



Spaces for Youth Development and Social Change Spaces for Change {S4C}

FORCED EVICTIONS IN BADIA-EAST TODAY | S4C STAFF ARRESTED, RELEASED

Sequel to our statement of Saturday, June 10, 2017, a Task Force squad comprising demolition agents of the Lagos State Government and scores of heavily-armed security operatives invaded Badia-East this morning, Thursday, June 15, 2017. With the aid of bulldozers, sledge hammers, iron bars, and earth-moving equipment, they levelled all the structures in the two ends of the community where the residents live. Beginning from last week Thursday, construction workers, on the orders of the Lagos State Government, began to fence off the area where the residents live, together with the residents inside. Seeing that residents were not put off by the fencing activity, Lagos State Task Force squad returned today to forcefully evict the residents and demolish their homes.

Up to 500 persons, mainly women, the youth and young children were rendered homeless today. They continue to remain outside despite the heavy rainfall this morning. Wet mattresses, refrigerators, television sets, heaps of clothes littered the entire demolished area. Children clustered round their mothers, looking on helplessly as bulldozers flattened what used to be their homes. Tension, pandemonium rent the air as scores of security operatives roamed through the locality determined to suppress any resistance to the demolitions. [[SEE DEMOLITION VIDEO HERE](#)]

The demolition exercise was characterised by brute force, excessive violence and indiscriminate arrests. Residents were not allowed to retrieve their belongings. Ms. Bilikisu Adeoye was arrested when she tried to pack her personal effects. She was beaten and locked up in a waiting Black Maria. While inside the Black Maria, a police officer hit her leg with a knife injuring her in the process. A demolition agent hit Mr. Sunday Ajayi, 23, on the leg, making it difficult for him to walk. They removed his slippers and also dragged him into a waiting Black Maria. Victor Eno, 21, was arrested for no reason, and also beaten, and bundled into a waiting Black Maria. In total, 6 persons were arrested.

Seeing that many have been arrested, large numbers of residents began to call SPACES FOR CHANGE's office, requesting them to come to their aid. SPACES FOR CHANGE's 5-man team arrived shortly and began to document the evictions. Women, children gathered to tell their stories of pain and experiences in the hands of the demolition agents. SPACES FOR CHANGE's staff and photographer, Mr. Chimee Adioha, was arrested while he was documenting the demolitions. Six heavily-armed security operatives rounded him up, dragged his clothes and bundled him into a waiting Black Maria. The security operatives declined to respond to queries regarding where they were taking the arrested persons to. The Black Maria was accompanied by another black-coloured security van with registration number KSF 342EE.

Immediately after the arrest, SPACES FOR CHANGE launched an intense social media action, demanding for the release of its staff and community residents. Yielding to mounting pressure across social media, Mr. Chimee Adioha and 5 persons were eventually released at Lagos State Task Force Office at Bolade Oshodi Station. With a gun pointed at his forehead, Mr. Chimee was forced to delete all the images and videos on his camera. The images and videos were taken at Badia during the demolition exercise. *'If you dare take videos again, you'll end up in Kirikiri'*, a police officer warned him. Mr. Adebayo Dagonro, a Badia resident, is still in police custody. The police did not give reasons for his continued arrest.

Address: 7 Independence Street, 1st Floor, Anifowoshe, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria

Website: www.spacesforchange.org | Email: info@spacesforchange.org | spacesforchange.s4c@gmail.com

Telephone: 07036202074 | 09094539638

What makes the current situation sad is that both the state and the Federal governments are working together to execute this ominous displacement agenda. On the right side, Federal government has required residents to push back a bit, to enable them construct a rail line. On the left side, the Lagos State Government is constructing a housing project, named Jubilee Housing Estate. The housing projects are still visibly under construction, and there is no plan to ensure that current residents benefit from this scheme.

Since 2015, SPACES FOR CHANGE| S4C has been providing free legal representation to over 1,000 displaced families in Badia, rendered homeless at the peak of torrential rainfall on 18 September 2015, on the orders of the Ojora Chieftaincy Family, and aided by the bulldozers operated by officials of the Lagos State Government. The matter came up for hearing on June 13, 2017 where the latest developments were brought to the court's attention. The court has adjourned to October 9, 2017 for ruling.

S4C appeals to all concerned individuals, local and international organizations, the media and all, to press upon the Lagos State Government to abandon this new mass displacement strategy. We further demand:

1. A suspension on the continuing fencing of the entire community without concrete plans to compensate, relocate or resettle the displaced residents;
2. Undertake to comply with international and national legal standards relating to the right to adequate housing and prohibitions on forced evictions, and
3. Strive to ensure that any project promoted in the name of "development" benefit the very poor, the aged and the vulnerable and contribute to the ability of people to live free from poverty and in conditions of dignity.

For further information, please contact:

Victoria Ohaeri
Executive Director | 09094539638

Aizighode Obinyan
Community Advocacy Lead

Sehinde Ebiesuwa
Communities Alliance Against Displacement | CAAD

Telephone: 07036202074
Email: info@spacesforchange.org | spacesforchange.s4c@gmail.com

Address: 7 Independence Street, 1st Floor, Anifowoshe, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria
Website: www.spacesforchange.org | Email: info@spacesforchange.org | spacesforchange.s4c@gmail.com
Telephone: 07036202074 | 09094539638