENCE:
UA IND 13/2021

14 July 2021

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; Special Rapporteur on the right to education; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; Special Rapporteur on minority issues; Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 43/14, 44/3, 41/12, 43/16, 41/15, 43/8, 44/13 and 42/5.

We would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning **the imminent threat of forced evictions and demolitions of around 10,000 homes in the Khori Gaon informal settlement, Faridabad, Haryana state. This may put over 100,000 people, primarily belonging to marginalized communities and minorities, at risk of homelessness and internal displacement. The forced evictions and demolitions have been triggered by a series of Supreme Court decisions, including the one of 7 June 2021, which set a deadline of six weeks for the Faridabad Municipal Corporation to clear the entire settlement. Water and electricity provision have been cut off for weeks, which has caused great difficulties to families in the heat of summer months and as the most recent wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is barely subsiding. We have also received information regarding the alleged arrests and criminalization of human rights defenders and residents in Khori Gaon in response to their peaceful protests against the evictions.**

According to information received:

Khori Gaon informal settlement and its residents

Khori Gaon, spanning 120 acres, is one of several informal settlements located along the foothills of the Aravallis mountain range between the states of Delhi and Haryana, on the Haryana side of the state boundary. This part of the foothills, known also as the Southern Ridges, was subjected to heavy quarrying since the 1950s. In the 1970s, quarry workers coming from villages in Haryana, Rajashtan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were entangled in debt

bondage by the quarry contractors and ended up settling there together with their families.

Between 1992 and 2009, the Supreme Court gave a series of orders checking and eventually completely banning mining in the area due to concerns for environmental sustainability. In 1992, the government designated¹ the Aravalli Hills as forest land under sections 4 and 5 of the Punjab Land Preservation Act. While these mentioned Supreme Court orders were implemented in the state of Delhi, compliance was not strictly enforced in Haryana and most of the mining shifted to and continued in Haryana. With it, additional people settled in Khori Gaon in the 1990s.

As of 2004, more urban poor also arrived and settled in Khori Gaon, having been displaced from various informal settlements in Delhi as a result of urban development projects. People also arrived from neighbouring villages attracted by job opportunities.

Following a complete ban on mining in 2009, the quarries were abandoned. Questionable land dealers sold land plots through power of attorney documents² to the former quarry workers and to the other residents arriving later. On average, people paid INR 300,000-500,000³ (currently equivalent to USD 4,016 – 6,695) for these land plots. Khori Gaon residents used their life's savings and took out loans in order to purchase their land plots, to build their homes, but also were extorted considerable amounts⁴ by police and forestry officials, who demanded payment in the form of “fines”. Electricity was supplied, possibly through informal channels. The residents did not question the legality of these land purchases and the construction of their homes. The vast majority of current residents are not in the possession of land titles.

Nowadays, Khori Gaon residents work in the informal sector, relying on daily wages - driving, construction, factory and domestic help jobs. The majority of these residents belong to marginalized communities and minorities – people belonging to Scheduled Castes including Dalits, what in India are referred to as “Other Backward Classes”, and Muslims. During the Covid-19 pandemic, as a result of the government-enforced lock-down, a large proportion of them were plunged into poverty since their earnings in the informal sector dwindled. Those of them who had jobs in other localities could not reach their work places, because state boundaries were closed. The monthly income range of residents is between Rs 8,000 (currently equivalent to USD 107) and Rs 15,000 (currently equivalent to USD 201).

Faridabad Municipal Corporation efforts to displace Khori Gaon residents ended by High Court decisions

¹ High Court of Punjab and Haryana, order dated 29 April 2016, case numbers CWP-19148-2010, COCP-2139-2011 and COCP-1135-2012.

² <https://thewire.in/urban/khori-gaon-haryana-urban-poor-eviction>

³ <https://mediaindia.eu/society/sc-order-puts-10000-families-in-faridabad-at-risk/>

⁴ <https://thewire.in/rights/cops-forest-officials-work-with-land-mafia-allege-khori-gaon-residents-facing-eviction>

In 2010, the Faridabad Municipal Corporation carried out a round of demolitions in Khori Gaon with the justification that the settlement is built on designated forest land. The residents then lodged several petitions before the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh requesting regularization or the provision of alternative housing.

While these petitions were pending review, additional demolitions were carried out between 2012 and 2015. Nevertheless, new residents continued arriving in Khori Gaon under the promises of politicians that the informal settlement will be regularized and connected to services.

In 2016, one of the resulting High Court orders directed the Haryana Urban Development Authority to conduct a detailed survey of those eligible for rehabilitation.

In another court order on 25 April 2016 (CWP 19910/2014), the High Court criticized the government for requiring from the Khori Gaon residents that they submit proof of ownership or land title, when it was clear that they had settled on land belonging to the Department of Tourism. This had already been acknowledged in the numerous applications that residents had made to the High Court. The High Court went as far as stating that “Apparently, the exercise that purports to have been undertaken to determine the length of possession of the occupants and consequently their eligibilities in terms of Clause (iii) of the policy, was/is a farce.”⁵.

In another order dated 29 April 2016 (case numbers CWP-19148-2010, COCP-2139-2011 and COCP-1135-2012), while acknowledging that the residents occupy the land illegally and that it must be vacated, the High Court recognized that demolition of the informal settlement without any prior notice and without the provision of alternative accommodation would be inhumane. Reviewing previous Supreme Court decisions⁶, the High Court confirmed that “some alternative arrangement should be made for resettlement and rehabilitation of the poor people, who live in the shanties [...]”. The High Court also requested the central government to prepare a policy on rehabilitation and resettlement of cross-state (internal) migrant workers.

Supreme Court decisions triggering forced evictions and demolitions

In 2017, the Faridabad Municipal Corporation appealed the High Court decision (in cases CWP-19148-2010 and COCP-1135-2012) before the Supreme Court.

In a decision on 19 February 2020, the Supreme Court concluded that the Faridabad Municipal Corporation has a duty to remove encroachments on the

⁵ <https://thewire.in/urban/why-haryana-govt-cant-evict-khori-gaon-residents-without-rehabilitation>

⁶ M.C.Mehta vs. Union of India, M.C.Mehta's case (supra), Olga Tellis v. Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay, Francis Coralie Mullin vs. Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation v. Nawab Khan Gulab Khan, M/s. Shantistar Builders v. Narayan Khimalal Totame, Chameli Singh v. State of U.P., Olga Tellis's case (supra), Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation's case (supra)

forest land, irrespective of any related proceedings pending before the Court. The Court also confirmed that the Municipal Corporation should be assisted in doing so by the State authorities, including by providing necessary/adequate security.

On 13 March 2020, residents of Khori Gaon were given eviction notices allowing them seven days to leave unless they could produce ownership documents. The demolitions were not carried out due to the nation-wide lockdown, which started on 25 March 2020.

On 14 September 2020, however, 1,700 houses were demolished in Khori Gaon, with the affected residents notified only verbally the night before by the police.

On 2 April 2021, additional 300 houses were demolished, again with residents notified only verbally the night before by the police. Police beat some of the residents who tried to salvage their belongings from their homes, including women⁷. At that time there was a scheduled hearing on an appeal filed in February 2021 with the Supreme Court.

On 5 April 2021, the Supreme Court confirmed its earlier decision, dismissing the appeal. It also clarified that it stayed the implementation of the earlier judgment by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana of 29 April 2016, in order to allow the Faridabad Municipal Corporation to take steps against the unauthorized structure(s) on the forest land.

In a further decision delivered on 7 June 2021, the Supreme Court directed the Faridabad Municipal Corporation and the State of Haryana to take all essential measures to remove encroachments on the forest land without any exception within six weeks. It directed the State and the local police to provide logistical support to the Faridabad Municipal Corporation for the forcible eviction and the clearing of all encroachments from the forest land.

On the same day, 7 June 2021, residents received eviction notices informing them that demolitions were scheduled for 9 June 2021. Residents held protests in the wake of the Supreme Court decision. The provision of water and electricity to Khori Gaon was interrupted around mid-June 2021, imposing a great burden on families to maintain sufficient amounts of safe drinking water, particularly as temperatures have soared to 42 degrees Celsius. The interruption of electricity provision has also rendered useless electric appliances that help support the heat.

It is estimated that 100,000 residents, corresponding to 10,000 households, will be affected by the projected forced evictions and demolitions in Khori Gaon. Among these, there would be around 5,000 pregnant women or young mothers who are breastfeeding.

⁷ <https://thewire.in/rights/cops-forest-officials-work-with-land-mafia-allege-khori-gaon-residents-facing-eviction>

Many of the residents whose homes were demolished in earlier waves of forced evictions and demolitions were either displaced from the settlement, or rebuilt their homes or remained living in makeshift conditions in situations akin to homelessness.

Several residents have committed suicide⁸, which is an indication of the immense emotional and psychological toll the threat of forced evictions has on people.

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hold a further hearing on 27 July 2021.

Compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation

At the time of sending this communication, there is no clarity as to whether any residents would be provided with rehabilitation or other forms of compensation.

In a hearing on 17 June 2021, the Supreme Court stated that Khori Gaon residents had failed to provide the Faridabad Municipal Corporation with documents to support their claims under the Rehabilitation Scheme.

The cut-off time determined by the Haryana Urban Development Authority is 2003, which is understood to mean that anyone who has been living in Khori Gaon prior to this year, and who can prove it, would in theory be able to benefit from rehabilitation. The High Court of Punjab and Haryana confirmed⁹ that the residents of Khori Gaon have sufficient documents to prove their residence for many years. However, it seems that with all previous eviction notices circulated, the local authorities have always been requesting the residents to prove land ownership, instead of occupancy, and that this may have affected their possibility to benefit under the Haryana rehabilitation policy.

It is unclear whether the Supreme Court considered if the residents have any rights under the Land Acquisition Act 2013, under which compensation may be granted without need to prove land ownership in the formal sense, but which requires that impact assessments be carried out prior to any eviction. There is no information that such impact assessments have been carried out.

At a press conference held on 17 June 2021, the Chief Minister of Haryana said that the government was in the process of forming a policy for rehabilitation only for Haryana residents. On 30 June 2021, the government said that they will rehabilitate 1,400 families. However, there is no clarity as to who those beneficiaries will be and it is understood that any rehabilitation will only become available after the evictions and demolitions are carried out. In addition, the Haryana government has already indicated that it would not take

⁸ <https://thewire.in/rights/cops-forest-officials-work-with-land-mafia-allege-khori-gaon-residents-facing-eviction>

⁹ High Court of Punjab and Haryana, order dated 29 April 2016, case numbers CWP-19148-2010, COCP-2139-2011 and COCP-1135-2012.

responsibility for those who have Delhi identity documents.

Freedom of assembly and criminalization of human rights defenders

Following a protest on 11 June 2021, 100 persons¹⁰ have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code¹¹.

On 15 June 2021, fifteen community leaders and activists involved in the Khori Gaon protests against the Supreme Court decision were arrested under section 144 of India's Criminal Procedure Code, which refers to urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger.

Later, the authorities invoked section 144, in order to prohibit any assembly of more than four persons in the informal settlement. The Police maintains heavy presence (400 police officers¹²) in Khori Gaon and announcements are regularly made, urging residents to leave the settlement. Barriers were installed around the settlement, which restrict the residents' freedom of movement.

On 30 June 2021, as several hundred residents were attempting to gather in Ambedkar park in Khori Gaon to protest against the lack of rehabilitation measures in the evictions, police officers equipped with lathis used excessive force on the residents, some of whom suffered serious injuries. A number of human rights defenders and community leaders were detained under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Since 7 July 2021, there has been an even larger police presence in Khori Gaon with many bulldozers. There are reports of police harassment and violence.

On 8 July 2021, several residents and human rights defenders protested in Delhi against the evictions. Between 200 and 600 were arrested by the police and kept on buses, before later being released or taken into police detention.

Access to safe drinking water

Since water is no longer supplied to Khori Gaon, the residents now need to either travel between 2 and 4 km across the difficult post-quarry terrain or resort to buying water at inflated prices from private vendors who have somehow managed to enter the settlement. Some of the residents have resorted to collecting water from polluted lakes within the settlement, putting their health at risk.

Interrupted education

¹⁰ <https://www.newsclick.in/Aravalli-Evictions-Haryana-Police-Stop-Protest-Lathi-Charge-Villagers-Khori>

¹¹ <https://www.theleaflet.in/sc-order-to-evict-illegal-houses-will-render-over-a-lakh-homeless-in>

¹² <https://www.newsclick.in/Aravalli-Evictions-Haryana-Police-Stop-Protest-Lathi-Charge-Villagers-Khori>

It is estimated that there are 20,000 children among the current residents of Khori Gaon. Since there is no electricity, students cannot attend online classes and sit for exams. The five schools in the area are also to be demolished¹³. In addition, anganwadi (rural child care) centers in Khori Gaon currently provide support to many children.

Other constructions on forest land

In addition, right next to Khori Gaon are located Chungi 1, 2 and 3 informal settlements – under the State of Delhi, those residents are not allowed to be evicted because they are entitled to rehabilitation or compensation due to a cut-off date of 2015 determined by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board. However, there are fears that the current forced evictions may mistakenly affect residents of these informal settlements too, since the border between Delhi and Haryana is unmarked.

In the vicinity of Khori Gaon, there are high-end, commercial and hospitality developments, hotels and farm houses, all of them located on forest land. Lakkarpur and Sanjay Colony in Bhatti mines are other settlements located not very far from Khori Gaon.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of the allegations received and while we are aware that the Supreme Court is scheduled to hold a further hearing on 27 July 2021 on this matter, we wish to express our concerns regarding the persistent and continuing efforts of the Faridabad Municipal Corporation and Haryana state to forcibly evict and demolish the homes of residents of the Khori Gaon informal settlement. Even more troubling is that the recent forced evictions and demolitions have taken place despite numerous petitions to the Supreme Court; indeed, far from protecting the rights that the residents alleged have been breached, the Supreme Court has ordered the forced evictions of residents of the entire settlement within a deadline of six weeks. This decision alone threatens to forcibly displace over 10,000 households, equivalent to around 100,000 people, just as the country is emerging from its deadliest wave of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, already 2,000 homes have been demolished and already 2,000 families have been threatened with homelessness and extreme poverty, many of them losing besides their homes also their entire life savings or being left in debt. The safety, health and lives of those left homeless would have been put at risk, since they would have had difficulties complying with the strict lock-down measures applied nation-wide, as well as with prevention protocols. There is no information that any consultations have taken place with the affected residents. Eviction notices were either not formally served or if so, these notices were unreasonably short, not allowing people to make arrangements for the removal of their private property. We are concerned about reports that the police has used violence and threats to keep owners from accessing their homes, trying to salvage belongings before oncoming demolitions. No arrangements appear to have been made

¹³ <https://www.theleaflet.in/sc-order-to-evict-illegal-houses-will-render-over-a-lakh-homeless-in-haryana/>

by the responsible authorities to provide alternative accommodation or compensation and rehabilitation to those affected or about to be affected by the forced evictions.

We are also concerned that section 144 of India's Criminal Procedure Code has been applied to the entire Khorri Gaon to restrict the residents' and human rights defenders' freedom of assembly and that police have used excessive force on peaceful protesters and also detaining a number of human rights defenders – community leaders and activists.

We are also troubled by the fact that Khorri Gaon residents have been denied electricity and water, including for drinking, washing and hygiene, in anticipation of the imminent demolitions, potentially putting their health at risk during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have serious concerns about the negative and lasting effects of the forced evictions and demolitions particularly on children, in view of the great number of children and pregnant or breastfeeding mothers among the community. The closure and demolition of schools and day care centers will likely leave these children out of school, but also further add to the psychological suffering they have experienced going through the Covid-19 pandemic and related lock-down measures, as well as from losing the roof over their heads.

Finally, we are concerned about the numerous low-level corruption allegations which have clearly led to the current crisis with Khorri Gaon. The local government's intention to clear the land, on which the informal settlement stands, because it is designated forest land does not appear to be of genuine motivation, since there is no forest in the settlement itself to protect and it does not appear to be plausible to regrow the forest within any reasonable time period. The entire area was mined for decades before the settlement came up. In addition, there are numerous high-end, commercial and hospitality developments, hotels and farm houses in the vicinity which also appear to be on forest land, but those do not seem to be threatened with forced evictions. It would appear that Khorri Gaon has been singled out and targeted for other unknown reasons and chiefly due to the vulnerability of its poor residents, many of whom belong to marginalized communities and minorities.

We wish to remind your Excellency's Governments of the obligations it assumed upon acceding on 10 April 1979 to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), in particular concerning the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate housing (article 11), as well as the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (article 12) and the right of everyone to education (article 13).

In its General Comment No. 4 interpreting obligations under the ICESCR, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) emphasized that “the right to housing should not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense which equates it with, for example, the shelter provided by merely having a roof over one's head or views shelter exclusively as a commodity. Rather it should be seen as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity.” It also affirmed that “forced

evictions are prima facie incompatible with the requirements of the Covenant and can only be justified in the most exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the relevant principles of international law”. In the same General Comment No. 4, the Committee stated that States should take immediate measures aimed at conferring legal security of tenure upon those persons and households currently lacking such protection, in genuine consultation with affected persons and groups. It also affirmed that adequate shelter means also adequate location with regard to work.

Further, in its General Comment No 7 on forced evictions, the CESCR clarified that if an eviction is to take place, procedural protections are essential, including, among others, genuine consultation, adequate and reasonable notice, alternative accommodation made available in a reasonable time, and provision of legal remedies and legal aid. Under no circumstances should evictions result in homelessness, and the State party must take all appropriate measures to ensure that adequate alternative housing, resettlement or access to productive land, as the case may be, is available to affected individuals, where they are unable to provide for themselves. We wish to underscore that, notwithstanding the type of tenure, all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure, which guarantees legal protection against forced evictions, harassment and other threats. States parties shall ensure, prior to carrying out any evictions, and particularly those involving large groups, that all feasible alternatives are explored in consultation with the affected persons, with a view to avoiding, or at least minimizing, the need to use force. Legal remedies or procedures should be provided to those who are affected by eviction orders. States parties shall also see to it that all the individuals concerned have a right to adequate compensation for any property, both personal and real, which is affected. In this regard, we would like to refer to the Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-based Evictions and Displacement (A/HRC/4/18, Annex I) and the Guiding Principles on security of tenure for the urban poor (A/HRC/25/54), developed by previous Special Rapporteurs on the right to adequate housing.

In his recent report to the General Assembly (A/75/148, para. 68(b)), the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing highlighted that the ramping up of evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic threatens to increase the number of homeless persons and can spread the virus, and called for a moratorium on evictions during the pandemic.

We would like to remind your Excellency’s Government of the explicit recognition of the human right to safe drinking water by the UN General Assembly (resolution 64/292) and the Human Rights Council (resolution 15/9), which derives from the right to an adequate standard of living, protected under, inter alia, article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 11 of ICESCR. In its General Comment No. 15, the CESCR clarified that the human right to water means that everyone is entitled to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses.

We wish to draw the attention of your Excellency’s Government to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2). We would like to refer in particular to Principle 5 that establishes that “All authorities and international actors shall respect and ensure respect for their obligations under

international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, in all circumstances, so as to prevent and avoid conditions that might lead to displacement of persons” and Principle 6, which acknowledges that “Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence”. Principle 28 establishes that “Competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country. Such authorities shall endeavor to facilitate the reintegration of returned or resettled internally displaced persons”.

We would like to bring to your Excellency’s Government’s attention the international standards regarding the protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities, in particular article 27 of the ICCPR and the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which refers to the obligation of States to protect the existence and the identity of minorities within their territories and to adopt the measures to that end (article 1) as well as to adopt the required measures to ensure that persons belonging to minorities can exercise their human rights without discrimination and in full equality before the law (article 4).

We would like to refer your Excellency's Government to the fundamental principles set forth in the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. In particular, we would like to refer to articles 1 and 2 of the Declaration which state that everyone has the right to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels and that each State has a prime responsibility and duty to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The full texts of the human rights instruments and standards recalled above are available on www.ohchr.org or can be provided upon request.

In view of the urgency of the matter, we would appreciate a response on the initial steps taken by your Excellency’s Government to safeguard the rights of the above-mentioned persons in compliance with international instruments.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and any comment you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please explain how the recent decisions of the Supreme Court requiring forced evictions in the Khorī Gaon informal settlement are compatible with the international human rights obligations of your Excellency’s

Government.

3. Please clarify if the Faridabad Municipal Corporation has carried out any consultations with the residents of Khori Gaon informal settlement ahead of making plans to clear the informal settlement.
4. Please provide information on the applicable legal and policy framework for the provision of rehabilitation or other forms of compensation to residents forcibly displaced in Haryana state, including the applicability of the Land Acquisition Act 2013. Please clarify if there are any plans to provide rehabilitation to Khori Gaon residents facing forced evictions. If such plans exist, please provide information on the criteria for determining who would qualify for rehabilitation, the basis for these criteria in law or policy, social impact assessments required, and the nature of such rehabilitation to be provided, including its monetary equivalent.
5. Please provide information on any investigations, prosecutions and convictions obtained following on numerous allegations of corruption and fraud in relation to the sale of land plots to residents of Khori Gaon, or the subsequent construction of their homes.
6. Please provide information on the reasonableness and proportionality of the restrictions on the freedom of assembly imposed on the Khori Gaon settlement, including the application of section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code on the entire settlement, heavy police presence and police violence against residents involved in protests.
7. Please provide information on any investigations into which entity was providing water and electricity to the Khori Gaon informal settlement, and who is responsible for leaving the settlement without water and electricity since mid-June 2021. In addition, please provide information on what provisions have been made by the authorities to ensure that the Khori Gaon residents have continued access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
8. Please provide information on measures taken by the State authorities to ensure that children and adults displaced as a result of the planned forced evictions will be able to continue enjoying uninterrupted access to education or day care.
9. Please provide information on the other constructions in the vicinity of Khori Gaon which would fall within declared forest land and whether or not they are also scheduled to be evicted and demolished.

10. Please indicate the measures taken by your Excellency's Government to ensure that all human rights defenders in India are able to carry out their human rights work free from any kind of restrictions.
11. Please indicate information on the Government's provisions for alternative accommodation and how any person or persons forcibly displaced by the evictions shall be provided with humanitarian assistance.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and a full consultative process be launched to engage with residents of the Khori Gaon informal settlement before any further plans to resettle the population concerned are carried out, in compliance with international human rights law.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information upon which the press release will be based is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the above-mentioned allegations. The press release will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government's to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please note that the response of your Excellency's Government is expected as soon as possible. This communication and any response received will be made public via the communications reporting website after 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Balakrishnan Rajagopal
Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context

Koumbou Boly Barry
Special Rapporteur on the right to education

Clement Nyaletsossi Voule
Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

Mary Lawlor
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