

Huts on Fire in Karachi

The land mafia and criminals torch the settlements as an attempt to evict people and get hold on the land.

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Huts on Fire

Two main causes are identified for these incidents; one natural and the other planned. The planned incidents are those, in which the land mafia is involved. To draw attention towards fire incidents in Karachi, URC circulates reports containing facts and figures on the issue to the press, NGOs and government agencies



URC has also been documenting incidents of fire in Katchi Abadis (informal and low income settlements) of Karachi. A total number of 2,704 huts were gutted in different settlements since January 1997. These incidents have rendered more than 17,846 people homeless. 50 minors and 35 adults were also burnt alive in these incidents, besides a number of severe physical injuries and lost of household goods.



Incidents of fire in Karachi reported in last one year

- i. Twelve huts were gutted when a fire broke out in a settlement near Al-Asif Square, Sohrab Goth on 8th October 2009. Two minor children were burnt alive and two women also sustained burnt injuries in this incident.
- ii. 30 huts were burnt to ashes while three people's sustained injuries when the fire erupted in a settlement located near Saleem Center, Block 13, Gulshan-e-Iqbal on 11th December' 2009.
- iii. A woman burnt alive in a fire broke out in her hut in Razi Goth near *Khuda ki Basti* Sarjani town on 31st December 2009. This hut was built by a gipsy family at a 120 yards empty plot. The deceased was identified as 30 year old *Izzat Bibi* and according to the locals she was blind and disabled
- iv. 45 people including 22 children, died when a fire engulfed about two dozen huts in a shantytown in sector L-9 of North Karachi on 9th January 2009. The fire broke out around 11:30 pm within the jurisdiction of the Bilal Colony police station. Over 100 people were living in the huts built in a small area of about 240 square yards. No proper investigations were carried out to find out exact causes of fire.
- v. A fire broke out in hut on 12th January 2009 in Khudadad Colony injuring a 40-year old women and her 5 year old daughter.

- vi. A baby died when a fire broke out in a slum located in an empty plot on 17th January 2009 within the jurisdiction of Aziz Bhatti Police Station.
- vii. 30 huts were burnt in Pehalwan Goth, Block 12 on 10th April 2009. Two year old baby was also burnt to death in this fire. The fire also damaged the entire household goods of the community.
- viii. In another incident, three huts were gutted in the fire in Railway Society, Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Block 19. In this incident two minors, lost their lives.



Two main causes are identified for these incidents; one natural and the other planned. The planned incidents are those, in which the land mafia is involved, they torch the settlements in an attempt to evict people. To draw attention towards fire incidents in Karachi, URC circulates reports containing facts and figures on the issue to the press, NGOs and government agencies.