

FEW CASES DEALT WITH BY THE COMMISSION RELATING TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

CASE NO. 7212/30/9/2015

The Commission has come across a distressing news report captioned "Child dies after railway officials demolish 500 shanties in late-night drive in Delhi" published in the Times of India on 13.12.2015. It is reported that one child died hours after her family, along with nearly 500 others, was evicted from their slums in a late-night demolition drive by railway authorities in New Delhi's Shakur Basti area. With their shanties razed to the ground, hundreds of women and children had to spend the cold night in the open. The Commission observed that if the news report, if true, raises a serious issue of violation of the right to life, right to shelter and right to dignity of the persons, including women and children, who have been rendered homeless after the demolition drive.

The Commission issued notice to Chief Secretary, Govt. of NCT of Delhi and Chairman, Railway Board, New Delhi calling for a report in the matter within two weeks. Further, it also directed that a team comprising officers of the Law Division and the Investigation Division shall visit the place of incident, conduct an on the spot inquiry and submit a report to the Commission within one week.

The High Court of Delhi had also taken cognizance of the matter and vide its order dated 16.12.2015 passed in the above mentioned matter has, inter alia, requested the National Human Rights Commission ('NHRC') to depute one senior official to visit the site and submit a report to the Court on the extent of relief and rehabilitation that is being provided to the dwellers and to give suggestions as to how this can be further improved. Accordingly the Commission deputed a three member team to visit the site and based on its report submitted a report to the High Court of Delhi a copy of which is at Annexure-II. The suggestions made by the Commission for improvement of relief and rehabilitation measures was appreciated by the Hon'ble Court and were incorporated in its order and directed to be complied with by the authorities.

