

**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

Islamabad 27th June, 2016

Subject: **INTERIM REPORT ON OKARA FARMS ISSUE.**

The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) had learnt from the press about reports of skirmishes between the authorities and the tenants of farm land in Okara, the violation of the law by the authorities, the allegation of forced ousters, the involvement of tenants in cases under the Anti Terrorism Act as a travail and about the worsening law and order situation in the most lucrative farm area of Okara. Which became a matter of concern as a human rights issue.

Taking suo motu notice, an investigating committee of three honourable members was constituted to visit the area and gather the correct information for proceeding further in the matter.

The Committee visited Okara and submitted an interim report. There is a need of further investigation, inspection of revenue record, the agreements between the tenants and the government, Fard Wajib ul Arz applicable to the parties, the practice of payment of consideration by the tenants for the use of the land, the legal rights of all sides

The most important issue which precedes other issues, is the ascertainment of the locus standi of the Federal Government to hold on to a property which prima facie

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belongs to the Punjab Government. This question remains enshrouded in mystery. The violence is because of incarceration of protesting leaders and their involvement in charging them under the Anti Terrorism Act.

The investigation has not ended. Reference will also be made to the Board of Revenue, Punjab for providing us details about the ownership status of the property.

In the meanwhile, I have the honour of submitting the interim report alongwith observations and interim recommendations to the Hon'ble Committee on Human Rights of the Senate of Pakistan.

Justice (R) Ali Nawaz Chowhan
Chairman

Interim Report

Introduction

The Committee consisted of the following NCHR Members,

Ms. Kishwer Shaheen Awan,

Chaudhry Muhammad Shafique

Mr. Ishaq Masih Advocate.

It held meetings with several civil society members in Lahore and Okara.

This report includes details of the delegation's meetings with stakeholders, and notes exchanged with the members of the Commission by the civil society, the AMP, government functionaries and villagers living in areas surrounding the Military Farms.

The report has been divided into the following sections:

- Introduction of Okara
- Okara Military Farms dispute
- Objectives of Okara visit
- Activities undertaken during the visit
- Meetings details
- Observations of the Commission
- Recommendations
- Annexures

Geographical location of Okara

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Okara, located some 110 kilometres southwest of Lahore, is considered one of the most fertile districts in the province of Punjab. The district is bounded on the east by Kasur district; Sahiwal and Pakpattan districts on the west; Sheikhupura and Faisalabad districts on the north; and Bahawalnagar district on the south. The Indian border lies on the south-eastern side of Okara. The district has a total area of 4,377 square kilometres. It has three tehsils – Okara, Depalpur and Renala Khurd.

According to the 1998 census, the district has a population of 2,232,992 of which 22.84 per cent are/were urban. Okara is famous for its fertile lands and potato, sugarcane, wheat, rice and maize crops. It is also known for its orange, mango, lemon, guava and grapefruit orchards. One can find archaeological remains of several dynasties of prehistory, Indus Valley Civilisation, Persians, Sultanates, the Mughal Empire, the Sikh Confederacy and the British Raj.

Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the two major occupations of the rural population that makes up 78 percent of the district's total population. Agriculture is the backbone of district's economy.

The Farms dispute

There are four types of farms in Okara. These include:

1. Military Farms Okara
2. Renala Estate
3. Coleyana Estate
4. Army Welfare Trust Farm, Probanabad, Depalpur

Okara has six Military Farms in 18 Chaks – 3/4L, 4/4L, 5-A/4L, 6/4 L, 8/4L, 9/4L, 10/4L, 11/4L, 12/4 L, 13/4L, 17/4L, 18/4L, 20/4L, 25/4L, 26/4L, 44/3R and 45/3 R. Spreading over 17,013 acres, these are managed by the Military Farms Authorities.

The Revenue Department's record (Annex-I) shows that in 1913, the Government of Punjab had transferred the land to the Central Government (the Ministry of Defence) on lease for 20 years @ Rs15,000 per annum. The lease agreements between the government and military authorities, however, were not available.

The Revenue Department record states that the record of payment of rent/lease money is neither available nor provided by the military authorities. Out of this land, 12,806.55 acres was leased out, by 2000, to 1,102 tenants on Batai System by the Military Farm

Management over a lease agreement signed by the tenant and the Military Farm Authorities.

In 2000, the Military Farm Authorities replaced the Batai System of cultivation with cash payment. The cash-rent system received a strong resistance from the tenants who refused to accept it.

Since 2001, tenants havenot paid in cash or under Batai System. They have formed the AMP under which they demand propriety rights of the land claiming that they have been cultivating it for generations.

The Anjum Muzzareen Punjab (AMP) has been agitating since 2001. This whole episode went through many ups and downs during these years resulting in commencement of a strong peasants movement, disproportionate use of force by local administration and loss of human lives. The fresh wave of tension emerged in April 2016 when the local district administration refused to let the AMP hold a convention to commemorate International Peasants Day. In a bid to stop this event by force, large scale arrests have been made, anti terrorism cases have registered against tenant leaders and they have been put in prisons under in-human conditions. This situation has made head lines in national media and attracted the attention of national and international human rights groups.

Objectives of Okara Visit

The two-day visit had been planned in line with the NCHR's mandate to investigate incidents of human rights abuse and propose recommendations to prevent these.

The NCHR firmly believes that all citizens of Pakistan have equal rights as enshrined in constitution of Pakistan. The situation in Okara is serious where thousands of tenants (muzareen) have been cultivating government's land for generations. Media reports suggest that the local administration has been arresting tenants and denying them their right to peaceful assembly. A large number of women and children are living in the areas cultivated by tenants. The NCHR considers it necessary to thoroughly investigate the issues involving the AMP and the local authorities. The Commission, being the country's prime human rights body, is keen to find how it can help address human rights violations, if there are any.

The key objectives of the visit were:

- To assess the ground situation in Okara where there is a clash between the AMP, the local administration and the administration of Military Farms. The issue has been lingering on for 15 years.

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- To prepare a report based on the facts, information gathered and observations made during the visit and present it before the Parliament and the nation so that the necessary and required intervention can be made to address the issue.
- To highlight the urgency to not only address the issue of arrest of tenants but also promote efforts to suggest a permanent solution to the dispute that is acceptable to all the stakeholders.

Activities undertaken during the visit

The visit was planned in a way so that that maximum ground could be covered to comprehend various aspects of the dispute. Focus was, therefore, on visiting the relevant Chaks so that a first-hand account of tenants could be collected and the situation on ground could be observed.

Apart from meeting several tenants from the 18 Chaks, the NCHR team met officials from the local administration, civil society members, journalists and officials from the Military Farms.

The Commission members undertook the following activities:

- Met Awami Workers' Party (AWP) Secretary General Farooq Tariq, Centre for Social Justice's (CSJ) Peter Jacob, Democratic Commission of Human development (DCHD) Executive Director Ms. Tanvir Jehan, and other civil society activists to know about their take on the situation in Okara in the wake of the 15-year-old dispute. The meeting was held on May 17, 2016, at the office of Democratic Commission for Human Development (DCHD), in Model Town, Lahore.
- Travelled to Okara from Lahore on May 18, 2016.
- Met Okara District Coordination Officer (DCO) Socrat Aman Rana at his office on May 18, 2016.
- Met District Police Officer (DPO) Muhamamd Faisal Rana at the DCO Office on May 18, 2016.
- Met Okara Military Farms Commandant Brigadier Asif on May 18, 2016.
- Met villagers and leaders of AMP (aman group) from various Chaks where tenants cultivate the disputed land
- Visited Chak 4/4L of Military Farms Group Okara on May 18, 2016.
- Met local AMP leaders, including Union Council Chairman Noor Nabi, in Chak 4/4L, on May 18, 2016.
- Met another group of AMP, led by Younis Masih, at Civil Rest House, Okara, on May 18, 2016.

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- Met members of Okara Press Club at Civil Rest House on May 18, 2016.
- Met AWP Secretary General Farooq Tariq and Centre for Social Justice's Peter Jacob at Chamba House, Lahore, on May 19, 2016.
- Held a meeting at Directorate of Ministry of Human Rights in Lahore on May 19, 2016.

Meeting details

Day 1: May 17, 2016

The team held a meeting with civil society activists at the office of Democratic Commission for Human Development in Model Town, Lahore. The delegation had a preliminary meeting with the civil society activists to know about their views on the situation in Okara, and to understand the issue. AWP Secretary General, Farooq Tariq, Centre for Social Justice's Executive Director, Peter Jacob and DCHD members briefed the Commission members about the dispute.

Farooq Tariq whose party has been supporting the tenants said the issue had been lingering on for last 15 years. In the absence of serious efforts on part of the government to engage tenants in a dialogue, the situation has gone from bad to worse, he said. He said the tenants had converted "a jungle into an agricultural land" and that they had been cultivating the land for decades.

He said the problem surfaced in 2000, when military authorities changed the tenants' status to contractors and asked them to pay in cash instead of giving a portion of their crop to the military.

The tenants refused.

They formed the AMP under which they have been struggling for the propriety rights of the land. In April 2016, alleged by Farmer Tariq that the district administration refused to allow the AMP to hold a farmers' convention. Several tenants, who had come to protest in the streets of Okara City, were arrested.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting with Okara DCO

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The NCHR Committee arrived at the DCO office at around 11am. DCO Socrat Aman Rana briefed the delegation about steps his administration was taking to keep the situation under control.

He apprised the delegation that although there are four types of land in Okara. the problem exists at the Military Farms only. Whereas the tenants in Renala Estate, Coleyana Estate and Army Welfare Trust Farm, Probanabad, Depalpur, had agreed to accept the new terms and conditions set by the authorities.

According to the DCO some arrests had been made recently when the AMP tried to create a law and order situation. He said the AMP has been agitating for one and a half month. He claimed that the administration had information that AMP activists were planning violence.

He said that after a terrorist attack in Lahore's Gulshan-i-Iqbal Park, they are extra careful. The DCO went on to say:

"The AMP requested for permission to hold a Farmers' Convention in Okara on April 17 but I refused to allow such a gathering under the current security situation... but they were not going to stop,"

On April 16, 2016, only a day before the planned convention, the DCO issued orders to detain AMP General Secretary Abdul Sattar in High Security Prison of Sahiwal under the Maintenance of Public Order (Amendment) Ordinance, 2015, for 30 days to "prevent him from acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and tranquillity and for maintenance of law and order situation in the district".

The DCO told the delegation that following the detention of Abdul Sattar, several AMP activists had blocked the GT Road in Okara. He said the AMP activists had attacked policemen who were trying to evacuate the area to restore traffic on the GT Road. He said those creating the law and order situation were arrested and cases were registered against them.

Mr. Rana claimed that the protest by the AMP activists was not for propriety rights but for the release of Abdul Sattar. Who the DCO said had a criminal record. He said nobody was going to take the land back from the tenants. "The administration only wants to work on the new terms and conditions. He said that for the last 15 years the tenants had not paid even a single penny or shared their crop with the government.

"A large number of tenants are with us. They don't want to indulge in violence. They are tired of paying extortions to a gang of AMP leaders," he said. He said the tenants were afraid of Abdul Sattar.

The DCO said that Abdul Sattar and all those who took law into their own hands would be dealt with in accordance with law. That Sattar is nominated in a number of criminal cases.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting with Okara DPO

The delegation met Okara DPO Muhammad Faisal Rana at the DCO Office. The DPO said that since 2000, 348 cases had been registered against AMP activists. List attached)

These include 16 cases related to murder, 21 to attempted murder, six to kidnapping, 18 to 7ATA, 6 to MPO, 9 to dacoit, 3 to robbery, 47 to trespass, 24 to mischief and 198 cases related to other offence(List attached).

The DPO accused some AMP leaders of operating gangs of criminals. He said the protests had taken to the streets in Okara when police had arrested AMP leader Nadeem Ashraf on Lahore High Court's orders.

Faisal Rana told the delegation that criminals and terrorists took refuge in "no-go areas" established by AMP activists in the Chaks. "Whenever an outsider tries to enter these villages, they [AMP activists] stop him."

According to The DPO proclaimed offenders from across the Punjab take refuge in the Chaks. He claimed that AMP leaders extort from villagers share in their crops. In return, he said, they told the villagers that they would get them property rights of their land.

Calling Abdul Sattar ring leader of the AMP, the DPO said many tenants were at peace following his arrest. He claimed that the tenants were now willing to talk to military authorities about the new terms and conditions.

Faisal Rana said no false cases had been registered against any AMP leader. He said cases were registered against them for blocking GT Road. He said some of the cases had been registered under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

He said Abdul Sattar had been trying to blackmail the local administration by saying that he would bring Okara to a standstill by arranging protest demonstrations in the city. He said those protesting for his release were his family members. The remaining tenants, according to the DPO, were happy with his arrest. He claimed that ratio of crime had gone down with the arrest of the AMP leader. "No human rights have been violated. In fact, the rights of policemen were violated when they were attacked and fired upon by the AMP activists."He said.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting with Okara Military Farms Commandant

The NCHR delegation also met Okara Military Farms Commandant Brigadier Asif to get the military administration's point of view regarding the dispute. (Their written report is annexed)

He said that since 1947, the lessees (tenants) were cultivating farmland on Batai System: sharing produce of the land with the army/government of Pakistan. "In 2000, the army reviewed the system. The decision from switching over from Batai System to Cash Rent System was taken by the GHQ in the best interest of both the parties. It would not only generate more funds for the government but also save the management and the tenants from many corrupt practices," he said.

Brigadier Asif said that there is an outstanding amount of Rs3,189,171,633 to be paid to the government by the tenants as they had not paid since 2000. He said the number of tenants in Military Farms Group was 1,230. Of them, 224 were Christian tenants. He said the tenants had been unlawfully occupying the army/government land since 2000. He said that in 2001 the tenants had filed a writ petition in Lahore High Court against the Military Farms Authorities.

He said that the LHC had observed, "The petitioners are the lessees of the land and the period of their lease has since run over. They are in possession of the property without any lawful basis. If they want to stay on land, they have to adhere to the revised policy of the Ministry of Defence, Government of Pakistan and pay the rent in cash."

The tenants, Brigadier Asif said, had challenged the LHC order in the Supreme Court of Pakistan that had upheld the verdict. "Instead of implementing court orders, some individuals having vested interests exploited the situation and formed the AMP," he said. "Raising the slogan of Malki or Moot, these elements joined hands with a land mafia and turned the land and the villages into a no-go area for law enforcement agencies. The army and the civil administration made concerted efforts to solve the issue amicably but some AMP leaders... injected the element of violence into the affair," he said.

"Some of the AMP leaders and workers did not hesitate from taking the law in to their own hands." He said they had manhandled police and officials of other law enforcement agencies on numerous occasions over one and a half decade.

Brigadier Asif said police were acting as per law by investigating charges against the arrested AMP activist and producing them in court. "Human rights, if ever violated, were violated by the criminal elements in the ranks of the AMP who extorted money from the

poor lessees, committed crimes... and stopped law enforcement agencies from entering the area. The reports of unrest among the lessees are baseless," he said.

The commandant said that eviction of lessees from the land was never and would ever be the objective of any policy framed by the government and the army. The lessees would continue to possess the land as long as they fulfil their legal obligations, he said.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting villagers from AMP Amn Group

On day two, the delegation met several tenants from various Chaks of Military Farms Groups who introduced themselves as members of AMP Amn Group. They disassociated themselves from AMP leaders saying that the latter resort to violence against the district administration and military authorities.

This meeting took place in committee room of DCO office. It was facilitated by the district administration, and mainly those people attended, who are supporting district administration.

They said several Chaks were stronghold of the AMP which was a security concern for them. They said the situation prevented them from publicly supporting the agreement with the local authorities.

Muhammad Bashir, a tenant from 12/4 L, accused some AMP leaders, including Abdul Sattar, of running what he called a parallel system in several Chaks. "Police cannot enter these Chaks after 6pm."

Muhammad Amin, a tenant from 45/3 R, said the presence of a parallel system in the area had made lives of tenants miserable. "They also sell alcohol. We are tired of them. We want to have an agreement with military authorities so that we might live peacefully," he said.

Okara Cantonment Board vice president Maqbool Ahmad said the AMP was cashing in on the dispute for its own interests. He said criminal activities were underway in the area and those speaking against this were socially boycotted by AMP leaders. He urged the army, the government and tenants to sit together and find a workable solution to the problem.

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Sher Afzal, a tenant from 12/4 L, said AMP leaders demanded extortion on the pretext of collecting funds to pursue cases against the government.

Muhammad Aslam, another tenant from 12/4 L, said he had to flee his home following a dispute with some AMP activists. He said tenants were happy with the Batai System. He said that in Chak25/4 L, a group of baton-wielding women attacked those who defied the AMP.

James Masih from 10/4 L said he owned only one acre and that it was hard for him to make the both ends meet.

During open discussion, it was learnt, that, these villagers were political rival of other tenants (agitating AMP) and therefore, this brought into light the political aspects of this dispute as well.

It was also disclosed by a muzareen leader in presence of district administration, that majority (80%) of the tenants were supporting the protestors and not the Aman group.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Visit to Chak4/4L and meeting with protestors.

The Committee visited Chak 4/4L on May 17, 2016, to meet tenants and inquire about their stance. Abdul Sattar is also from the same village. Some 200 to 250 tenants, including women, had gathered at janazgah to meet the NCHR team. This gathering was facilitated by Anjuman Muzareen Punjab. Its General Secretary Mr. Noor Nabi Advocate, was main organiser. He was accompanied by many others including elected local bodies representatives like Mr. Shahzad Shafi, Member Cantonment Board, and Mr. Iftikhar Masih, Chairman, Union Council 38.

The tenants said they had been organising a convention on Farmers' Day (April 17) for many years but the district government had not allowed them to organise one this year. They said they were denied permission despite having assured the district administration that they would organise the convention in the village in a peaceful manner. Their leader Mr. Abdul Sattar was arrested and detained in a high-security prison in Sahiwal a day before the planned convention. Cases were also registered against those who protested against the arrest, the tenants said.

“Even his kids are not allowed to meet him. Abdul Sattar has done BSc in agriculture. He remained Nazim for two terms and bagged 32,683 votes during the 2013 elections for a Provincial Assembly seat. He is subjected to torture in the jail. Is he a terrorist? His

only crime is that he speaks for the poor tenants,” said Advocate Noor Nabi, a tenant leader.

He said that in 1913, the Punjab government had given the land to the military on lease for 20 years. He said the lease had expired in 1933 and since then their ancestors had been cultivating the fields. He said that it was tenants’ right to have the ownership of the land as they had been cultivating it for generations. “Everywhere in Pakistan tenants have the ownership rights. In Okara, however, an impression is being given that the AMP is a criminal organisation. Go through the record and you will find that no case has been registered against any tenant before 2000. Such cases are registered to pressure tenants to give up their just demand for propriety right to the farms they have been cultivating for generations,”Nabi said.

Shahzad Shafi, a tenant and an elected local government member of Cantonment Board, said the district administration had registered cases against hundreds of un identified people. “Is peacefully protesting for one’s right a crime? FIRs are registered against tenants under 7-ATA. We are not terrorists. We are patriotic Pakistanis. Our forefathers supported the army during the 1965war,” he said.

“Heavy military vehicles, including tanks, move in our villages to harass us and give us an impression that military can carry an operation against us any time. We are not anti-state elements. We are Pakistanis. The state should treat us like other citizens and not enemies,” he said.

“There are no, no-go areas here. We want the government to negotiate with us and solve the issue. A Judicial Commission should be formed to address the issue. If anybody has committed any crime, he should be dealt with in accordance with the law but detaining a popular tenant leader is not fair. Harassing citizens and depriving them of their rights is unacceptable,” he said.

Master Francis, another tenant, said, “What else we should do when we cannot even protest against the arrest of our leader?” “Journalists, too, are arrested for covering our protest demonstrations. Hafiz Hasnain, a reporter for daily Nawa-i-Waqt ,is also in prison.”

Several women also shared their ordeal with the commission members. Women said male members of their families were always at risk of being detained by police. They demanded that the government play its role and help solve the issue. They accused military authorities of blocking a shortcut to a girls school in the area.

Union Council 38 Chairman Iftikhar Jagga said local political leaders were not sincere in resolving the tenants’ issue. He said that during the election campaign, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had announced that he would give ownership rights to the tenants. He

said he had the recordings of the PM's speech. He demanded that the prime minister fulfils his commitment. The tenants made the following demands:

- Abdui Sattar, AMP General Secretary be released.
- Propriety rights of the land be given to tenants.
- False FIRs registered against tenants be quashed.
- Those found guilty of committing a crime should be prosecuted in accordance with the law.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting Founding AMP leaders at Civil Rest House

On day two, the delegation met AMP leaders Younis Masih and Nambardar Talib Hussain, at Okara Civil Rest House. They claimed to be co-founder/pioneer leaders of tenants movement in Punjab. They told that besides Okara, they are also fighting for rights of tenants of other districts of the province.

Younis Masih said, in beginning, the AMP movement got weakened due to political ambitions of Mehr Abdul Sattar. He said, they welcomed him in AMP because he was university graduate and thought he would be adding a lot of new vigor and value to the rights struggle. During initial years, everything was fine and their movement was going alright. But later on, Mehr Abdul Sattar, who was then appointed General Secretary of AMP decided to enter into politics to get more power and influence in support of struggle. He said, being founder of this tehreek, they opposed this idea and had disassociated with the Abdul Sattar group when he decided to contest election. He demanded that the government give the land to the tenants.

Younis Masih also shared details of last AMP meetings with government authorities held in 2013, Chief secretary Punjab office. Despite some agreed follow up actions and the pledge to resolve the issue on fair grounds, the meeting process discontinued. In above mentioned meeting, the revenue authorities had clarified the confusion surrounding ownership of disputed land and, it could have resolved the matter amicably, if that meeting/dialogue process was continued.

While Abdul Sattar contested the 2013 election on a PPP ticket, Amn Group led by Younis Masih supported the PML-N's Mian Yawar Zaman, who won the election and currently holding the portfolio of Provincial Irrigation Minister.

Day 2: May 18, 2016

Meeting members of Okara Press Club

The NCHR team met members of Okara Press Club at Civil Rest House on May 18, 2016. NCHR Members shared with the media the objectives of the Commission's visit to the district Okara. Members appreciated that media helped bringing important issues into the limelight. They shared observations on the situation in Okara. The journalists shared their ideas about the issue. They said that the government should take steps to amicably resolve the issue.

Day 3: May 19, 2016

Second Meeting with reps of Awami Workers Party(AWP) and Centre of social Justice.

The Committee returned to Lahore late on May 18. On May 19, it held another meeting with Farooq Tariq, secretary General of AWP and Peter Jacob, Executive Director, Centre of Social Justice, who have been associated with the tenants' movement for over a decade. The team shared its observations with them. They appreciated the Commission's efforts and opined that, Commission's report will bring the factual position surrounding this issue to the attention of all concerned. The NCHR intervention has raised hopes among victims, and CSO that the needful will be done at government level to deal with tenants according to human rights principles. They said the government should solve the issue through negotiation instead of using force on peaceful citizens.

Observations and Interim Recommendations

Observations:

- 1) The issue came to surface in 2001 when the administration of Okara Military Farms tried to change the status of mazaarian from tenants to contractors which the tenants refused to accept. Hence a movement called Anujman Mazaarian Punjab (AMP) began.

The matter as such is not pending in any court of law. Apparently, the provincial government also has not engaged with the farmers in a dialogue for settlement nor presented a solution so far.

- 2) The restrictions imposed on the peaceful gatherings of AMP by the local authorities in Okara since mid April 2016 appear to be arbitrary and not constitutional.

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3. The version of events presented by the local authorities making a link between action against AMP's leadership and the National Action Plan (NAP) against terrorism is not based on good motives and is draconian. Particularly the use of Section 7 of Anti Terrorism Act, 1997 against AMP members/leaders, does not make sense.
4. The use of heavy military vehicles and show of weaponry against common citizens, particularly in a settlement which already has heavy military presence, reflect an excessive use of force, which can jeopardize the interest of the country as well as tarnish the image of the security establishment.
5. In past 15 years, the government of Punjab has not tried to resolve this issue. A further delay in resolving the issue will carry serious implications on people's right to life, liberty, safety and security, right to livelihood and employment and other economic and social rights, which have been under threat all these years, causing alienation among people.

Timely efforts, on part of the Punjab government and the relevant departments, to resolve the land rights dispute can yield positive results, especially dialogues and negotiations can bring much better outcomes.

6. In three cases registered against a leader of AMP Mr. Mahr Abdul Sattar in past several years, he was proven innocent during investigation which suggests that the police and local administration may have grossly overreacted against AMP and its leadership.
7. The AMP has sizeable following reflected in the voting for the candidates of AMP in Local Bodies and General elections, therefore, the possibility of some political interest exploiting the situation against AMP cannot be ruled out.

Several, political leaders had made promises to AMP about helping them attain propriety rights of the agricultural land which they have been cultivating for over a century. These promises have not been honoured after they assumed power and left the mazaarian in lurch.

INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) will be able to give its final recommendations after further investigation and research based on revenue status of the parties. In the meanwhile, the interim recommendations are as under: -

1. The Board of Revenue, Punjab should collaborate with NCHR for an independent inquiry about the legal status of parties involved with respect to property.
2. The body so constituted should also advise about the liabilities.

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3. The cases under Anti Terrorism Act should not be preceded on the issue in hand until the NCHR or the body constituted in collaboration with NCHR hands down its findings in the meanwhile as a good will gesture.
4. The Government should be benign to the leaders of AMP and release them on ensuring bail bonds for keeping good behavior until the findings are hand down.