

LET'S STOP A CRISIS BECOMING A HUMANITARIAN DISASTER

Indian Farmers Human Rights Report

deolfoundation.org

Open Letter to the United Nations



STOP A CRISIS BECOMING A HUMANITARIAN DISASTER

Urgent Request

We humbly request you to send a fact-finding team to India, in order to investigate human rights violations against farmers, farm labourers, and those who support their national campaign to have the recently passed farm laws repealed. We further request urgent creation of U. N. Observation Posts At The Three Main Farmers' Protests Sites at Ghazipr, Tikri, and Singhu.



change.org/SaveIndianFarmersUN

Reasons for Request

The 30 rights and freedoms set out in the UDHR(1) include the right to freedom from torture, the right to free speech, and the right to a fair trial. It further includes the right to live in freedom and safety, civil and political rights, like the right to life, liberty, and privacy. The right to form groups and organize peaceful meetings, as well as the rights of journalists, social/political activists, artists, and musicians to have their work and themselves protected are also present within these articles.

During its heavy-handed response to the farmer's agitation, the Government of India is in



- Breach of Articles 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29 and 30 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights Act.
- Breach of Articles 2, 3, 6, and 8 of the United Resolution of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas(2).
- Breach of Articles 14, 32, 21, 20 (1), 25(1), 19, 29 (1) of the Constitution Of India.(3)
- Breach of Articles *PT1*: 1, *PT2*: 2, *PT3*: 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (4)





Farmers Demands

- Repeal the following 3 laws passed anti constitutionally in parliament:
- Farming The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation)
 Act(5).
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act (6).
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment)
 Act(7).

Additionally:

- Implementation of a new law that guarantees MSP (Minimum Support Price) on 23 crops.
- Implement Swaminathan report's formula (price not less than C2+50%) and recommendations (2006) (8).
- Consultation with India's Farming Union
 Organisations and other relevant farmers
 representatives before enacting any future
 laws or policies.

Farmers say the laws will deregulate crop pricing and eventually, get rid of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) that guarantees them an income by setting a uniform price for certain crops. Most farmers are small-scale and have low annual incomes. They are in no position to take their produce out of their district to trade. It will also add to their expenses. They believe in the long run a consortium of private players will develop, leaving them vulnerable to large corporations and market forces. In the law meant to provide for a governing mechanism for the contract farming, there seems to be no check upon the corporate houses coming into contract with the small peasants, against usurping their land, also the dispute mechanism does not allow them to go to court. Instead, it will be brought before a bureaucrat, whom the farmers believe will most likely favour big business. The laws are not supported by sufficient regulation, they argue(9). The amendments in the Essential commodities act now allows for large-scale storage of all the basic eatables, thereby paving the way for synthetic inflation as well as renders the poor population vulnerable to starvation.

On The Ground ...



Currently, there are tens of thousands of farmers encamped at the three farmers protest sites. The numbers have been steadily rising since their initial arrival on the 26th November 2020. People have left their homes, in many cases hundreds of miles away. Multitudes are sleeping in make-shift tents, under tractors, and in tractor trolleys during the coldest winter in Delhi's recorded history. A large amount of protestors comprise of women, children, and the elderly. A number have succumbed to the bitter conditions. They are now surrounded by barbed wire, barricades, spikes, and scores of police and paramilitary officers. Ambulances and vehicles are being restricted access to the sites. On the 26th January 2021 during the republic day protests, an Amercian Aid worker, Dr Swaiman Singh and his team were brutally beaten by Delhi Police whilst they were administering medical aid to protestors and police officers. Their ambulance was also smashed. The incident was captured on camera(9a).

On Friday 29th January 2021 a group of 200 people in plainclothes attacked the farmer's camp with rocks and battens whilst police stood by and watched. Tents were destroyed and farmers attacked. The farmers have shown restraint in the face of these provocations. A Senior Police Officer was asked why the mob were allowed to go unhindered into the campsite which is under heavy security personal guard "they wanted to hold talks and were allowed to move forward."(10). The farmers, meanwhile, alleged that the group threw "petrol bombs" at the protest site. They had come armed with sticks too, the farmers claimed(11). The fact-checking website Alt News headlined with 'BJP supporters posing as locals identified in mob protesting against farmers at Delhi border(12). Eventually, the farmers resorted to self defence'. The Delhi Police arrested 44 people in connection with the violence at Singhu border, ANI reported. According to another report in The Indian Express, all those arrested were farmer protestors(13). Even the right of self-defense is being denied.

India has a tragic history of communal riots against minority communities. The fear is that the government is trying to play the communal card and turn the majority community against Sikh farmers. This has largely failed to this point to the number of Hindu farmers involved in the movement for change and the communal harmony existing between the two groupings.

Farmer Suicides

In the last few years, a large number of farmers have committed suicide. Cases of suicides have been reported from states such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh(14). 13 farmers have committed suicide during this agitation(29).



The Media in India...



The world economic forum has exposed horrifying revelations about the Indian Media: instances of its unscrupulous involvement in financial, criminal, civil, and sexual crimes in an organised attempt to destabilize the nation. It has named the Indian media as the most corrupt in the world(15). The Indian Media is widely seen as being biased and in the hands of special interest groups. JournalistS with differing views than that of the 'official narrative are harassed, threatened, and sometimes killed. At least 198 serious attacks were recorded on reporters between 2014 to 2019. 40 were killed'(16).

On the other hand, the Indian government has tried to scare and stifle the voice of independent journalists and media entities by coercion...

Caravan Magazine is one of India's news platforms that has covered the farmer's protest. Ten sedition cases have been brought against three of its senior-most editorial staff (the publisher, editor, and executive editor). In five states for a story and tweets relating to the death of the protester(17). In just a matter of a few weeks, the total number of journalists arrested in 2021, is the highest in 30 years in India, since 1992(18).

Newsclick, another news platform known for its critical stance about the government's decisions has been recently raided by tax officials, this is a widely known method of coercion against anybody who is critical of the government.

Freelance Journalist Mandeep Punia was arrested on January 31st by Delhi Police whilst covering the farmer's agitation. He was beaten and threatened in police custody(19). The beatings only stopped once the police were informed a video of his arrest had gone viral. A list of all the arrests made and FIRs filed against journalists in January 2021 alone:

January 17: Three journalists of the website 'The Frontier Manipur' were arrested under the UAPA and charged with sedition.

January 20: Senior journalist Paranjoy Guha Thakurta was issued a non-bailable arrest warrant by a Gujarat court.

January 25: Three journalists in U.P.'s Kanpur Dehat district were booked for airing a report about a school function drill. January 28: FIRs were lodged against six senior journalists for inciting violence on January 26: through their social media posts. January 30: The Rampur Police in U.P. registered an FIR

against senior journalist Siddharth Varadarajan.

January 31: Mandeep Punia was arrested by the Delhi Police at the Singhu border. Another journalist, Dharmender Singh, was picked up by police on January 30 evening from the border(20).

Human Rights Violations

Human Rights Groups do not feel safe. Amnesty International says it has been forced to halt its India operations due to "reprisals" from the government.

The watchdog also accused the government of pursuing a "witch-hunt" against human rights organizations. "We have seen an alarming escalation in the Indian authorities' targeting of anyone who dares to criticize or protest the government's repressive laws and policies. The crackdown on those protesting the Citizenship Amendment Act still has not ended, while new efforts to quell the anti-farm legislation protests have taken shape. The crushing of dissent leaves little space for people to peacefully exercise their human rights including the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly in the country," said Rajat Khosla, Senior Director of Research, Advocacy and Policy at Amnesty Internationall(21).





Protestor Jagseer Singh dragged from a tractor and viciously beaten by police and an accompanying mob on Jan 26th 2021.



Farmer Labourers Activist Nodeep Kaur was arrested on Jan 12th 2021. Geeta Pandey of the BBC, quoted Meena Harris's tweet that the activist was "arrested, tortured & sexually assaulted in police custody".

Police Brutality

The authorities must stop threatening, demonizing, and arresting peaceful protesters and stop treating them as 'anti-nationals' or 'terrorists' (22). Farming groups say more than 100 people have gone missing since the 26th January tractor rally, as draconian laws like sedition and UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) have been used to clamp down on protesters. At least six senior citizens are among the 120 people arrested in connection with the violence that broke out in the capital during the rally on Republic Day, according to a list released by the Delhi police. A peaceful assembly does not lose its peaceful character due to sporadic violence or unlawful behaviours of some individuals. Where a small minority tries to turn a peaceful assembly into a violent one, police should ensure that those who are protesting peacefully are able to continue to do so, and not use the violent acts of a few as a pretext to restrict or impede the exercise of rights of a majority.

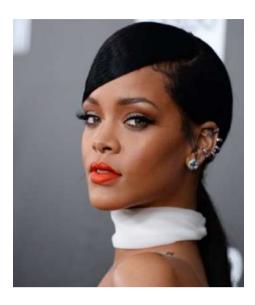
The Editors Guild of India, The Press Club of India, the Indian Women's Press Corps, the Delhi Union of Journalists, and the Indian Journalists Union, Reporters without borders have all released statements condemning the crackdown on journalists covering the protests.(23).

CELEBRITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIVISTS TARGETED

DEOL FOUNDATION

Government Propaganda Machine & Police Forces Target Opposing Views

Global Barbadian popstar Rihanna (right) sent out a simple tweet asking why 'we were not discussing the farmer's agitation in India?' Whilst many around the world thanked her for raising a debate the Indian propaganda machine began an immediate and unwarranted backlash. This began with Amith Shah 'No propaganda can deter India's unity! No propaganda can stop India to attain new heights! Propaganda can not decide India's fate'. A totally disproportionate response. 'Similar or even identical tweets were shared by several celebrities, including Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, Bollywood's Akshay Kumar



, Ajay Devgn and Karan Johar, legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar and badminton player Saina Nehwal - leading to suggestions that the messages were co-ordinated by social media managers from the governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BIP).'(24)



Climate campaigner Greta Thunberg (left) shared a link to register objections to the new laws, police in Delhi said they were investigating whether there was an international campaign to damage India's reputation. The farmers protesting have the full force of the Indian government's propaganda machine. They have been labelled anti-national, Khalistani (Sikh separatists), Naxalites, Urban Naxalites, Pakistani, and the list goes on. Ironically the police have claimed Greta Thunberg's toolkit had Khalistani origins. Ludicrous if you consider she is a Swedish Climate change activist with no links to Sikh separatism. (A militant struggle that enjoyed popular support in the mid-1980's up until the mid-1990s.) The current farmer's agitation is a nonreligious secular agitation with Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Atheists, and Dalits supporting in large numbers. Most protestors are also seen waving the national flag of India, something no self-respecting separatist would do.

A 22year old climate activist from Bengaluru has also been arrested and remanded for sharing the same toolkit as Greta Thurman. Disha Ravi is one of the founders of the "Friday for Future" campaign. "We have registered a case for spreading disaffection against the government of India - it's regarding sedition - and disharmony between groups on religious, social, and cultural grounds, and criminal conspiracy to give shape to such a plan," the officer had added(25).

'Twitter is locked in a battle with the Indian government after it was ordered to take down accounts supporting the ongoing farmers' protests. India's government has reportedly threatened to punish Twitter employees with fines and prison terms of up to seven years for restoring hundreds of accounts after the initial takedown'(26).

verview

22 year old climate activist Disha Ravi is now at the mercy of the Indian police, the and judiciary Indian media.

JUDICIARY

Impartial Judiciary?

The judiciary and the courts are no longer considered independent. "There is a viewpoint that post-retirement appointment is itself a scar on the judicial independence of the Judiciary. In fact, this is a valid and strong point." – former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi(27).

In view of the ongoing Farmers agitation, on January 12th the Supreme Court of India suspended the farm laws. "These are matters of life and death. We are concerned with laws. We are concerned with the lives and property of people affected by the agitation. We are trying to solve the problem in the best way. One of the powers we have is to suspend the legislation," SA Bobde, the chief justice, told the court.*5a Whilst this was a welcome step it was followed up with the creation of a 4 member panel to look into the grievances. But, this panel could not stand the test of credibility as neither the protesting peasants nor the nominated members themselves accepted the panel as one of the members Mr. B S Mann chose to recuse himself saying that I am on the side of the protesting peasants. All of the four members of the panel were quickly outed by their own previous statements as clearly being pro farm laws and pro-government(28).

"The members of the supreme courtappointed committee are not dependable as they have been writing on how agricultural laws are pro-farmer. We will continue our agitation," said farmer leader Balbeer Singh Rajewal (leader of BKU Rajewal) PAGE | 09 Data as of 17/02/2021





The names of those who have died during this historic farmers struggle...

Name Belongs to Date POD (29) Kahan Singh Dhaner, Barnala 24/11/2020 Mehal Kalan Toll plaza. Dhanna Singh Khiyali Chehlan Wali 27/11/2020 Bhiwani-Delhi Highway. Janak Raj Dhanaula Village 29-30/11/2020 Tikri Border. Gajjan Singh Bhangu Khatra 28/11/2020 Tikri Border. Gurdev Singh Attar Signwala 30/11/2020 N/A Baljinder Singh Gill Jhammat 01/12/2020 Delhi-Kurukshetra Highway. Gurjant Singh Bacchoana 02/12/2020 Near Tikri Border. Gurbachan Singh Sibia Bhinder Khurd 02/12.2020 Protest at Moga. Lakhbir Singh Laleana 02/12/2020 Tikri Border. Rajinder Kaur Gangohar 07/12/2020 Mehal Kalan toll plaza. Karnail Singh Sherpur 07/12/2020 N/A Gurmail Kaur Chandpatti 24/11/2020 Dhospital in Patiala. Ajay More Sonipat 08/12/2020 Sighu Border. Sanajy Singh Sonipat 08/12/2020 Sighu Border. Kitab Singh Chahal Ujhana 08/12/2020 Narwana, Jind-Patiala Rd Mewa Singh Khote 07/12/2020 Tikri Border. Lakhvir Singh Jharon 08/12/2020 N/A Bhag Singh Bhadowal 11/12/2020 Sighu Border. Ram Mehar Chann 07/12/2020 Rohtak in Haryana Makhan Khan Bhinder Kalan 14/12/2020 Sighu Border. Gurmeet Singh Kundala 15/12/2020 Sighu Border. Labh Singh Saferha 15/12/2020 Delhi-Karnal Highway. Gurpreet Singh Saferha 15/12/2020 Karnal Delhi Highway. Sukhdev Singh Dandiana 14/12/2020 Near Bhago Majra Village Deep Singh Popna 14/12/2020 Mohali. Baba Ram Singh Saferha 16/12/2020 Suicide Singhu Border Jatinder Singh Fatta Malauka 17/12/2020 Delhi-Hisar Road. Surinder Singh Hussainpur Khurd 05/12/2020 N/A Munim Krishan L.Gupta Dhuri 11/12/2020 Tikri Border. Balbir Singh Rajsansi Bagga Kala 11/12/2020 Punjab To Delhi, Morcha. Galtan Singh Bhagwanpur 01/01/2021 Gazipur Border Kashmir Singh Pasihyapur 1-2/01/2021 Gazipur Border Manpreet Singh Kaka Alipur 21/12/2020 Singhu/Kundli Border Satnam Singh Mahima Chakk 02/01/2020 N/A Harjinder Singh Jindu Baghiwander 01/02/2021 Bathinda Yashpal Sharma Barnala N/A N/A Kashmir Singh Kuhandiyanwali 02/01/2021 Tikri Border Jashanpreet Singh Chauke 02/01/2021 Tikri Border laghbir Singh lind Harvana 02/01/2021 Tikri Border Kulbir Singh Gangana 03/01/2021 Kundli-Singhu Border Shamsher Singh Lidhran 03/01/2021 Kundli-Singhu Border Surinder Singh Sindhu Maayna 03/01/2021 Palwal Protest site border Raj Kumar Nawansher 19/12/2020 N/A Hazoora Singh Patiala 19/12/2020 N/A Surjit Singh Ladhar 02/01/2021 Tikri Border Kashmir Lal Mahmu 01/01/2021 Delhi Protest site. Gurlabh Singh Dyalpura 28/12/2020 Dyalpura Bathinda Amarjit Singh Jalalabad 24/01/2020 Tikri Border Jangir Singh Pratapgarh 05/01/2021 Sighu Border Kesar Singh Lang Patiala 06/01/2021 Delhi Border Pratap Singh N/A 05/01/2021 N/A Surinder Singh N/A 05/01/2021 Delhi Agra Highway Gurdarshan Singh Fatehgarh N/A N/A Ram Singh Batriana 06/01/2021 N/A

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"To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity."

Nelson Mandela

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Varun Attari Dhaunkalan 31/01/2021 Returning sick from Delhi. Krishan Singh Bhawanigarh 31/01/2021 A hospital in Sangrur. Sandeep Kumar Rampur Chana 02/02/2021 Tikri Border. Bant Singh Bahri Panecha 02/02/2021 Chahal Toll Plaza Protest. Boota Singh Tibbi Hari Singh 01/02/2021 A hospital in Sardulgarh. Gurjant Singh Cheema mandi 02/02/2021 Tikri Border. Jasmail Singh Chanawala 03/02/2021 Singhu Border. Sukhdev Kaur Mahesari Sandhuan 03/02/2021 Tikri Border to Moga. Surjit Singh Cheema Shukar Chak 03/02/2021 Delhi Border to Amritsar. Joginder Singh Dhal Patti 03/02/2021 Singhu Border. Jang Singh Dakha 30/01/2021 Punjab-Delhi highway. Gurjant Singh Kot Dharmu 03/02/2021 Delhi to Faridkot. Balvinder Singh Bari Bhujia 25/01/2021 N/A Shera Singh Pakhoke 28/01/2021 Tikri Border. Gurjant Singh Bhadra 05/01/2021 Tikri Border. Randhir Singh Mohangarh 04/02/2021 Tikri Border. Angrej Singh Manuke Moga 05/02/2021 Returning from Tikri border. Lakha Singh Kalaudi Sangrur 07/02/2021 Tikri Border. Satgur Singh Sheron N/A Dhuri Road, Gurdaspura. Sukhmander Singh Durkot 07/02/2021 Tikri order. Karambir Singhwala 07/02/2021 Tikri Border. Karamveer Gudda Jhajjar 07/02/2021 Dhansa Border Protest site. Roshan Singh Chaurpur 06/02/2021 Returned from Tikri Border. Manmohan Singh Ghaloti 08/02/2021 Tikri Border. Tarsem Singh Bhatauli 03/02/2021 Returning from the protes. Balvir Singh Bhadaur 08/02/2021 At PGI Chandigarh. Gamdur Singh Sangrur 07/02/2021 Hospital in Domicile. Deepak Nandana 08/02/2021 PGI hosiptal Rohtak. Harpinder Singh Kandeela 09/02/2021 Returning from the Delhi. Harender Singh Seva Panipat 09/02/2021 Singhu Border. Gurcharan Singh Gurusar 09/02/2021 N/A Bijender Dalal Dahara Jajjhar 08/02/2021 Rohtak PGI hospital. Darshan Singh Rauli Moga 09/02/2021 Singhu B. Hospital Sonipat. Satpal Singh Maur Khurd 10/02/2021 Delhi to Bathinda Road Satnam Singh Paada Bhikhariwal 09/02/2021 Singhu Border to Amritsar. Ranjit Singh Jalalabad 09/02/2021 Hospital in Faridkot Gurcharan Singh Mullanpur 09/02/2021 Mullanpur Dakha. Hansa Singh Said Mohamad 12/02/2021 Sighu Border. Kashmir Singh Rajpura 11/02/2021 Hospital in Patiala. Naib Singh Dhande Samrala 11/02/2021 To PGI, Chandigarh. Kulwant Singh Halwara 12/02/2021 Halwara Ludhiana. Manjeet Singh Khanauri 12/02/2021 Khanauri Punjab. Malkeet Singh Demru Kalan 14/02/2021 toll plaza dharna. Palvinder Singh Gawara 14/02/2021 To Delhi b. with his jatha. Jagdev Singh Moga 16/02/2021 Hospital near Delhi border. Darshan Singh Himatpura 19/01/2021 In DMC hospital from Delhi. Pritpal Singh Sekhu 17/01/2021 Returning from Delhi. Bhagwan Rana Paaksama 20/01/2021 Tikri Border. Baldev Singh Patti Bahthal 09/12/2020 Punjab-Delhi Border. Nirmal Singh Nimma Randhawa 19/01/2021 Singhu Border.

Bhagail Singh Chaunda 17/01/2021 Returning from Tikri border.

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- (*1) https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/
- (*2) https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1650694?ln=en
- (*3) https://www.india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india/constitution-india-full-text
- (*4) https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx
- (*5) http://164.100.47.4/BillsTexts/LSBillTexts/PassedLoksabha/113_2020_LS_Eng.pdf
- (*6)http://agricoop.nic.in/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20price%20assurance%20and%20farm%20services%20Act%2C%202020%20.pdf
- (*7) http://164.100.47.4/BillsTexts/LSBillTexts/Asintroduced/111_2020_LS_Eng.pdf
- (*8) Formula: Cost A2 +FL In agriculture, farmers also use a lot of family labour and if their cost is imputed and added to cost A2, that concept is called cost A2+FL. ... National commission on farmers head by M.S Swaminathan recommended a 50 per cent margin over C2, which is also being the demand of the farmers. https://www.prsindia.org/report-summaries/swaminathan-report-national-commission-farmers
- (*9) https://news.sky.com/story/indian-farmers-protest-why-are-farmers-protesting-12210142
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