

**FACT FINDING REPORT OF THE**  
**SLUM DEMOLITIONS AT SANJAY**  
**GANDHI NATIONAL PARK AND AT**  
**GOVANDI:**

**PREPARED BY THE 'COMMITTEE FOR THE**  
**PROTECTION OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS.'**  
**(CPDR)**

**Fact finding report of the slum demolitions at Sanjay Gandhi National Park and at Govandi:  
Prepared by the 'Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights.'**

There has been of late, a spate of demolitions in different parts of the city of Mumbai. This prompted the 'Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights' to investigate the reasons that necessitated these demolitions and to find out who are the people whose houses have been demolished and what has happened to them post demolitions. Many of the recent demolitions have been carried out under orders of the court in response to a petition initiated by so called public minded bodies in the name of public interest litigation. According to the history of Sanjay Gandhi National Park - 10309 hectares of land is covered under the National Park. The Bombay Environment Action Group (BEAG for short) filed a writ petition No.305 of 1995 before the Bombay High Court for removal of 'encroachers' from the National Park. The High Court issued directions in the matter without giving the slum dwellers a hearing to defend themselves. In 1996, certain slum societies moved the Bombay High Court for protection of their homes. Ultimately on 7/5/1997 a detailed order was passed by the Bombay High Court which interalia directed that all slum dwellers whose names are contained in the election roll of 1995 should be relocated outside the boundaries of the park and within 18 months of passing of this order. There were over 80,000 residential structures contained within Sanjay Gandhi National Park. This was revealed by a survey conducted under the supervision of Mr., A.R.Bharati.-Deputy Conservator Forests which indicated that 33,000 families fall within the list of 'eligible' structure holders and needed to be relocated. The demolition commenced from around October 1997 for the removal of these structures. The fact finding team of the Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights spoke to the residents, many of whom live in the open as their structures have been demolished and recorded their statements.

**The recorded statements of Ambedkar Nagar residents of the slums (which form part of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park.) are as follows:**

1. "We have been staying here sine 5 years. Basically we are from Kudal district, Sindudurg. My husband is a watchman nearby. Our house was built prior to 1995, therefore it still hasn't been demolished. The forest officials are demanding Rs.7000/- for shifting to Kalyan-Ambernath. Wherefrom can we get so much money? Since our children go to a nearby school and our work and source of livelihood is also here, we don't want to leave. We don't have a disposable income of even Rs.200/- per month."  
Ankita Eknath Dhuri.

2. "When the poor are shifted to huge buildings, how will they manage to pay for the maintenance? I am staying here for 5 years and work at SEEPZ, Andheri. I don't think we all will get a room at Kalyan-Ambernath. Only the political leaders will get land."  
Prakash Kale.

3. "I'm staying here since 10 years. I'm a member of Ekta Chawl Committee. There are different chawls here viz. Nirankari Chawl, Hanuman Chawl, and many more. An iron fence has been constructed here since the last 4 years by the forest department officials and we live inside this fence. I will not go from here at any cost."  
Urmila Rajkumar Vishwakarma.

4. "My husband and I have studied upto StdXI. We have been staying here since 7 years. We have a three Year old son. My husband works for a plastic company in MIDC, Andheri. I have to walk 1 ½ hour a day to fetch water. I have paid Rs.5000/- to go to Kalyan-Ambernath. But haven't been shown the place there yet."  
Rashmi Ravi Rane.

5. "I am from Ratnagiri and have studied upto STD VIII. I have 4 children and they have studied at Limboni Vidyaniketan, Malad. I don't have any money to pay.  
Sakharam Kolhe.

6. "My husband is an alcoholic and has deserted me. I have 3 children who study at Santosh Nagar and are looked after my neighbour in my absence. I work at a small factory in Goregaon. Since my entire Chawl is protesting against the demolition, we have set up the Sadguru Chawl Committee."  
Tara Gupta.

7. "I am from U.P. and have been staying here since 11 years. Near the Mahindra water tank, an area housing 500 huts, had been burnt. First the area was bulldozed, and all the belongings were taken out and burnt.  
Govindlal Kanojia.

8. "I was residing at Matangad since 10 years. My house was demolished in April 1999. Though I had proof of residence I was evicted and relocated within the premises of the park. I.e. at Ambedkar Nagar. Now even this structure is going to be demolished. My children's schooling at Santosh Nagar was affected due to the demolition at Matangad and so we have had to discontinue their studies. I have been asked to pay Rs.5, 000/- but I have no money. Also each demolition has cost me Rs.10, 000/- for rebuilding."  
Renuka Chavan.

9 "I had a 16 year old terminally ill child suffering from Cancer. On the day of the demolition, my daughter hung to the policeman in the demolition squad pleading him not to do the demolition. However the demolition continued unabated. At the end of the day, my daughter died of shock."  
Hamida Khartoum.

10. " I study closely at Yeshwant Vidyalaya in the VIII Std. at Adivasi Nagar. My mother Suman works at Lokhandwala Complex at Kandivli as a domestic worker. She toils from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., earning Rs.800/- per month. We along with many others here are oustees from the Bhimananda dam, near Pune. We lost all our agricultural land. My father now works as an agri labour in Kahu village. I have 2 brothers, studying in the 2nd and 5 th standard."  
Reshma Shankar Datta.

11. "We had been displaced from Matangarh due to the demolition there and so we shifted to Appapada. Now they want to evict us from there too. Where should we go? Is this not our country? We have meagre incomes. What will become of our children, their education and their future?"  
Lalita Babu Chavan.  
Subhas Chavan.  
Param Singh.  
Bhiku Chavan.

12. "We, the residents of Appapada have been told by the bulldozer operator who had come for demolitions that if we did not vacate on our own, we will be shot dead. We don't have even Rs.5, 000/- to pay."  
Gopal Chavan.

13. "Since 1985,I reside here with my son. I.e. at Savitribai Phule Nagar (Appapada). Why didn't they ask me to leave then? My son works in the nearby vicinity so I don't want to leave."  
Kanta Prasad Yadav

14. "My house was demolished even though I am residing here since 1990. (at Matangarh.) Is this what

you call justice?"  
Devnath Kushwaha.

15. "I am a Social Worker. I have hospital delivery papers where my wife gave birth to our 3 children. These papers are for the period prior to 1995. Yet the Govt. refuses to acknowledge that I am residing here before 1995. One man broking for the forest officials has been collecting between Rs.100 to Rs.500/- per month.  
Harish Chandra Jogdand.

16. "I had a Kirana shop at Matangarh that was demolished and shifted to Appapada. We were 2 families living in one house. The authorities say they will shift us to Ambernath but the place is 14 kms away from the Station. It is impossible to travel from Malad where I work to Ambernath and back. I have come from Dindypurgaon in Varanasi.  
Vinod Kumar. (Appapada.)

17. "I have a tea shop and I have a family of 6 children, all of whom go to Sai Vidya Mandir School. The forest officials came here and asked me to pay Rs.7000/-. I cannot pay, as I have no money. I am staying here since 1992. I don't want to leave.  
Subhedar Ramraj Yadav.

18. "I have a family of 4 children I am staying here before 1995. I earn Rs.70-100/- a day. I am a daily-wage worker. My children study at Bharat Mata School. If I leave from here it will be economical death, a kind of suicide, as I hail from Bidar, Karnataka. I have no choice but to stay here.  
Shankar Mahadev.

19. "I have been supplying building material here but since 1997 no construction has been taking place. On 7th October, 1998 for 4 months continuous demolition at Sahyadri Nagar was on where a very large number of houses were demolished. Forest officials have collected Rs.2000/- in installments through their guards and their supervisors. The names of these officials are Patil, Jadhav, and Chowgule. They had allowed us to construct our houses here. Lokhandwala Complex is standing on Gowshala land. (Pasture land). The fact-finding team saw these high rise buildings existing on either side of the slums.  
Ram Singh.

20. "The Govt. dogs come here and take bribes from us. By bribing them regularly, we have been able to keep our houses intact so far."  
Sitaram Bagwe.

21. "I was shifted to Appapada from Matangarh. Now they want me to go to Kalyan, Ambernath. I should go there and eat mud? Forest officials say "Pay up or else we shall be tough on you." Our houses have been broken down and our belongings have been burnt.  
Lalita from Matangarh.

22. "I came from Killari, Latur after I lost my house in the earthquake. I am a tailor by profession. I am going to stay at Appapada."  
Vinayak Salunkhe.

23. "I came from Koyna dam and I have no land or anything else in the village to live on. I am a daily wages worker and I live hand to mouth."  
Maruti Bhagirath Kadam.

**These are the recorded statements of Kranti Nagar residents of the slums, (which also forms part of Sanjay Gandhi National Park.):**

1. "I am working as a driver to a builder at Walkeshwar. I have 3 children. My house was demolished between 3-18th March 2000. I am willing to go to Kalyan but so far the location has not been shown to me. My children and my wife are now on the streets. I am drawing Rs.4, 000/- and yet I have to stay in the slums. You can imagine the plight of those who earn 50-100Rs. a day and most of them here belong to this category.

Raj Kumar Jha.

2. "I am residing here since the last 12 years. I had paid Rs.10,000/- to the forest officials through their brokers. I have studied upto 12 Std. I have 2 children all going to Swami Vivekananda School. Even the Swami Vivekananda School will be demolished. The nearby Bharat Mata School has 8,000 children. And it will also be demolished. According to the Court verdict Case No.1745 of 1997 Gautam Nagar Vikas Sangh V/s State of Maharashtra, the land is not within the boundary of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park.

Asma Asrani.

3. "I am a member of Gowmata Chawl. I have a Pan Thela.( Small Pan vendor.) I was an S.E.M. I am residing here since 1992 and since that time I have been watching the demolitions going on rampantly. On 3rd March about 3,000 huts were demolished at Gautam Nagar. I.e. Extension of Kranti Nagar. Around 2,000 hutment dwellers have a record of existence before 1995. These were also demolished. Their matter was taken up before the Takraar Nivara Samiti constituted by the National Park authorities and presided upon by Justice Sinkar and Justice Pande. We want to say that the Judges were not willing to listen to us and were arbitrary in their decisions. The police officials and forest guard officials beat up the people in that meeting.

R.B Upadhyay.

4. "Even Pucca houses were demolished in the last demolition. One of these belonged to a BEST bus driver. I am here since 1993. I am working as an accountant at S. R. Works Fort, for a salary of Rs.6, 000/- Although Kranti Nagar is very far away from the Station and I have to spend 1 ½ hours in commuting I still want to be here.

S.B.Singh.

5. "On the 16th and 17th March the forest guards came here with their apparatus and asked me if I had paid my share of the money. When I told them that I don't have the money to pay they demolished half my house and threatened that if I did not pay up soon the other half would be demolished soon.

I really do not have Rs.7, 000/- to pay. From where should I get the money? I have to get water at Rs.150/- per month. I have 6 children going to Bharat Mata School. What will become of my children? Please help me.

Radhe Shyam Vishwakarma.

**Fact finding report of the Slum demolitions at Govandi constituting of 3 localities:  
Indira Gandhi Nagar.  
Chikalwadi.  
Padmanagar.**

The fact finding team interviewed the residents of the 3 places mentioned above and these are the details:

1. On 29/2/2000 demolitions of the Slums at Indira Gandhi Nagar and Chikalwadi were conducted without prior notices being issued to the concerned residents.
2. Again on 10/3/2000. Demolitions took place with the assistance of the Police and the BMC. Around 17 people were wounded. A large number of residents have Ration Cards since 1982 and upto 1995.
3. Most people earn their livelihood by doing small work as Chappal manufacturing, Jari work, sewing, masonry, carpentry, women working as housemaids, selling vegetables or they are street vendors. Most of the people have average incomes of Rs. 50-100/- a day.
4. The total number of houses demolished at Indira Nagar and at Chikalwadi number around 500.
5. Most of the residents have paid Rs. 10/- under the Slum Sanitation Programme (SSP for short) which was collected for making toilets. As a result they were given the 'Collector's receipt.' These receipts were shown to the BMC squad, yet their houses were demolished. At present there are approximately 20,000 houses.
6. The people of Indira Nagar against the demolition of 182 houses filed a writ petition No. 1797 dated 12/12/1999. This writ petition was filed in the name of the Madrasa: Darul Usman Husneya Barkateya.
7. Only 3,000 people have Ration Cards in the area.
8. Women go to places like Allana Cold Storage, Vashi from Govandi to earn a living.
9. Raul Asthana, the BMC Commissioner told the residents that there were no instructions from him for the demolitions.
10. Influential men have managed to bypass the demolitions. A man named 'Vir Bharat Singh' who is a teacher in a nearby school and has close links with the Shiv Sena run 'Savdhan' owns a cowshed (referred to as a tabela) with 300 buffalos. This 'tabela' exists since 1992 although the Municipal license is for a School. He has covered a large area after the last demolitions and inspite of not having any stay orders, his shed was not demolished. He sells his buffalos once they age and lose their fertility to the abattoir at Deonar. Whereas there were others who inspite of having stay orders couldn't safeguard their houses. The names of those who lost their houses inspite of having stay orders are Chander Yadav, Dilip Yadav, Rafiq and Abbas. These people are willing to come and testify when required. These residents claim that the activists of 'Savdhan' threaten the locals and extort money from them and force them into submission.
11. Malaria is quite rampant, as the place is replete with mosquito swamps.
12. Most of the above mentioned information was obtained after interviewing Mr. Mohit, Mohd. Yunus, Jwala Prasad Gupta, Irfan Ghani, Hafiq, Mohd. Shueb who is a General Secretary of the BJP local unit.
13. People buy water at Rs. 5/- per gallon. (one handa of 35 ltrs)



14. There was an offer from the Municipal Corpn. whereby water connection was offered to be provided if 15 people together paid up Rs.45,000/- for pipe installation charges. I.e. an average of Rs.3, 000/- per person. But since most of the residents earn between Rs.50-100 per day, they couldn't pay up and as a result they have to buy water from outside.

15. There is only 1 Govt. School where the language of instruction is Urdu and Hindi. Apart from this, around 150 people study at the Madrassa where the language of instruction is Urdu. And there is no official Govt. curriculum.

16. The details of some of the residents at Indira Nagar is as under :

i. Hussain Ahmed resides here since 1990. He has a voter's card, a ration card, and he has regd. himself under the Slum Sanitation Programme.

ii. Naseema Khatoon actually hails from Gorakhpur. She is 30 yrs old. She has 5 children: a 12 year old boy who works in a garage and therefore has no access to schooling, a 4 year old girl who is brain damaged and hence perennially bed ridden, Her husband, Ghulam Mohd. Is a fruit vendor who earns between 50-65 Rs. Per day. She buys water at 7-8Rs. Per Handa. She has no Electric meter and hence buys electricity from outside. Her other 3 children study at NO3. Indira Gandhi school.

iii. Shima Zamir: Her husband is Zamir Hasan. She is staying here since the last 2 years and has 3 children. She hails from Lucknow and has studied upto the 12 std. Her husband earns Rs.80-100Rs. Per day by selling Zari. She bought this house from her life savings for Rs.26, 000/- She says when a Pucca structure is demolished, around Rs.50, 000/- to Rs. 60,000/- is required to rebuild it.

iv. Shahid aged 10 years, studies at the local Ruby English High School. In Class III. He has 30 students in her class.

17. Every year the land, on which these houses exists sinks in and the residents have to refill the ground with mud. (Approx. 2 truckloads of mud are required for the purpose every year per house.)

18. The details of some of the residents at Chikalwadi, Govandi is as under:

i. Mohd. Israt Farooki: Aged 35 years, he has 4 children and all of them are studying at the 1 local Bharat Nagar school. He makes garments and earns his living.

ii. Mohd. Rasualla Ansari: He is 18 years old, a tailor by profession. He is unmarried and stays with parents. His house was also demolished.

iii. Jwala Prasad Gupta: He is a tanker driver with BPCL. He says he is residing here since 1990. and yet his house was demolished. He has 4 children and he also has to buy water.

iv. Sheikh Mohd. : Aged 38, a turner, fitter by profession hails from Pratapgarh from U.P. He has 3 children, a brother and a wife.

v. Shabin Ali: Aged 33, has 4 children, and is a tailor by profession and he is staying here for the last 12 years. Prior to this he was at Dharavi.

vi. Hasan Sheikh: He is 30 years, works at the abattoir. Has 3 children, hails from Sholapur. Lives here for the last 18 years.

vii. Hussain Ahmed is a carpenter, Mohd. Shamsher from Balra, U.P. is here since 1993 and sells supari fruit Ghulam Mohd. Is another resident.

viii. Vidaya Hidayatulah: Is living in the open and this place is a rented place. Her house was demolished and she is scared that if she rebuilds, her house may face demolition again and whatever meagre resources she is left with will also go. Since 1990, for the first time she has faced demolition.

19. Zubeda Jabbar, the local Corporator from the Samajwadi Party had assured the residents that there would be no demolitions but in the afternoon the demolition squad came and demolished their houses. Sayyed Sohail Akroor, the Congress MLA also had given them similar assurances but in vain.

#### **Findings, Comments of the fact finding team and demands:**

##### **Findings:**

1. The team observed that most of the people residing here were migrants.
2. They had left their original habitats for a variety of reasons. Some of these are earthquakes, construction of dams, floods, inability to make ends meet in the villages from which they migrated.
- 3 All of them do some work that is useful and essential like carpentry, masonry, plumbing, tailoring, driving (auto, taxi and B.E.S.T. drivers.), domestic helpers, servants, peons, clerks, waiters, teachers and so on.
4. The team observed that their wages very abysmally low and did not enable them to buy out a small room even in a Chawl, let alone a flat.
5. The employers who employ them and use them as cheap labour have mansions to live in and limousines to travel.
6. The team found that there was a tendency on the part of the same employers to label all the people in the slums as criminals and to write them off as unwanted.
7. Shifting them to places like Kalyan-Ambernath will snap links between their place of livelihood and their place of work. So shifting them to distant places will deprive them of their 'Right to life' guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution.

##### **Comments of the CPDR team on the fact-finding team:**

There are advertisements by the Lokhandwala builders, which has constructed a large number of buildings. These advertisements highlight 'flats overlooking greenery' are for sale. But these flats, due to the slums don't overlook greenery but shanties which adversely affects the prices of real estate and hurts the interests of the concerned builders.

The CPDR team realizes that maybe the hands of these people who own these resources and who are the vested interests are behind the current spate of demolitions.

There are exhausted quarries all around the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. The team has reason to believe that these quarries were excavated unauthorisedly and unlawfully.

The C.P.D.R. unequivocally stands for the protection, preservation and the improvement of the



existing environment. The term 'ecology' has a Greek origin, which means 'house.'

The environment is the house in which we human beings live. It is in our interest that the house we live in is clean, good and comfortable but it must be for all human beings; it cannot be for a few who have the resources and the power at their disposal and to the exclusion of the vast majority of people who inherit this earth.

The C.P.D.R. understands that the present spate of demolitions started at the instance of an organisation called the Bombay Environment Action Group (BEAG). The concept of environment, which this organisation has, stands independent of human beings. Such a concept of environment is a fascist concept. The fascists in Italian Germany spoke about 'country' as an 'entity' that stood independently of human beings and at whose altar the human being could be sacrificed. Organisations like BEAG have created and advocated a similar concept of environment that is devoid of human beings and at whose altar the poor and the deprived of this city can be sacrificed as the scapegoats- all in the name of hygiene and clean air.

The 1990 Census shows that there were about 12 million people in the city of Mumbai. At present there must be around 14-15 million. According to official statistics, more than 50% of people in Mumbai live in slums, which means that there are about 7 million people in the city who live in the slums. This is more than the total population of New Zealand and Israel put together. There cannot be any plan concerning this city which excludes 7 million people. If they are so excluded they will be left with no option but to rise in rebellion as a last resort. In this context, it must be remembered that both the American declaration of Independence and the Universal declaration of Human Rights recognize rebellion as a last resort to overthrow a regime, which is repressive, and anti people.

In fact Henry David Thoreau, the man who influenced Mahatma Gandhi enormously, said clearly; and I quote:

"Every individual has the right to reject and disobey unjust and unfair laws and refuse his allegiance to a regime whose tyranny has become unbearable. To be right is more honourable than to be law abiding." Unquote.

In an unjust system, the laws are intended to defend and uphold injustice. Ours is an unjust system. And our laws are against the vast majority of people in this country. To be specific, the laws are against about 7 million people in this city whom the laws refer to and treat as trespassers and criminals. We must change such laws. And thereby act in the best interests of our people.

#### **Demands and recommendations:**

1. These dwellers in the slums have reclaimed marshy land and have made them viable and habitable. Hence we insist that they be allowed to stay where they are, without any hindrance.
2. Rehabilitation makes no sense. For it is nothing but a never ending cycle of displacement and rehabilitation which even the higher income groups cannot afford, not to mention these poor slum dwellers. So we demand immediate stoppage to these demolitions.
3. We think that the most viable, the most humane and harmonious solution is to improve their present conditions wherever they are; and provide them with roads, sanitation, water, electricity, schools, transport services, medical facilities and such other important facilities. We demand that bus services to Appapada be resumed immediately and thereby ease their suffering and provide them with the much needed relief.
4. We demand that the issue of slum dwellers be seen in the light of the larger issue of development,

and not just in a micro sense.

If the ill effects of liberalisation and globalisation has affected the middle classes and made them jittery and struggling for survival, one can very well understand the plight of these poor slum dwellers and sympathise with them and give them at least what is their due.

In the name of humanity, let justice be done.

**Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights. (C.P.D.R.)**

# THE SECOND FACT FINDING REPORT

Teargas and bulldozers in the National Park

28th April 2000

This is with reference to the to the demolitions taking place at Appapada slum in Sanjay Gandhi National Park. A Fact finding team visited the area today (28th April) and the following is a brief report of the same. The fact-finding team consisted of:

Prakash Reddy, Secretary, CPI (Mumbai Council), Mr.P.S.Gupta, former secretary, All India Income Tax Employees Association, Susan Abraham, journalist, A.F.Mathew, Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR) and Jennifer Coutinho, CPDR.

The following were our observations:

## # The Massive scale of demolitions

The present phase of demolitions started on Monday, April 24 a day subsequent to massive rally organised by Nivara Hak Suraksha Samiti and attended by 30,000 slum dwellers which was addressed by former Prime Minister V.P.Singh, Minal Gore and Shabana Azmi.

The team estimates that more than the government figures of 10,000 huts have been demolished uprooting about a lakh people in the most inhuman way. We observed vast numbers of displaced and dispossessed slum dwellers waiting around their previous homes only. Only a small percentage of people were seen leaving the National Park premises. Most people we met at the park insisted that they would not be leaving this area and would stay put.

The demolitions were carried out with the help of massive land excavators. Large tracts of land have been excavated leaving huge craters. The demolished areas look as though some major calamity has befallen them.

The demolitions are being carried out with the assistance of a huge contingent of police force and SRP force. The area we covered looked more like a POLICE CAMP.

## # The Builders-Forest dept-Government nexus

As we entered the affected slum areas at Pimripada in Goregaon east, what was obvious to the eye was the massive quarrying going on in the so-called forest area by Raheja Builders. There was a board showing large tracts of land belonging to another builder called Tikekar and others. In fact a 16 storeyed residential apartment, Valentine Towers (completed last year) towered over the slum totally untouched. There were other such posh apartments, built by Shaukat Lalani builders.

As we left the affected area two hours later at Appapada in Malad east, there were again large tracts of quarrying going on by Lokhandwala builders, in fact the massive and posh Lokhandwala complex in Kandivili east has come up recently, in the heart of the "so called forest land".

A view of the area would make it obvious to all that these slums are "eye sores" to the posh residents of these apartments.

#### # Inhuman treatment to the slum dwellers

Many a heartrending tale was told to the fact-finding team by a number of affected people. Many slum dwellers have been injured in the lathi charge. In the last few days, Bhim Singh, Hukum Dev Singh, Shyam Dhani, Chedilal Vishvakarma showed their injuries to the team and spoke about how the police had entered their houses and assaulted them and others including women and children. Infact, Rahul Pawar had to have fourteen stitches in the head. Ahire had the skin on his back torn due to the assault. Malesh Y.K. a handicapped man showed that even his lame foot was not spared in the lathi charge.

It was reported to the team that a pregnant woman died/seriously injured at Poppat compound. The team was not allowed to enter this area and hence could not verify.

Yesterday, 27th April, slum dwellers reported that apart from brutal lathi charge police fired in the air and burst various rounds of tear gas to terrorise slum dwellers.

#### # Police Repression

A number of activists from the area, like activists of Nivara Hak Surak Sha Samiti and the police have targeted other slum organisations. Gurbir Singh an activist, was singled out and false cases foisted on him.

66 slum dwellers and activists are in lock up at Dindoshi police station for a number of days. A tearful girl told us that her brother one Dashrath Parushram who had come from the Mumbai suburb to visit her mother was arrested and badly beaten up in the lock up.

The police did not spare even the team members of the rough treatment. One inspector by the name of Shantaram Birje physically manhandled one of the team members, Prakash Reddy. The team members were prevented from visiting many of the sites. We were also prevented from taking detailed interviews from the affected slum dwellers.

#### # An obvious Lack of alternatives

It is glaringly obvious that the government has NO alternative plans or intentions for the resettlement of the displaced slum dwellers. Narendra Kumar Tiwari asked the team "if we will not be allowed to survive in these far away places, are we going to be allowed to stay on the streets? Or should we go to Nariman point?"

It is obvious that the government does not wish to bear its responsibility of finding alternative accommodation for slum dwellers living in this area for ten to twenty years. The government stated position upto now has been that persons residing in the area before 1995 were legitimate slum dwellers, however the team met numerous persons holding proofs such as ration cards, voter identity card, forest department's identity card etc whose houses were not spared. A small percentage who were able to shell out Rs 7000/- to the forest department seems to have been spared. What has to be noted here is that many of the affected persons told the team that it was not possible for most of them to raise such a large amount in such a short period of time.

The team observed that the said Rs.7000/- was no guarantee of relocation. It was a mere fine to the forest department!