Slum Eviction and Housing Rights in Dhaka City (1975-2001)

Islam Mohammad Nazrul

I Introduction

Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, has one of the fastest urbanization rates in the world. Now it is the 11th populous city in the world and already a mega city in terms of its population. But like other mega cities of developing countries it is facing multifarious problems, slum is one of the severe problems among them. As citizens of the country the slum dwellers have rights to lead a standard life in city for sustaining their lives. But there is always a fear of eviction, for which the relatively well-off households in the slum cannot invest much on their illegal shelter. The country has adopted a national housing policy recognizing the rights of the slum dwellers to proper housing. Yet the government, the city authorities, the service agencies and law enforcement bodies ignore the provisions laid down in the policy and resort to forceful evictions.

Contradictory to the housing rights of the urban poor as outlined in the national constitution and to the housing policy and various universal declarations of providing housing for the poor many incidents of forced evictions have occurred in the slum settlements of Dhaka City. This is creating misery for the poor slum dwellers. This paper attempts to make a chronological location analysis of slum evictions which have occurred in Dhaka City from 1975 to 2001, to outline the process how they have been evicted and also to focus on the housing rights of the urban poor as outlined in the national constitution, housing policy and various universal declarations.

II Literature Review and Methodology

In the present study the Dhaka Metropolitan Area (DMA), the capital city of Bangladesh has been chosen as the study area (Figure 1). This city lies at the north-eastern banks of Buriganga River and in the central part of the country. The total population of DMA is around 12 millions with an approximate area of 360 sq. km. Slum is a widely discussed matter and cruel reality in the fast-urbanized countries. In the present study the “slum” is used broadly to include squatter’s settlement as well.

(1) Literature Review

Regarding the slum eviction and housing rights issue of Dhaka City few researches have been

Figure 1. Location of Study Areas in Dhaka City
done though some articles have been written to arouse public awareness.

In August 2000, a four-member team from CHORE and ACHR\(^2\) conducted a fact-finding mission to investigate reports of large scale forced evictions in Dhaka. The team concluded that there was no justification for the brutal forced eviction of over 100,000 people in the year of 1999. The fact-finding team declares that the forced evictions violated not only international laws, but domestic laws and government’s own policy as well.

The researchers of RAMRU\(^3\) mentioned that the incident of slum evictions in 1999 began incidentally to uproot the criminals. It is also mentioned that some slum dwellers committed crimes in the slums but they are controlled by some ‘influential people’\(^4\) who are out of touch of law. They found that the slum evictions create a negative impact among the civil society but the main opposition parties somehow did not show any sympathy to the evicted people.

Rahman Md. Mahbubur states that the housing right is being violated by the government, public and private organizations and individuals every now and then. The writer has reviewed some slum eviction in the years of 1975, 1990-92 and also of 1994 but he does not identify the locations of the evicted slums.

Some literature related with urban planning, slum and squatter problem in Third World cities are also reviewed here briefly.

Saha S. and Sajid Hossain explained that the old part of Dhaka City (see Figure 1) is developed freely with mixed land use; planned part is compartmentalized according to different use like commercial, industrial, administrative etc.; the unplanned part of new city developed either in fringe areas or in between formal developments.

Shirish B Patel\(^5\) showed that government’s rehabilitation scheme for slum-dwellers in Mumbai is not workable. The author suggests that ownership of land is transferred to slum-dwellers as the first step; slum-dwellers should pay for their own construction and services; slum-dwellers be permitted to build ground-and-one-upper with commercial use of the ground floor freely permitted; and the financing and providing of municipal infrastructure be more carefully and thoroughly worked out.

James Ockey mentioned the struggle of slum community leaders against slum eviction in Bangkok. His case studies demonstrate that at least under the new leadership that has developed during the last two decades property rights are being challenged when faced with eviction.

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3) RAMRU, Eviction of Slums : Role of the State and Civil Society, Refugee and Migratory Research Unit (RAMRU), Periodical 7, Dhaka University, 2001.
4) It means the people who have political power, administrative power, or gangsters who live out of the slum(s).
squatters and renters move from passive resistance to active defense of their “tacit, de facto gains.”

D. C. I. Okpala prefers a more systematic long-term solution than the slum and squatter upgrading approach for the Third World city. The author has stressed on socio-economic and institutional development for poverty reduction in the Third World city.

The above literature review initiated the author that the incidents of slum eviction in Dhaka City should be discussed more and the eviction process is right or not should be clarified. It will be helpful for the authority to re-think before slum eviction and to adopt a new policy for slum rehabilitation or development.

(2) Methodology

In the present paper data has been collected mainly from the secondary sources. The chronological events of slum eviction has been collected from the daily newspapers of different years, different research works and essays of journals and also from the organizations which keep record of eviction events. Not all the slums that were evicted in Dhaka City have been recorded. So only the incidents of slum eviction that are in record have been discussed in this study. Besides, two evicted families have been interviewed and what they have experienced is given as case study.

III Spatial-Temporal Process of Slum Eviction in Dhaka City

Dhaka, one of the oldest cities of South Asia has been experiencing rapid growth in the recent decades. The annual urbanization rate in this city 1961-81 in two decades was more than 6 % in average and in 1981-91 was 5.17 %. The rapid growth of the city has been mainly caused by three factors: high in-migration from the rural areas, territorial expansion and natural population growth. In 1974 census, the city population was recorded at 1.6 million, 3.44 million in 1981 and 4.1 million in 1991. And the latest census in 2001 the population of Dhaka City is 9.91 million.

The destitute condition of the poor in-migrants tended to overwhelm the efforts of city authority and government who have tried to provide adequate services in advance and to control, direct and manage urban development effectively. If we look at the Table-1 in 1974 the number of squatter settlements was 119 and the population was 173,339 in Dhaka City. In 1988 it found a total population of 878,000 in 1,125 slums and in 1991 number of slum was 2,156 and total population was 718,143. In 1996 the number of slums and squatters became 3,007 and the total population 1,104,600.

The magnitude and rapid rate of slum population has deteriorated the environmental and socio-economic situation of the city. These are characterized by highly congested, unsanitary and

unhygienic living condition without basic services, high rate of illiteracy, unemployment and crime, environmental and psychological degradation etc. Most of them get employment mainly in the informal sector and the health situation is precarious.

In such a situation the government and the other authorities of the city are not taking any proper steps to tackle this serious problem. They evict slums almost every year without alternative arrangement for the evicted people to stay in a way that is not bringing any good result.

(1) Process of Slum Eviction

In Dhaka City many slums had been evicted in the past years, very few of them were rehabilitated and most of them were forced eviction. These evictions occurred without following any laws and regulations recognized in the national constitution and in the universal declarations.

The term “forced eviction” as used throughout the General Comment No. 7 (1997) of United Nation is defined as the permanent or temporary removal against the will of individuals, families and / or communities from the homes and / or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to appropriate forms of legal or other protection.

This type of eviction describes both the act and result of involuntarily removing of a person or group from their homes without compensation or rehabilitation.

Terms such as relocation, resettlement and redevelopment each infer a neutral or even positive aspect of this process, implying that affected groups are actively ‘relocated’, ‘resettled’ or ‘developed’ to ostensibly improved housing conditions, while effectively ignoring the coercive aspect of evictions and thus implicitly accepting eviction as an inevitable byproduct of economic growth and development, can assist in cloaking this act in a shroud of acceptability.

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Table 1. Temporal Pattern of Slum and Slum Population in Dhaka City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Slum</th>
<th>Population in Slum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974*1</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>173,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988*2</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>878,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991*3</td>
<td>2,156</td>
<td>718,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996*4</td>
<td>3,007</td>
<td>1,104,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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This types of eviction occurred mutually for a better environment or situation.

The slums of Dhaka City are evicted in quite different ways. The authorities adopt more cruelty and brutal means in the eviction. To bypass the laws against eviction new strategies are used. The most frequently employed techniques are cordonning, beating and frightening off the dwellers, arson and let loose hired goons etc. Arson is indeed a very popular, cheap, fast and effective method. Sometimes slums are evicted arbitrarily on the excuse of crime control though almost all of the people in the slums are innocent.

How the dwellers of the slum are evicted? We can get a clear idea by some case studies of evicted persons who were evicted in the past few years.

Case Study 1 : Story of Rina Akter

A domestic servant (30 years old) who was evicted from Moghbazar Wireless gate Bastee (see Figure 1).

"I am living in this slum with my husband and two children for five years (see Figure 2). I am earning my living by giving domestic services to 3-4 houses around Moghbazar area. My husband is a part time van puller. Within the last 5-year stay we were uprooted twice, once in 1999 and again in 2001.

On 11 August of 1999 when the police men uprooted this slum, they informed us to leave the slum on the previous evening and evicted on the following morning. They took everything what they found in the slum by a railway carriage. After of the eviction one night we stayed beside the road and 3 nights at the corridor of my master’s house. Then we rented a house one kilometer away from this place by 1000 Taka per month but we did not stay there due to shortage of space and heat. The policeman guarded the evicted area only during day time so we could stay in the evicted open place at night. We cooked our food at the rental house and came back in the slum after eating. After three months we built our house and began to stay here again.

On 28 August 2001 we were uprooted again during the time of Care Taker Government before national parliament election. Just one day before in the afternoon of the eviction day the authority informed us to leave the slum by 8 a. m. on the next day. On that night we went to keep our valuable things at the master’s house where I worked. But after return in the slum we could hear that the slum would not be evicted tomorrow. So on the next morning my husband and I went to our work. I was preparing my breakfast after return from my work ; at that moment I could see that many policemen, Bangladesh Rifles and railway police with red labels in their head cordoned the slum. So, my younger sister and I hurriedly packed up the belongings in a sack. We took these things and my children and kept them beside the road with my sister. My mother was not in her house at that time so I came back hurriedly to take the goods of my mother’s house. Then I went to my children and sent my younger sister to call my mother from her working place. Then the police and laborer shattered the house. About 3 or 4 hours later they left and we came back to the previous place. Some days we lived in open place

15) op. cit., footnote 5), p. 212.
then again we made a thatched shack. But we always live in the fear of eviction. We cannot leave the city because we have no property in village; we can survive here by working."

This slum is situated at the ward No. 55 of Ramna Thana on the land of Bangladesh Railway. This slum is originated on 2-acre deep wetland near the railway just after the independence of Bangladesh. In this way many slums beside the rail line are evicted almost every year due to fake cause of crime, development activities and security of railway carriages. But after eviction there were no development activities, so the evicted people set up their houses again. It is one kind of tyranny on the poor slum dwellers because they have no place to go.

**Case Study 2: Story of MD. Zahedul Islam**

Md. Zahedul Islam was a rickshaw puller (40 years old) who was evicted from Badda Natunbazar Bastee (see Figure 3).

"I have come to Dhaka City from Brahmanbaria district 15 years ago and I was living in Badda Natunbazar Bastee (see Figure 3), ever since. About one month ago of the eviction day there was a rumor about eviction but nobody believed it because there was no written notice. But on 23\textsuperscript{rd} August in 2001 about 10 a.m. we found that more than 200 police and laborers have come with 6 bulldozers to uproot this slum. I, with my wife packed all of the easily carry-able things of my house in a sack and was waiting to observe what was happening. We were sitting inside the house and were expecting if they might not uproot the slum we could stay here. A few minutes’ later police entered into the slum and started demolishing the houses by bulldozers. At that time the owners of the shops at the roadside were wrangling with police to stop eviction. But police threw tear gas shell from the opposite side. Then we ran hurriedly to come out from the slum. The bulldozers demolished the houses one after another. Some people wanted to go to take their belongings but police beat and abused them. After the eviction my family with some of the evicted people stayed some days under the open sky at Lalmati 1 km. away of the evicted place. The owner of this land told us to construct house on the basis of 50-Taka monthly rent per fore arm (18 inches) of land. We have to give 700-1000 Taka for a room in this way. We are paying rent by borrowing rent of this month on another month."

This slum grew up on the open land nearby higher class residential area of Baridhara beside Pragoti Saroni. The land of this slum was acquired from the individual owners by Dhaka
Improvement Trust for a development project in Pakistan period. The land has sold to the rich persons on plot basis just after the eviction.

By this way most of the slum evictions occur without any compensation or rehabilitation. Most of the cases, less than 48 hours are given to the dwellers to abandon their shelter. Sometimes the authorities give oral notices within less than twenty-four hours to families to vacate their homes. It is usually given in the evening prior to the forced eviction. The forced eviction occurs early the following day. There are many slums where NGOs run various poverty alleviation and environment upgrading schemes with the approval of the government. However, even these slums cannot escape eviction, which is a proof of lack of government’s commitment, absence of an integrated policy and non-coordination among various organizations.

Most of the evictions occurred under the direction of Home Ministry, Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha, RAJUK (Capital Development Authority), Dhaka City Corporation, Bangladesh Railway and so on. The slums of private-owned land are evicted very secretly by the owners that do not come across any media. The forced evictions conducted by the police and sanctioned by the Government are extremely dehumanizing and stripped people of their dignity, just because they are poor and helpless.

(2) Chronicles of Slum Eviction

There have been numerous incidents of slum settlement demolition and evictions in the past years, particularly in Dhaka City as shown in Table 2. The slums before independence had to bear the wrath of the brutal genocide of the Pakistani army on the night of 25th March, 1971. They were bombarded by tank shells and burnt to ashes, killing thousands in their sleep, and forcing others to flee the city and become refugees, some in the neighboring country.

In the first week of January 1975, the first large-scale slum evictions occurred in Dhaka City. The Babupura slum of Nilkhet and Palashi slum, Ramna railway slum and Sohrawardi Hawkers market slum of old railway of Fulbaria, some large slums of Moghbazar and old Dhaka were also evicted on that year (Figure 4, 1975). Though the first five-year plan (1973-78) expressed clear intentions for slum improvement and rehabilitation, the eviction was an unprecedented action by the government. The slum dwellers used to be hired to attend political meetings and

Figure 3. Evicted People gathering Materials of Badda Natunbazar Bastee after Eviction in 2001(taken by the author)
participate in mob attacks and riots on behalf of the political parties, was the reason of swift eviction by the government. About 200,000 low-income people were evicted. Only 75,000 people were re-located to three distant sites in the sub-urban area.

In 1981 one railway side slum was evicted from Karatitola of Sutrapur Thana.

In November 1983, both sides of the VIP road nearby Sonargaon Hotel were fenced off with corrugated iron-sheets and the Kamlapur railway sweeper colony was evicted.

In 1985 two slums were evicted, Agargaon slum near old Haji camp and Sweeper Colony slum near Shohrawardi Hospital and Pangu hospital of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

In 1987 one slum was evicted from Raj Narayan road at the crossing of Lalbagh fort of old Dhaka.

In 1988 many slums were evicted from the northern side of Kawranbazar, Shahidnagar Bastee of Lalbagh, Cantonment Camp and Bihari colony slum of Mirpur also evicted on that year.

In 1990 local bullies roasted several inmates of Kalyanpur Bastee alive in a bid to clear the slum. In August of same year, one child was crushed under bulldozer in Agargaon slum while a forceful eviction was being carried out. On that operation, 20,000 dwelling units were demolished in one day. Several slums in Kamlapur, Mohammadpur, Tejgaon, Moghbazar, Babupura and Kazipara were blazed to ground since 1990.

In 1991 two slums were evicted: one from Nilkhet and another from Bakshibazar of Lalbagh.

In October 1992, the 12 years old Palshi Bastee was demolished by an order of the city Mayor on a rainy day. Another slum was evicted from Baridhara on that year.

In 1993 some slums were evicted from Kamlapur Railway and one from Mirpur Pallabi.

In May 1994 Agargaon Bastee was evicted by a week’s notice and the Railway Minister evicted slums along the railway track of south Shajahanpur in 72 hours notice. The first incident was apparently attempted to please the Prime Minister who was due to pass by this second largest slum of the city to open the National Science and Technology Week in February 1994. Risk of rail accident was used as a justification for the other incident. In the same year the Kollyanpur Pora Bastee of Mirpur was evicted without serving any notice of the eviction.

In May 1995 three slums were evicted: one slum from Azimpur, one from Panthpath and another from Kawranbazar of Tejgaon.

From January until March 1996 the country was going through a political upheaval, preceding and just after the February 1996 election. During this time the residents of Bijli Mohalla slum settlement and Bagunbari slum of Tejgaon; and Islambagh slum of Lalbagh, which the ruling party had burned down because, dwellers in these communities had backed the opposition. At that time Amtoli slum of Mohakhali and one slum from Lalbagh were also evicted.

In 1997 one slum was evicted from Bhashantek of Cantonment Thana. After the eviction of Bhashantek Bastee Prime Minister apologized and the Secretary of the Public Works Department was OSD (Officer on Special Duty) and the State Minister resigned for that reason.

In 1998 Kawran bazar slum (twice), Azimpur slum of Lalbagh and some slums near Kamlapur railway station were evicted.

Figure 4. Slum Eviction through Time in Dhaka City (1975-2001)
From 7 May to 13 August of 1999, 42 slums were demolished and approximately 21,933 families evicted, accounting for a population of 109,665 persons. Between 8 to 13 August, several slums were demolished daily. All of the railway-side slum and most of the larger slums in Dhaka city were evicted at that time (Figure 4, 1975-2001). There was no relation of eviction with any urban development policy; the main cause of the eviction was the crime in the city that became out of control of the government.

However, the Supreme Court of Bangladesh states to stop the slum eviction after a writ petition in 23 August 1999, when many slums were evicted in 2000. Boatghat slum of Rayer bazar, Paribagh Nalirpar slum, Tejgaon P. T. C. slum, one slum from Segaun Bghicha, Banani Jheelppar 2 No. Road slum, Amtola slum of Banani and Kawranbazar railway slum were evicted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Slums</th>
<th>Locations of evicted slum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>13+</td>
<td>Babupura slum, Palashi slum, Ramna Railway slum, Sohravardi Hawker’s market slum, Kamlapur slum, Shahjahanpur slum, Mahalbagh slum, Moghbazar slum, Hazaribagh slum, Azimpur slum, Armanitola slum, Tejgaon slum, Basabo slum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Karatitola slum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kamlapur Railway Sweeper Colony slum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Agargoan slum (Near old Haji camp), Sweeper colony slum (Near Pangu Hospital)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lalibagh slum (Raj Narayan Road)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>Railway slum of Kawranbazar, Shahid Nagar slum (Lalibagh), Cantonment camp slum of Mirpur, Bihari colony slum (Mirpur).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>8+</td>
<td>Agargoan slum, Kamlapur slum, Moghbazar slum, Babupura slum, Kazipara slum, Kamlapur slum, one slum from Mohammadpur and another from Tejgaon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nilkhet slum, Bakshibazar slum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Palashi slum, one slum from Baridhara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>One slum from Kamlapur and another from Mirpur Pallabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agargoan slum, one slum from South Shahjahanpur, Kollyanpur Pora Baste (slum) in Mirpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Three slum from Azimpur, Pantpath and Kawranbazar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bijli Mahalla slum, Bagunbari slum, Islambag slum, Amtoli slum and Lalibagh slum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bhashantec slum, one slum from Mirpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kawranbazar Railway slum (Twice), one slum from Azimpur and another from Kamlapur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Sayedabad railcrossing slum, K.M. Das Lane Bastei(slum), Golapbagh slum, Methorphati slum, Sonarbangla slum, T.T. Paral slum, Rail Barrack Slum, Moghbazar Wireless gate Bastei (slum), Comilla slum (Moghbazar), City Law college Bastei, Bakshi bazar slum, Fakirpur Box culvert slum, Banani Jheelper slum, Badda Gudaragh slum, Badda Chaitola slum, Banani 11 Nô. Road slum (WAPDA colony), Baridhara Block-F slum, Mirpur section-11 Block-C slum, Shantibagh Munshirte slum, Guntighar slum (Ganderia), Gandaria shop slum, Per Gandaria slum, Gandaria Rail line slum, Jurain slum, BFDC Rail crossing slum, Kawranbazar Truck-stand slum, Tejgaon Kawranbazar railway slum, Nakhalpara slum, Tekjuni para slum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boatghat slum (Rayer bazar), Paribagh Nalirpar slum, Tejgaon P.T.C slum, Segun Bagicha slum, Banani Jheelpar 2 No. Road slum, Amtola slum (Banani), Kawranbazar Railway slum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Badda Natunbazar Bastei (slum), Baridhara J-Block slum, Jheelpar slum (Pallabi), Tongi Diversion road slum, BFDC front slum, Kawranbazar slum, Tejgaon industrial area slums, Begunbari slum, Mohammadpur New colony slum, Shahjahanpur Railway slum, Kawranbazar railway slum, Meradia slum, Moghbazar Wireless gate Bastei (slum), Nakhalpara Rail gate slum, Khilgaon slum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in that year.

In 2001, during the time of Caretaker Government (July-October), many slums were evicted in the name of so-called illegal settlement demolition and crime control before the National Parliament election. It was a tactics of that government to control crime in election purpose but that was not related with urban development policy of the city. Most of the railway-side slum and some slums of Gulshan, Tejgaon, Ramna and Mohammadpur were evicted. In this time over 12,000 families were evicted, many of them cannot cast vote in the election.

To sum up, three different years show particular importance in slum eviction 1975, 1999 and 2001 (Figure 5). Interestingly three distinct areal patterns emerge for evicted areas in these periods. In 1975 a clustered pattern can be noted in the southern part of New Dhaka where most of the squatters’ settlement existed (Figure 4). During 1999 the eviction took place in a linear pattern mostly along the railway line where provided space for recent slum growth was provided. In 2001 the eviction took place in scattered fashion all in the northern part of Dhaka which again was the places for new slum development. Thus these evictions have been following the pattern of slum growth in different periods within Dhaka City.

In the absence of any alternatives or compensation after eviction the evicted people have rebuilt their shacks in nearby places, some have rented in nearby low-income settlements and some have moved in with their relatives nearby. Due to their places of work are in the surrounding areas they do not go to places far away. Many people have no alternative place to go, so they live on the pavement under a plastic sheet with constant fear of eviction. Forced eviction without relocation simply shifts poor people from one slum to another, inflicting suffering on them by disrupting their lives and livelihood and worsening their well-being rather than improving their living conditions. This way the slums are being evicted day after day but the number of slums and slum dwellers are not decreasing, instead they are increasing.

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Figure 5. Evicted Slums by Year

Source: The Daily Sangbad, The Daily Ittefaq, Rahman (1995), Ain-O-Salish Kendro (ASK) and Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP)
IV Housing Rights and Rehabilitation Programs

Many big cities of the Third World are trying to confront rather than to evade the slum and squatter problem. To avoid the human rights issues rehabilitation has been taken as the most feasible way.

(1) Rehabilitation Programs

After the Independence in 1971, the government became aware of the substandard shelters and was actively considering doing something for the poor. In 1975 Government rehabilitated the evicted slum dwellers in three camps namely Bhashantek of Mirpur, Chanpara of Demra and Dattapara of Tongi. The rehabilitation program of housing supported by government and other national institution was successfully gained. The 1975 resettlement camp at Bhasantek at the outskirts of the cantonment was relocated again on a lowland 3 kilometers west in 1979.

In 1989, the Ministry of Land formed a committee, which was called “Dhaka Mahangori Bastee Samashya Nirasan Committee” (Dhaka Metropolitan Slum Problem Eradication Committee). The committee makes a list of the slums of Dhaka City and takes comprehensive plan for rehabilitation phase by phase. But in the later time no effective program has been taken for implementation of this project.

Loan schemes operated by NGOs have been showing that the poor people can sustain small easy-term loans which can provide capital for improving housing which in turn would increase labor productivity and hence the loaners repaying capacity.

In the recent years government take three rehabilitation schemes, namely the Ghore Phera Project (return to home project) for rehabilitating slum dwellers, the Asrayan (village shelter program) and the Adarsha Gram Prokolpo (Ideal village Project).

In 1999, Bangladesh Krishi Bank began the Ghore Phera (return to home) project, which encouraged people to return to their village by offering them loans for income generating activities in the rural area and providing cash money for transportation and housing costs. The main purpose of this program was reducing rural-urban migration, alleviating urban poverty and improving the cities environment by sending people back to their villages.

The return to home program identifies various slum dwellers and offers those loans ranging from Taka 20,000 (USD 350) to Taka 150,000 (USD 2600) and in some special cases the loan can be increased to Taka 300,000 (USD 5200). According to the General Manger of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, 1,746 families have received loans and returned to their villages and have begun various income generating activities. However, it was really inadequate comparing the number of persons who were evicted and in some cases the people who have obtained the loan return to the city some time later.

18) op. cit., footnote 2) p. 13.
(2) Housing Rights

Housing is the indivisible part for human settlement, cultural and economic development. The international Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) which was signed by Bangladesh government recently states in Article 11(1) that:

The State parties to present covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The state parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

In most of the cases of slum eviction in Dhaka City this right has been denied.

The constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh states in Article 15 (a) that:

It shall be a fundamental responsibility of the state to attain, through planned economic growth, a constant increase of productive forces and a steady improvement in the material and cultural standard of living of the people, with a view to securing to it's citizens (a) the provision of the basic necessities of life, including food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care.

The whole process of slum evictions in Dhaka City violated this fundamental right.

The National Housing Policy of Bangladesh has adopted in 1993, reiterates protection against forced eviction. However, no law has been enacted based on this policy yet though the eviction without alternative housing is going on.

In a writ petition against slum eviction the judgment and order of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on 23 August 1999 stated, in part:

".... The said wholesale eviction of slum dwellers is not only contrary to law of the land but against the recommendations issued by the UN conference on Human Settlements in 1976 and the resolution of the United Nations there under to prevent the discrimination and protection of minorities and affording evictions constituting a gross violation of human rights which also included adequate housing ....".

Therefore, forceful eviction of slums without serving proper legal notice and without resettling them is a gross violation of the country's law as well as international laws. The Government should take effective program to solve this problem within the rules and regulations. The international human rights organizations should provide more help for slum dwellers.

V Conclusion

The slum eviction of Dhaka City is no product of economic growth and development. The situation of slum is not improving by eviction, but rather it is worsening. Some rehabilitation programs adopted in different times but those were not actively implemented later time due to lack of proper fund and unfavorable decision of the changed government. Some efforts which

20) Stated in the Part II, Article15 (a); Bangladesh National Constitution.
21) op. cit., footnote 2), p. 44.
have been taken there are also lack of proper plan and transparency in payments so they become fruitless. So the government and the city authority should take a proper plan for slum development or rehabilitation and they should implement it phase by phase among the selected slum. It is true that in some cases a few slum dwellers are committed crimes but for this reason the evicition of the whole slum is injustice and inhuman. The authority should control crime within the rules and regulation of the country in slum and everywhere. The slum dwellers in the city should form community organization to protect the slum from criminal activities and to get facilities from the city authority. The media should report more objective news about slum and slum dwellers rights. The major political party of the country should be well-intentioned to fulfill the slum dwellers right more humanely. The NGOs and the international donor agencies can play a greater role by providing fund for socio-economic and housing development of slum dwellers. The condition of the slum in Dhaka City cannot be improved within a day but attempts should be sincere by taking a long-term improvement plan to solve the problem.

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Slum Eviction and Housing Rights in Dhaka City, 1975-2001

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Dhaka, the capital and primate city of Bangladesh, has been growing very rapidly, especially since independence in 1971. Most of the increasing population comprises rural landless destitute migrants who arrive in the city in search of basic subsistence. Due to the low affordability and shortage of lower class housing facilities they are forced to take shelter in slums where they live inhumanely. Moreover, repeated eviction creates very severe conditions for them. The Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh has signed various international covenants related to housing rights that have also been reaffirmed in the national constitution and in housing policies. Despite many laws and obligations, slum evictions (often forced) take place almost every year in Dhaka City and very few people are rehabilitated. Many slum evictions occurred in 1975, 1990, 1999 and 2001. The authorities are implementing new strategies to bypass the anti-eviction laws. A city like Dhaka, with these repeated inhumane acts, reflects a sad part of the urbanization process. This paper undertakes a chronological location analysis of slum eviction and clarifies the process and problems of slum evictions focusing on housing rights.

Key Words : Slum Eviction, Housing Rights, Rehabilitation, Dhaka City, Bangladesh
ダッカ市におけるスラムの立ち退きと居住権（1975-2001）

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バングラデシュの首都であるダッカ市は１９７１年の独立後、人口の都市集中が急速に進んでいる。ダッカ市の流入人口の大部分は、食料と住居を求めて来る、土地を持たない地方の貧困層である。彼女らの多くは低所得の戸にしかつけず、物価や家賃も高いため、スラムに住むことを余儀なくされる。過去、こうした多くのスラムでは、居住者の生活更生がなされることなく繰り返し強制的な立ち退きが実施されてきた。本稿はダッカ市における１９７５年から２００１年にかけて行われたスラム立ち退きについて時系列的な立地分析を試みることで立ち退きの過程を概観する。さらに憲法や住宅政策、様々な国際的な宣言の中で述べられた都市貧困層の居住権に注目する。本稿のデータは主に新聞などの二次資料と立ち退かされた人のインタビューから得られたものである。

バングラデシュ政府は、憲法と住宅政策の中で居住権を重視し、居住権に関連する国際的な契約に署名してきた。にもかかわらず、ほぼ毎年ダッカ市ではスラムの強制的な立ち退きが行われ、居住者の生活更生がなされる事はほとんどない。特に１９７５、１９９９年、２００１年には大規模なスラムの立ち退きがあった。市当局は、スラムの立ち退きを禁止する法律をうまく回避するために新しい戦略をとっている。こうした強制立ち退きは、貧困というだけでスラムの人々の人間性を失わせ、尊厳をも剥ぎとってしまうのである。

スラムの状況は立ち退きによって改善することなく、むしろ悪化しているのである。政府および市当局はスラムの開発や更生に対して適切な計画を立て、徐々に実行に移すべきである。ダッカ市のスラムの状況は一日で改善することはできず、長期計画をとることで真摯に改善を図るべきであろう。

キーワード：スラム立ち退き 居住権 更生 ダッカ市 バングラデシュ