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On Sunday, April 10, 2016, the Chief District Officer of Sindhuli deployed police to forcefully disperse community members who were peacefully protesting a World Bank-funded transmission line project. Communities had staged the peaceful sit-in when police and construction workers entered their land to resume construction of the project. Forces entered the village without any resolution to the decade long conflict that has mired the project in delays. As a result of police force, several members of the community sustained injuries, including many elderly and women. Police physically dragged people from the protest site and some who were beaten with *lathis*, or long bamboo sticks, on the back, legs, and arms.

Shortly after clearing the protesters, Armed Police Forces erected a barbed wire fence around the field and set up tents for 24-hour surveillance of the site. At all hours, a group of 5-6 armed officers patrol the construction of a transmission line tower, located close to people's homes and the Swiss Sindhuli School. Communities have resumed their peaceful sit-in at the site of another transmission line tower.

The same day as the protest, six community leaders were detained by police forces as they left a meeting with district authorities. The CDO had invited community leaders to his office to discuss their concerns. One district authority said the reason for the detention was to allow for the smooth dispersal of protesters. The community leaders were released the following day after being coerced into signing a form that gave their assurance that they would no longer obstruct project construction. Community leaders reported said that they were not allowed to read the document and that they were threatened with criminal charges and further imprisonment if they did not sign. Local authorities, including the CDO and the Superintendent of Police in Sindhuli district, repeatedly refused to disclose a copy of the document. A week after this incident, communities held a protest at the CDO's office to voice their concern about the continued project construction.

Indigenous and rural communities in Sindhuli District have been voicing their concerns about the Khimti-Dhalkebar transmission line project for over six years. They filed a complaint to the World Bank in 2013 outlining harm to communities' land, health, and livelihoods. The complaint also raised serious concerns about the use of security forces and violent repression of peaceful protesters in 2012.

The Bank's accountability office, the Inspection Panel, conducted an investigation in 2014-15, finding serious abuses of the Bank's social and environmental policies in the planning and implementation of the project. The Inspection Panel found that the Bank "did not ensure adequate, timely and meaningful consultations during project preparation and implementation." The Bank failed to assess alternative routes for the power line and whether the local agency implementing the project, the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), had capacity to do so in

compliance with the Bank's rules. The Panel also found the Bank did not provide prompt and effective compensation to families forcibly displaced by the project, nor did it create a local and accessible way for people to register their complaints.

The World Bank Board of Directors encouraged an amicable resolution to the conflict, and affected communities have been requesting dialogue with the Government of Nepal and the NEA for the last year. However, authorities have repeatedly denied requests for engagement and dialogue. Despite the Panel's findings that consultations were not timely and meaningful, there has been no attempt to correct those violations, creating further frustration in the affected communities. Instead, the Government of Nepal has resorted to complete the project by force.

The World Bank continues its funding to the NEA and Government of Nepal in the energy sector, despite clear evidence that their funds are complicit in causing human rights violations against affected communities. Members of the World Bank Board of Directors have indicated that, instead of reprimanding the NEA for blatantly disregarding human rights obligations, they are in the process of considering new loans to the NEA for more energy projects in Nepal.