

Exodus of Refugee Women and Their Protests(1948-1958)

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Abstract

There was a huge exodus of refugees from East Pakistan after partition. On their way, the women suffered a lot. These refugees first stayed at transit camps. Later they were shifted to refugee camps. In these camps, the women suffered once again. As a consequence, many Mahila Samity grew up in these camps. Eventually the government decided to relocate these refugees to Dandakaranya. It was outside West Bengal. In this article I have discussed the role of women in refugee agitations. They participated in Anti-Dandakaranya scheme. Anti-Dandakaranya movement of the women continued till 1961.

Keywords: Exodus, Refugees, Women, Mahila Samity, Agitations, Satyagraha, Anti-Dandakaranya Scheme.

Introduction

The partition of Indian sub-continent, created two nations. But with this there were groups of people men and women, placed on the wrong side of the border. Immediately after the partition, they crossed the border. During the time of exodus, these people had to face extreme sufferings. Especially the women refugees suffered on the way to Indian Union. The Hindus who stayed at undivided Bengal, were forced to leave their land after the partition in 1947. On their way, the women refugees suffered a lot. Here some instances may be cited.

Officer in Charge, Hasnabad P.S. reported on 25th February 1950, that he had received information to the effect that OC of Kaliganj P.S. district Khulna (East Pakistan) announced by beating of drum that no women or children of the Hindus of East Pakistan would be allowed to go to Indian Union for next three months. The Hindus had become very much panicky at this *diktat*.

This panic was not unfounded. Their cause of panic turned into reality. India received reports from Benapol that Pakistan Government authorities were forcibly detaining a large number of Hindu evacuees from East Pakistan at Benapol station on the Indian Union on the pretext of not possessing permits and it was reported that the evacuees specially the women were being subjected to barbarous oppression and indignities. This had caused a good deal of tension amongst the Hindus in Indian Union.¹

It was reported that on 3rd March 1950, one Ramesh Chandra Raha came to Indian Union by train with his family members. They were stopped at Benapol on the border of East Pakistan. The Pakistan male officers tried to search his wife. Meanwhile Raha was arrested by the Pakistan Police. His family including his wife was allowed to cross the border to Bongaon quite unattended. Later they were sent to their relatives' houses at Kachrapara with the assistance of the Hindu Mahasabha.² Sub Divisional Police Officer of Bashirhat reported that on 5th April 1950, 500 military men snatched the gold ornaments from the Hindu evacuees. The military had concentrated at Satkhira, Khulna. Reports of atrocities on Hindus reached the SDPO. It appears that Ansars and police oppressed the women. They forced the women to discard their clothes. These men even injured these women's earlobes.³

¹West Bengal State Archives, IB File –Report on Border Incidents week ending 16.3.50, IB Department.

²WBSA, IB File, IB Department.

³WBSA, IB File , Satkhira Khulna East Pakistan dated 5.4.50, IB Department.

Soon a report began to be circulated in some villages of Khulna district on the border of 24 parganas. It said that members of Pakistan border militia would effect forcible marriage of Hindu girls with Muslims. It caused a huge panicky exodus of minority from that area.⁴ Some incidents took place in the residence of Iman Balsh in Rudrapur. About 100 Muslims men assembled in a meeting. There were 2-4 Hindus present as well. In that meeting, the attendees decided that Hindu women of the area should be forcibly married off to the Muslims. For instance, 3 Brahmin women of the area should be married to Muslims. Such marriages were considered pious acts by the Muslims. As a result the Hindus became afraid. This incident later caused an exodus to India.⁵

Another incident may be cited here. 2 Hindu women while travelling on feet were molested and robbed of their cash and ornaments by 2 Pakistani constables.⁶ Similarly the Muslims brutally tortured a *Namusudra* family(fisherman) with the help of police on the basis of false complaints. The torture was so severe that 1 pregnant woman immediately had a miscarriage. The Ansars and police used to force the womenfolk of the *Namasudras* to come to their camp at night. These series of atrocities ascertained the migration of *Dalits* from East Pakistan to India.⁷ It had become clear from the testimonies of the emigrants of Dinajpur that they had left their native place as the Muslims had taken fancy to the Hindu women. They even threatened to take the women by force.⁸

It became evident that minorities from East Pakistan emigrated to India in various stages. When they reached the Indian Union, initially they had to stay in transit camps like Sealdah station. Later relief camps were established for the refugees. Special kind of camps were established for the refugee women. Various railway stations and godowns were selected by the government for the refugees as transit camps. In course of time, relief camps were established in different places. Moreover special type of camp was established for East Bengal refugee women. Families headed by unattached women and widows were kept in these camps. Camps of Titagarh and Kartikpur of 24 pargana, Rupashripalli of Nadia, Bashberia and Bhadrakali of Hooghly also had a women's wing. These camps were active from the very early days of 1950s.

On the first week of June 1950, 18 adult women refugees of Titagarh women refugee camp no. 1, were ordered to be transferred to another camp in Medinipur. They were not given usual weekly dole. The first week went quietly. Later from 19th June 1950(morning), the women refugees, resorted to hunger strike. The police watched the situation.⁹ Thus the women suffered once again.

The Women refugees were found active in the district of 24 parganas(Kharda). Some women refugee were transferred from Kharda to Ranaghat camp(Nadia). And they were supposed to draw their ration from Kharda. Later the refugees expressed that the living condition of the new camp was intolerable. So on 20th and 22nd November 1950, they attempted to reoccupy the abandoned camp of Kharda when they came to draw their ration. But they were forced to leave the place(Kharda). Some political parties became involved too. So necessary police arrangement was continued till 26th November 1950.¹⁰ In May 1950, 3 refugees residing at Dhubulia camp, including one woman resorted to hunger strike, as a protest against the order of government stopping doles of able bodied refugees. On 21st May, about 300 refugees, in order to publicize their demands, held up 2 down trains and 1 up train at Dhubulia. SP and DM went to the spot to prevent similar event from happening again.

In Payradanga camp(Nadia) inmates went on hunger strike from the morning (6th July 1950) over demands of payment of cash dole, house building loans and withdrawal of restriction order from 1 Jiten

⁴WBSA, IB File 1238/47, Fortnightly appreciation of border situation in West Bengal, in the first half of April, IB Department.

⁵WBSA, IB File- Copy of Report, 23.3.48 ASI, Tetulberia P.s, IB Department.

⁶ WBSA, IB File -Fortnightly appreciation of border situation in West Bengal, in the second half of February 1948, IB Department.

⁷Dilip Halder, *Atrocities on Dalits Since The Partition of Bengal*, New Delhi:Mittal Publications, 2008, pp.19-20.

⁸ WBSA, IB File- Extract from SP West Dinajpur, Weekending 16.4.48, IB department.

⁹WBSA, IB File- dated 18.6.50, File no 1838/48, IB Department.

¹⁰WBSA, IB File- Report of political activities and corruption of refugees dated 26.11.50, IB Department.

Chowdhury. In order to publicize it, about 88 refugees including some women came in a procession on 13th July from Payradanga to Ranaghat and placed their demands before the SDO. Local supporters of socialist party, and RCPI, also accompanied them. The strike was withdrawn through the intervention of communist workers on 16th July 1950.¹¹

During the initial stage of United Central Refugee Council(UCRC, established in 1950), Bijoy Majumder, a CPI party worker, worked amongst the refugees, as an agent. At that time, refugees formed various committees out of necessity, organizing and conducting the struggle. Majumder felt that he could play no effective role if he failed to secure any base in the committees. He proposed to form coordinating body. The *samity* was called South Kolkata Bastuhara Songram Parisad. Majumder wanted to spread the influence of UCRC in the grass-root level of camp and colony dwellers. He sought the assistance of Mohila Atmaraksha Samity in the field of the activities of the refugees. The *samity* worked as a relief organization. The women refugees were more likely to talk freely against the establishment to sympathetic people. Thus the Mohila Atmaraksha Samity(M.A.R.S) established contact with these marginal women.¹² The leaflets of M.A.R.S contained the issues concerning the refugees. Thus refugees slowly became involved in the network of economic movement.¹³

They joined the rallies and processions spontaneously. They had nothing to lose but small hutments. Women who had experience of political activism, working with M.A.R.S, introduced political activism in refugee women. There was a metamorphosis of refugee women. It is pertinent to mention that communism had developed in East Bengal. It had its impact in West Bengal. In cotton mill areas of Barrackpur, trade union movement grew up. Similarly women's front developed around the colonies and camps. In the camps and colonies, the leftist women could be identified amongst the migrants. Jibon Prabha Devi of Titagarh Camp no 1, Kamala Tanti of camp no 2, were some of the women refugees. The women had joined the movement in West Bengal before partition.¹⁴ There were thousand and lakhs of migrants. There were women communist refugees among them as well.¹⁵

The refugee organization United Central Refugee Council, was formed in 1950. Prafulla Chakrabarti writes that a new feature of UCRC rather was the presence in the procession of women in large number. Of the ten thousand persons, who attended the meeting, at least 1200 were women. The women often with babies participated in these processions and meetings. It may not be an exaggeration to say that it was the UCRC which according to Prafulla Chakrabarti "brought women in large numbers into the streets of Calcutta".¹⁶ The communist party organized the camp refugees of West Bengal., Bastuhara Mahila Samity, was formed in Cooper's camp under the influence of Communist Party of India. Chabi Mondol, Monica and Renu Chakraborty were some of the important members. They took part in protest marches, gheraoing and public meetings.¹⁷ In 1954, Mahila Samity was established in Bhadrakali Camp. Alladini Majumder, was arrested by the police in Gopalpur camp, (Burdwan). And despite talks of negotiation with the refugees, the police brutally treated the refugee women. A committee was formed, in Rotibati camp with Satish Chatterjee of Barishal as president and Gobinda Das of Pujirpur, Barishal as secretary. The committee decided to stage a hunger strike by some inmates of the camp in order to coerce the government into realizing their demands. They ultimately selected Smt. Shishubala, widow of Gobinda Das and Smt. Suniti Mali, wife of Bisnu Mali to go on a hunger strike. They wanted to alarm the government. It was apparent that the hunger strike was an instrument, the refugees repeatedly used to 'pressurize' the government. Accordingly on 21st April 1954, two women went on hunger strike in the

¹¹ WBSA, IB File- Report of political activities and corruption of refugees dated 16.7.50, IB Department.

¹² Prafulla Chakrabarti, *Marginal Men and the Left Political Syndrome*, Kolkata : Lumier, 1990, pp.47-48.

¹³ Gargi Chakrabarty, *Coming out of Partition, Refugee Women of Bengal*, New Delhi Calcutta: Bluejay Books, 2005.

¹⁴ WBSA, IB File, IB Department.

¹⁵ Gargi Chakrabarty, *Coming out of Partition*, p.44.

¹⁶ Prafulla Chakrabarti, *Marginal Men*, p.93.

¹⁷ WBSA, IB File, IB Department. See also, Abhijit Dasgupta, "Unwanted Harijan" in Imtiaz Ahmed, Abhijit Dasgupta, Kathinka Sinha-Kerkhoff, eds. *State, Society and Displaced People, in South Asia*, Dacca:University Press Limited, 2004, pp.67-70.

camp. It was thoroughly publicized through leaflets at the insistence of Manaranjan Ghuha Thakurda.¹⁸ There was a hunger strike in Bhadrakali camp of Hooghly as well. On 14th August 1954, 10-12 police including women police, of Serampore came to Bhadrakali camp. They took Smt. Shishu Datta, Surobala Sil, Sefali Das and their daughters to an unknown location. Moreover when the women were taken, their various possessions were destroyed.¹⁹ Prior to this incident, inmates of the Bhadrakali camp, for a long time, were tortured. On 19th and 20th October 1954, a group of outsiders were hired by the camp authorities to torture the inmates. Consequently some women were injured. On 19th February, a meeting was held under the leadership of Subarna Sengupta. Pran Krishna Chakrabarty was the speaker. He highlighted that the camp was attacked by anti-social elements, under the instigation of the camp authorities. 17 families were punished and their dole was stopped. Sarajubala Bal, was the organizer of the Mahila Samity. Suddenly her name was struck off from the camp register. Subsequently a meeting was held on 25th August 1957. Here the main speakers were Pran Krishna Chakrabarty, Kunja Dasgupta, Usha Nag, Sarajubala Bal, and Manaranjan Hazra. However the inmates continued to be tortured. But within a few days Prafulla Datta, Shishu Datta, Sarajubala Bal, Mahamaya Chakraborty, Kusturi Biswas, Laxmi Das were arrested.²⁰

From 26th August 1957, women refugees of the camp such as Manjulika Bhrama, Surabala Bhattacharya, Bishubala Datta, went on a hunger strike. They demanded the removal of the camp superintendent as the latter was unnecessarily strict. They complained about their missing children. The glaring complaint was against the woman superintendent.²¹ Those five women, had been jailed as per a complaint of a woman who was a favorite of the Kashipur camp administration. The female refugees were imprisoned on 13th August 1957. On the very day, of their release, they were divided into two groups. They were taken to police vans. They were told that they would be taken to Serampore if they wanted. The arrangements would be made by the authorities.²² Surprisingly the two vans ran without any direction. The passengers remained without any food. Then one van went to an unknown location. Another van reached Peardoba camp of Bankura. The Women were transferred to that camp. But their children were not with them. Smt. Manjulia Brahma, Smt. Sishu Datta, Smt. Surabala Sil, asked the authorities about their children. But they did not receive any answer.²³ On the other hand, they received no information on where the children were sent by the local authorities.

As a result, the women refugees became tremendously discontented. UCRC's representatives like Nalini Pal went to Bhadrakali camp to meet the inmates. In the meantime, the Hooghly Zilla Refugee Parisad's secretary and local MLA Manoranjan Hazra deputed the whole matter to the authorities. They too were unable to yield any result. On 14th August 1957, they described the incidents and the future course of action.²⁴ It had been already mentioned the camp residents (Bhadrakali, 4 in number), started a hunger strike from 26th August 1957. They had the following demands- 1) No Inmate or their children would be forcefully transferred to any other camp. 2) Those who had already been sent, must be brought back. 3) The adult male child should be transferred to rehabilitation centers. 4) Sarajubala Bal, must be allowed to enter the camp and provided with due clothes and other necessities. 5) Action should be taken against corruption.²⁵

The first batch of hunger strikers, continued their hunger strike for 14 days. On the 15th day, an unfortunate event took place. The hunger strikers' condition deteriorated. The camp became prey of police *julum*. Refugee women were forcibly taken to prison vans. Other women who had been nursing

¹⁸ WBSA, IB File, no. 666/33, IB Department.

¹⁹ *Jugantar*, dated 18th August 1957.

²⁰ Tushar Sinha, *Moronjoyi Sangrame Bastuhara*, Kolkata: Dasgupta's, 1990, p.29.

²¹ *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, dated 12th August 1957.

²² *Jugantar*, dated 18th August 1957.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, dated 29th August 1957.

them, were also taken to prison vans.²⁶ The second batch of Hunger strikers started their hunger strike on 10th September 1957. Smt. Mahamaya Chakraborty, Bhubaneshwari Chatterjee, Giribala Sarkar, Sarala Das offered to go on a hunger strike.²⁷ Though the condition of hunger strikers took a critical turn, the police in presence of SDO, arrested Annapurna Roy, Bimala Adhikari, Tulsi Karmakar, Surabala Sil who had been looking after the hunger strikers. They were taken to Serampore. A hut was built to keep the hunger strikers. But there was no trace of hunger striker refugees.²⁸ Annapurna Roy, Surabala Sil etc. started hunger strike in jail.²⁹ A meeting was held on 16th September 1957. The meeting was organized by UCRC. It was presided over by Jibonlal Chatterjee. It was attended by 120 persons including 75 women. In the meeting it was unanimously resolved that the superintendent of Bhadrakali camp should be removed and government should intervene for peaceful settlement in the affairs of Bhadrakali camp.³⁰ After the meeting, a procession headed by Pran Krishna Chakraborty and 80 female followers paraded through various roads of Calcutta. It is worthy to mention that in Bhadrakali camp, an attempt was made to murder Prana Krishna Chakraborty. Some hired men were engaged in oppressing the women refugees. This is done to demoralize the female refugees. Some of these goons attempted to murder Pran Krishna Chakraborty. He demanded the removal of grown up boys from the camp. Over this issue, he requested all, to join the mass rally on 18th September 1957. Here one Shankari, a refugee woman from Titagarh camp noticeably participated in this rally. She lent her support and cooperated with the Bhadrakali camp. later, the following resolutions were taken: 1) urging the government to withdraw all the cases initiated against the women refugees, to remove the camp superintendent and also return separated children to their respective mothers. They also wanted to set up an enquiry committee to look into their allegations against camp superintendent. 2) Grievances of Mahila Samity of the Bhadrakali camp were addressed.³¹ The problems of Bhadrakali camp lingered till 1958. A batch of women refugees with a few boys and girls, came in groups to Subodh Mallick Square.³² The hunger strike continued for 61 days. Then the government accepted the demands of the camp.³³ After the influx of lower caste and class people, to West Bengal in 1950, the government faced a crisis of accommodating them and providing them with dole. In 1956, a conference was held at Darjeeling, where rehabilitation ministers from Eastern States participated. It was decided that Bettiah was the largest area where refugees from West Bengal could be accommodated. It was however outside West Bengal. According to Gnanesh Kudaiysa, most of the camp residents who took shelter at Bettiah were *Namasudras*.³⁴ But they were not properly settled at Bettiah. They came back to West Bengal. They took shelter at Howrah Maidan, Sealdah Station, Dumdum Cantonment.³⁵ The refugee women came into forefront at Howrah Maidan in a struggle with the relief organization, Paschim Banga Samaj Sevi Sangha. The relief organization allotted 4 and 2 *chataks* of rice, to adults and minors respectively. The refugees demanded 10 and 5 *chataks* from the organization. On 2nd May 1957, women refugees, became involved in a skirmish with them. The relief organization distributed rice at the usual rate. And the women refugees demanded the rice to be distributed at a higher rate. As a result, an altercation developed over the issue. A large number of refugee women, 'forcibly' took away 3 bags of rice weighing 6 moulds from Paschim Banga Samaj Sevi Sangha. The Sangha complained to the Howrah police station. The SP wanted to persuade the women to return the bags. The

²⁶ *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, dated 3rd September 1957.

²⁷ *Jugantar*, dated 10th October 1957.

²⁸ WBSA, IB Report, IB Department.

²⁹ *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, dated 14th September 1957.

³⁰ Swati Sengupta Chatterjee, *West Bengal Camp Refugees, Dispersal and Caste Question*, Kolkata : Sreejoni, 2019, pp.86-87.

³¹ WBSA, IB Report 1483/32, IB Department

³² WBSA, IB Report, IB Department.

³³ *Jugantar* dated 26th October 1958.

³⁴ Swati Sengupta Chatterjee, *West Bengal Camp Refugees*, pp.95-96.

³⁵ WBSA, IB File, IB Department.

women were 'adamant' about not returning the same.³⁶ In course of persuasion, some refugee women became very furious. The situation got heated at Maidan. These women were front rankers. When the DM arrived at the scene, he was heavily brickbatted. From this incident it was evident that the refugee women had the power to fight against any odd and their focus was fixed.³⁷ When the Bettiah returned refugees participated in a *satyagraha* movement, a number of women and children took part in it. The daily arrest of women and children was a testimony to the fact, how women participated in the *satyagraha*.³⁸

In December 1957, the government's dispersal policy was practically implemented for the refugees of Bankura district (Basudevpur and Shiromoni camps). Inmates of three camps of Basudevpur, I, II, III, numbering 100, were served notice to move to rehabilitation site in Rajasthan.³⁹ The UCRC decided to launch a *satyagraha* as a mark of protest by 12th March 1958. In the meantime, a violent incident occurred at a refugee camp at Basudevpur number III. 12 camp inmates of the said camp, armed with 'deadly weapons' suddenly 'attacked' the store keeper when rice was being distributed among the camp. There was a difference of opinion among some refugees. Some refugees were not in favor of 'looting' the store and in fact tried to dissuade the others from doing so. They even handed over some of the 'violent' refugees to the police. But this made the situation worse. As the news spread to other camps, the refugees from other camps assembled near camp number II. They waited to overawe the loyal refugees. Refugees like Bisnu Halder, son of Kalikanta of Basudevpur were chased out. He was later caught and confined in a tent by Khirod Malakar of camp number I. He was forced to write that he would not under any circumstances complain to the police on a piece of paper and he would join hands with them in agitations. The cases were lodged. Case number 1 section 147 / 148 / 380 /307/ 354/ Indian Penal Code on the complaint of the store keeper Birendra Banerjee. This case was lodged against Kamala Kanta Biswas, Shridam Chandra Das, Amulya Bhaktya, Mahendra Biswas, Mahanlal Sarkar, Niranjana Sardar, Panchibala Goldar, Gharibala Biswas, Rajlaxmi Biswas, Banshibala Das. Among them, Gharibala Biswas, Rajlaxmi Biswas, Panchibala Goldar, Gyanada Chowdhury were arrested and taken into forced custody.⁴⁰ A *satyagraha* commenced under UCRC from 12th March 1958 in Bishnupur. It is here pertinent to mention, the role of women in the March *satyagraha*. One Usharani Bhattacharya was the leading woman organizer of the refugees of Basudevpur camp and Peardoba camp. She was a member of working committee of Bankura District Bastuhara Parisad. She took important part in organizing the refugees of the various camps of Bishnupur subdivision for participating in *satyagraha* movement.⁴¹

When Basudevpur was attacked by the police, a two year old girl Laxmimoni died. Ambica Chakraborty informed the UCRC about this incident. From Bishnupur, Ambica Chakraborty, received the news of the death. The police had snatched the girl from her mother. As a result the little girl fell on the ground. She remained unconscious for a long time. Later she died. The refugees took the dead body and went to MDO. Then they went to Bankura civil surgeon for tests. But it was not done. Local doctor did the tests instead. On this issue, a protest meeting was held. Consequently the police arrested 50 refugees.⁴² Jogendranath Mondol, a prominent scheduled caste leader, guided the women refugees. He came to India in early 1950. But he had to wait for 8 years. A meeting was scheduled for 11th and 12th January, at Bagjola camp. Hemanta Biswas was the secretary. Some members proposed to invite Jogen Mondol. Mondol was thus invited. He got the opportunity to address a huge public.⁴³

³⁶ Swati Sengupta Chatterjee, *West Bengal Camp Refugees*, p.117.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ WBSA, IB File, IB Department.

³⁹ WBSA, IB File 1483/32, IB Department.

⁴⁰ WBSA, IB File 1483/32, IB Department.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *Anandabazar Patrika*, Dated 24th March 1958.

⁴³ Swati Sengupta Chatterjee, "Role of Some Scheduled Caste Leaders in 1950", *Quarterly Review Of Historical Studies*, Volume LIV, Number 1-2, April 2014-September 2014, p.172.

In February 1958, a committee was formed. Hemanta Biswas presided over the meeting. Mahadev Bhattacharya acted as the secretary. Jogen Mondol acted as the treasurer. There were members from other corners. Mondol during this time of his 'propaganda', made a plan for Burdwan district. He decided to collect 1000 volunteers for the ensuing movement. Along with that, he a plan to collect funds at the rate 4 anna per family from the camp. He planned to select captains from the volunteers. Amiya Narayan Prochodo expressed his wish to allow his wife Sushilabala to lead the female volunteers. She was liberal and educated. Mondol did not object. This indicated that there was good female volunteers.⁴⁴

From the early months of 1958, the idea of Dandakaranya developed by the government. On 21st January 1958, a conference of chief ministers of different provinces was held at Calcutta. Some important decisions were taken there. The chief minister and rehabilitation minister of the province promised to provide about 1 lakh acre land for rehabilitation of East Bengal refugees. A land survey and a land recovery would be carried on by the state government. And expenses should be borne by the federal government. After 3 months, a similar meeting would be held at New Delhi. The idea of Dandakaranya was planned by chief administrator A L Fletcher(ICS). The refugee organizations prepared for a struggle against the government. It was the refugee counter-action. First initiative was taken by Sara Bangla Bastuhara Sanmela. On 26th March 1958, a meeting was held in Calcutta. Shibnath Banerjee revealed that atrocities were regularly committed on refugee women. They were *lathi*-charged and tear gassed. He further added police could not stop the women refugees of Burdwan from participating in *Satyagraha* movement. They were very enthusiastic and despite their husbands' unwillingness, they were ready to join the *satyagraha* movement. UCRC started the struggle from April 1958. 3rd April was marked for observance of women refugee day. A number of women refugees from Burdwan would offer *satyagraha*.⁴⁵

Table 1.1.Anti Dandakaranya Struggle.

Year	Male / Female arrested or fined	Date	Source
1958	1 female	18 th March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	38 females near Rajbhawan	n.d	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	117 males and 1 female near Burdwan court	20 th March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	65 males and 8 females	21 st March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	298 males and 17 females at Calcutta	21 st March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	2 females at Cooper's camp	28 th March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	56 females, 4 boys and girls, 5 babies, at Esplanade East.	25 th March	<i>Jugantar</i>
1958	301 males and 17 females, 7 children near Bagjola, Ghusuri, Sonarpur camps.	21 st March	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	172 males, 15 females and 14 children, near Bagjola, Ghusuri, Sonarpur camps.	22 nd March	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	161 males, 30 women and 17 children.	26 th March	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	82 males and females near Raj Bhawan	26 th March	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	106 males and 32 females , 23 children near East Esplanade	1 st April	<i>The Statesman</i>

⁴⁴WBSA, IB File 96/50, IB Department.

⁴⁵WBSA, IB File , IB Departmnet. Swati Sengupta Chatterjee, *West Bengal Camp Refugees* ,pp.174-177.

1958	Males and females near Howrah	8 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	1 female in Midnapur court	8 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	353 males and 81 females near Murshidabad Berhampur	8 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	421 males, 16 females, 25 children in Calcutta	9 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	63 females and 2 children	9 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>
1958	35 females, outside Chinsura court.	9 th April	<i>The Statesman</i>

Conclusion

These women also participated in anti-Dandakaranya movements of 1959. We find women's participation in districts and sub-divisional level. Chaya Neogi, Monorama Datta, Molina Dey, were arrested in front of the Ranaghat court. In Hooghly UCRC conducted *satyagraha* movement under Shishubala Das. In Midnapur, 8 women offered *satyagraha*. On 16th January 1959, 17 female refugees were arrested at Asansol. A meeting was held at Asrafabad camp on 11th January 1959. Ullasini Sarkar spoke in the meeting. 32 female refugees participated in civil disobedience movement at Calcutta. On 2nd February 1959, 50 female refugees, participated in *satyagraha*. The torture on female refugees continued till 1961. There was a hunger strike at Bagjola camp against the government's policy of rehabilitation. Not only 4 male refugees were killed, the police entered camp 7 of Bagjola and severely beat Suren Samaddar's wife Binodini and their 4 year old daughter. Similarly Brajabala Biswas and Sarala Bairagi were injured. Thus it is clear police violence perpetuated on the refugee women even in 1961. These women thus belonged to the lowest rung of the have-nots.