

# HUMAN RIGHTS NEWS UPDATE

By Civil Society Forum on Human Rights (CSFHR), Odisha

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## **THE POSCO ISSUE WHERE DO WE STAND?**

**(An appeal to the left and democratic organizations and anti-POSCO struggle solidarity groups)**

Dear Friends and Comrades,

All of you might be aware of the tragic turn of events in the anti-POSCO struggle area. Last week armed police conducted flag march, raided homes, and were forcibly trying to erect a boundary wall to demarcate the area for POSCO. The events which have unfolded for the past two months especially after the arrest of Mr. Abhay Sahu the president of POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samity raises many pertinent questions about the nature of the leadership and their relationship with Odisha Govt. and POSCO. Needless to say is that Mr. Abhay Sahu president of PPSS is a National Council member of CPI and Mr. Shishir Mohapatra secretary of PPSS is a card holding member of CPI. Their role in the past two months has raised many eyebrows not only in the anti-POSCO struggle villages, but in the media and the entire thinking population of Odisha.

The latest attitude of PPSS is quite disturbing for 4 days last week armed police have been conducting flag marches, raiding homes in Gobindpur, and also they have been trying to constructing a boundary wall to demarcate the land for POSCO, this was successfully resisted by the people of Gobindpur. Strangely PPSS didn't come out with an update when I heard about it I immediately circulated an update. My update was widely circulated in different activist websites and listserves. Then a day after my update was circulated Willy PPSS update came out duly signed by Prashant Paikray the official spokesperson of PPSS. This makes the position of PPSS and CPI highly suspect. Over the years whenever any such incidents were to happen in the anti-POSCO struggle villages then within hours PPSS update was circulated and Prashant Paikray used to make numerous phone calls to different metropolitan centres. Strangely this time the update came a day after my update was circulated where I had pointed out why the PPSS update has not been circulated.

Senior activists of Odisha like Shri Prafulla Samantra and Sudhir Patnaik who are intimately involved in the Anti-POSCO struggle from the day one and know the movement and its internal dynamics thoroughly have suggested that the left and democratic organizations and anti-POSCO struggle solidarity groups should write an open letter to CPI and PPSS questioning their role in the murky deal between Odisha Government and PPSS and between CPI and BJD.

There is a propaganda in the mainstream media that the POSCO struggle is over and the Odisha Govt. has successfully acquired 2700 acres of land in Gobindpur, Nuagaon and Gadkujang. The statements quoted from Govt. of Odisha official and POSCO management that Govt. of Odisha will soon handover the 2700 Acres to POSCO for the first phase. Those of us who were involved in the anti-POSCO struggle should make an objective assessment of the situation and take a firm stand.

I have been having long conversations with Tuna and Prakash from Gobindpur. Prafulla Samantra had also given a detailed assessment and have urged the solidarity groups to take a stand. Before arriving at any conclusion I will try to reconstruct the happenings at Gobindpur since 4<sup>th</sup> week of June. As all of you might be knowing since the Arrest of Abhay Sahu around 29 platoons of Armed police at Gobindpur and there is a police camp right in the heart of the village and since May first week they have been terror rising the villagers. They conducted Flag marches in the main road of Gobindpur and have carried out mid night raids to arrest activists. As the events in the anti-POSCO struggle villages and the role of different political parties in Odisha unfolded for past few months it is quite clear, that CPI in a cynical electoral calculation has handed over Gobindpur in a very diabolical clandestine, despicable deal with the BJD.

On 26<sup>th</sup> June around 6 AM early morning 12 platoons of Armed Police led by the SP and collector arrived in Gobindpur to demolish Betel Mines. By 6.30 AM around 200 families of Gobindpur arrived there to present them from destroying the betel mines. When the police and revenue official tried to physically destroy the mines, a scuffle took place. Then there was heavy lathi charge but the people kept on fronting the police. The activists of Gobindpur made frantic phone calls to Dinkia to come and join them. Prakash called up Deba and Manorama and Tuna called up Akshay. Around 1000 Dinkia men and women had arrived at Patnahat for their ongoing Dharna around 9 AM. There Akshay told them to join the people of Gobindpur who were hardly 50 meters away. When the people of Dinkia joined the Gobindpur people, lathi charge was on. Then Shisir Mahapatra started calling up Dinkia people to come back and told them not to join Gobindpur people around 11.30 AM. Dinkia people came back. So when around 12 AM when the administration saw the Dinkia people going back they got the message and resumed lathi charge on Gobindpur people, this time more brutal, and by 3 PM had forcibly destroyed 40 betel mines. The lathi charge was on from 6.30 AM to 2.30 PM and the Dinkia people were just onlookers.

In the lathi charge around 50 people were injured, the people who are severely injured and need medical assistance are 1. Bharti Mohanty 2. Shakti Bardhan 3. Satyabati Swain (Ranjan's Mother) 4. Chhabi Swain (Her conditions is still serious) 5. Kapatari Mohanty and off course the main activist were severely beaten up. On 26<sup>th</sup> early morning around 6 AM again 12 platoons of armed police led by the SP and Collector arrived again. That day the target was Tuna's Vine since early morning Tuna his old Father and Mother were sitting inside the Vine, by 6 AM the police, forcibly entered the Vine and ruthlessly beat up Tuna and his old parents. By that time people of Gobindpur arrived and when they contacted Dinkia, no body from Dinkia came then one more round of lathi charge was ordered by the district administration. Bu the time Tunas Vine was completed destroyed.

On 29<sup>th</sup> Narayan Reddy was around in Gobindpur when the police arrived around 7 AM that day since Narayan Reddy was around 30 people from Dinkia joined them another 250 of Dinkia people were 50 meters away at the Patnahat Dharna spot. Within 30 minutes Shishir Mahapatra called the Dinkia people back to the Dharna spot at Patnahat. But Gobindpur people confronted the police until 2.30 PM. Since Narayan Reddy was around that day police went back and by evening the district collector give a press statement that 2700 acres of land needed are acquired. It is clear from this that CPI used Shishir Mahapatra to handover Gobindpur and we should take a firm stand on this. The most outrageous and cheapest aspect of the incidents from 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> is the role of CPI leadership operating through Shishir Mahapatra as the secretary of PPSS and Prashant Paikray the spokes person of PPSS. To fool all of us and to take the solidarity groups for a ride after 3 or 4 days PPSS circulates an update signed by Prashant Paikray asking people to write to PM. CM, DM etc, after everything was over and the deal was sealed with the declaration that the first phase of land acquisition is over. One can easily see through this cheap game plan by CPI. For the past many years I remember whenever there was going to an event PPSS update signed by Prashant Paikray used to be solidarity groups a week earlier. On incidents like imminent police attacks Prashant Paikray used to call up half an hour earlier, and he used to call at least 20 people in Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai etc. With three hours of police atrocities PPSS updates were circulated to the solidarity groups. So the latest PPSS update is a face saving exercise by CPI to hood mint all of us. I was at Gobindpur for around 10 days in the first and second week of June. Before I had arrived after the arrest of Abhay Sahoo (and this co-incidence between the arrest of Abhay Sahoo and the police attacks and

forcible destruction of Betel Vines in Gobindpur is extremely important to understand recent events in anti-POSCO struggle and to pin point CPI's treachery in handing over Gobindpur to POSCO)

By the day I arrived after the arrest of Abhay Sahoo, a massive contingent of Armed police led by district officials ruthlessly beat up Gobindpur and forcibly destroyed hundreds of betel vines stretching over a fort night. There was brutal naked terror in Gobindpur, there were flag marches, mid night raids on Gobindpur anti-POSCO activists, and strong misinformation campaign by Pro-POSCO agents and hired criminals. Many people from Gobindpur like the winter of 2007 were forced to leave the village and live in Dinkia.

In the first week of June the Administration justified the violence and destruction of Betel Vines by saying that the people are willingly giving and have been given compensation cheque. This happened in the fort night after Abhay Sahoo arrest, there was reign of terror in Gobindpur, every five minutes a new rumor was floating, nobody was trusting each other, the agents, crook, contractors of all sorts were let loose at Gobindpur. In the absence of leadership, naked terror and fear and strong inducements like the agents of POSCO a few families distressed and few took compensation, each agent was getting twenty thousand rupees commission for each betel vines. They doubled the compensation amount for some families. POSCO has released huge amount of fund to the district administration, so road contractors are given to pro-POSCO agents. In spite of all these the anti-POSCO people comprising of more than 250 families heroically fought the police and continued to fight, foiling the game plan of CPI and BJD. Tuna and Prakash played the central role in reorganizing Gobindpur people. Around 75 odd families can be counted as neutral. The pro-POSCO element in Gobindpur are small minority. After last week of May the anti-POSCO people didn't allow any vine yards to be destroyed and the police camp was right inside the village.

The day I arrived in Gobindpur that is 7<sup>th</sup> June, a large contingent of armed police along with the district officials tried to destroy the betel vines the anti-POSCO people and there was light scuffle, they forcibly broke the betel vine of Satyanand Rout who is anti-POSCO people of Gobindpur chased the police away. All these were happening, when the around 350 men and women were sitting in a Dharna at Patnahat hardly 80 meters away, none of them joined the Gobindpur people, Babaji Samantray was presiding and Shishir Mohapatra was giving the official PPSS line to people that nobody should join Gobindpur people. Satyanand Rout arrived at the Dharna spot and showed the broken saplings. Then everyone expressed sympathy with him.

A few day earlier around the fag end of May. Around 300 armed police men, few officials along with a JCB machine came to dig the trench at the border of Gobindpur, only a handful of Gobindpur people around 12 to 13 Tuna and Prakash in the front stood in front of the JCB machine and shouted slogans and prevented them from digging the trench finally the district official and police retreated. All these were happening when around 250 Dinkia people were at Patnahat hardly 40 meters away. As I have written earlier on 9<sup>th</sup> around 9 to 10 AM a contingent of heavily armed police along with true tehsildars came to destroy the betel vines of Gobindpur, they started measuring the vine, there were only handful of us around 15 we confronted the police and snatched. I away the tape, a scuffle followed and the armed policemen beat up Ramesh Bhai of Gobindpur, then a few women from Gobindpur joined us and we chased away the police and the officials. All this was happening when there were around 400 men and women from Dinkia were sitting at Patnahat hardly 50 meters away and were silently watching. After we chased away the police all of us went to the Dinkia meeting, there I asked the permission of Babaji Samantray who was presiding to speak I told the meeting that whenever Gobindpur is attacked Dinkia people should join them. After me Manorama, Akshaya and few others spoke strong supporting me, while this was going on Abhay Sahoo's phone from Jail came to Manorama and then Manorama gave the mobile to Shishir Mahapatra, he had a long chat with Abhay Sahoo. After the phone call he over ruled everybody and said that no one from Dinkia should go and join Gobindpur people in their resistance.

On 11<sup>th</sup> June the Gobindpur people had a March to the police camp and the procession passed by the Patnahat Dharna of Dinkia people, we were hardly 3 meters away from them. But they refused to join the March so we went ahead with the March so the police camp shouting slogans.

Every night in Gobindpur we were having meetings how to combat the onslaught of police, in the meeting it was always the unanimous opinion that given the police terror the 22<sup>nd</sup> June black day programme should be held at the Gobindpur police camp. Mean while on 13<sup>th</sup> June PPSS circulated the 22<sup>nd</sup> June invite stating the Black day public meeting will be held at Patnahat. Amongst Sanhati members we had discussed the 22<sup>nd</sup> programme as 'Gobindpur Chalo, police Hatao'. On 14<sup>th</sup> I went to meet Abhay Sahoo at Jail and told him that since PPSS has already decided about the public meeting at Patnahat on 22<sup>nd</sup> June after the meeting there should be a March to police camp and protest to be held, we agreed with that and told me that he will talk to the CPI state leadership about it. I also told him about the plan of Sanhati and other solidarity groups about protesting at the Gobindpur police camp he agreed with the idea. After I came back to Dhinkia I spoke to Manorama that after the public meeting there has to be a protest at the police camp she agreed and told me that she will mobilize the Dhinkia people for that. Next day I met Babaji Samantray the Dhinkia village committee president of PPSS and told him the same thing he agreed and promised me that he will raise it in the village committee. I also had a detailed discussion about with Akshay at Dhinkia.

After I came to Delhi I got a mail from Prafulla Samantra asking me to call him and discuss the POSCO issue. When I called him he told me that he was present at the Patnahat Black day public meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Ashish Kanungo the second in command of state CPI and other state level leaders were there. After the public meeting was over Prafulla Samantra asked Prakash, Manorama, Akshay, and others to March to the police camp. There Shishir Mahapatra put his foot down and told that the Dhinkia village committee has decided not to join the March. So the plan was eventually dropped. This village committee thing is all nonsense this is a big joke there was no functional village committee or committee system nearly in the anti-POSCO struggle for years, Abhay Sahoo had centralized everything in his hand. (in fact this is the main weakness and the structural reason of the root cause of the anti-POSCO struggle, there was no collective leadership and all genuine sincere activists like, Tuna, Prakash, Akshay, Ramesh Bhai were deliberately side lined by Abhay Sahoo, later I will write in detailed about the organizational degeneration of PPSS). Shishir Mohapatra acts as the henchman of CPI for the nefarious deal with BJD to handover Gobindpur. We should openly ask CPI and PPSS about the role of Shishir Mohapatra.

Prafulla Samantra asked me to tell Sanhati and other solidarity groups to write a formal letter to Prashant Paikray and demand explanations officially from PPSS about the 22<sup>nd</sup> June incidents. Just few days ago when I came back from Dehradun after the Summer Marxist School I had called Prafulla Samantra, we had a long chat, he told me that this 2700 acres were handed over to POSCO as per the game plan by CPI and BJD and he asked me to write to Sanhati and other solidarity groups to ask a detailed explanation from PPSS about this and specifically about the role of Shishir Mohapatra, because Abhay Sahoo in Jail CPI operates in PPSS through Shishir Mohapatra. This Saturday on 6<sup>th</sup> June evening I met Sudhir Pattnaik at the Ishrat Jaha protest meeting at the constitution club. I had a long discussion with Sudhir Pattnaik he is the most committed and reliable person in Odisha, he gave me the graphic details how the CPI had struck a deal with Navin Patnaik to handover Gobindpur. He also told me that Abhay Sahoo's arrest is a drama, engineered by the CPI. Sudhir Pattnaik suggested instead of PPSS. Sanhati and other solidarity groups should write to CPI National leadership demanding an explanation. I totally agree with him, the CPI doesn't have the copy right over PPSS all sections of the people including the supporters of ML, CONGRESS, and BJP are part of PPSS. It is a joint front of all struggling people in the anti-POSCO struggle, therefore I suggest we should write an open letter to CPI. All India general secretary and Odisha CPI state secretary with copies marked to the CPI state committee members and the Odisha state ML leadership.

The arrest of Abhay Sahoo in the first week of May was a big drama orchestrated by CPI to facilitate forcible land acquisition in Gobindpur, such that people will say all this happened because Abhay Sahoo is in Jail and nobody will blame him or CPI for the unfortunate incidents in Gobindpur. There are hundreds of Questions the manner and occasion in which Abhay Sahoo was arrested. He was arrested twice earlier and there are innumerable criminal cases against him including murder cases, the commonsensical reaction by everyone is that, when the movement was in a very crucial delicate phase, and given earlier arrests and the pending criminal cases, why and how was he arrested? Why was he not extra careful given the immense responsibility of the movement? What was the necessity for him to go out of the area in this sensitive phase of the movement and the prevailing security situation? The CPI and Abhay Sahoo have

taken all of us for a ride. After I reached Odisha, and talking to people in Bhubaneswar and the Anti-POSCO struggle village the game plan was crystal clear to me. Everyone had serious doubts on the way he was arrested. A mass movement leader which is leading an important anti State govt. struggle will naturally will have a hostile relation with the state police force and the administration. Likewise the Administration will be hostile and will be on a look out to capture a person with so many warrants against him, observed by applies from the local intelligence, police station to the state police headquarters. And a person having so many criminal cases including murder cases will be extra careful especially when he is leading an extremely important and sensitive struggle will avoid police like anything. And Stalwarts and Cadres of mass movements have done this Telengana onward. Only police informers or sold out mass movement leaders who want to strike a deal with the state apparatus, political executive and the corporate sector will develop contacts in the police department.

At least 50 people in Bhubaneswar and Anti-POSCO struggle villages told me that Abhay Sahoo called up the Jagatsingpur SP and told him that he is going to Coimbatore via Bhubaneswar airport and should be given safe passage. (One should seriously think about this aspect.) Another worrisome aspect of this arrest melodrama is that Abhay Sahoo the Kujang police station staff not the Bhubaneswar police. In the normal cases if a mass movement leader who has an arrest warrant travels the state intelligence, when it comes to Bastar, Chhatisgarh etc the central intelligence Bureau inform the police, that the local police of that particular area arrests. In Abhay Sahoo's case the Kujang police was following him right from the Anti-POSCO struggle area. How did this Happen?

I had one and half hour meeting with Abhay Sahoo at the Kujang Jail, according to me he is having a nice retreat. If one visits a jail right from the mofussil jail to Metropolitan Jail, there is a common scene in the visitor's space, one sees a narrow window with dozens of visitors (mostly family members) and other side of the window dozens of inmates talk maximum for half an hour, and in the din one has to struggle to communicate with each other.

When any visitor goes to meet Abhay Sahoo in Kujang Jails (mostly CPI people) the visitor is given a chair along with Abhay Sahoo, in a large, neat private space which is quite relaxing. He gets as much of Paan and other things from outside, the prison staff obeys him. Everyday home cooked food goes from Manorama's house to Jail. Every alternate day Manorama washes his clothes and sends it's to Jail. Manorama's brother carries food and clothes to Jail. Abhay Sahoo can make any number of phone calls. He is in constant touch with CPI state leadership, everyday he calls Manorama. I think he is really having a picnic, while manipulating thing from jail through mobile calls. In this whole process Manorama has become the private domestic help of Abhay Sahoo. This is another sad aspect of the story.

Manorama is an extremely committed activist with immense potentials. I have seen her in action many times over the years. I want to stress that women have played an extremely important role in the Anti-POSCO struggle they were in the forefront in the barricades and with the police. And Manorama has a signal contribution in the women's resistance in the Anti-POSCO movement. But unfortunately she was turned into a personal secretary cum domestic help cum informer to Abhay Sahoo. Manorama has suffered much in her personal life she has numerous police cases, she can't go out even for medical treatment. She suffers from chronic arthritis and needs immediate medical attention. I appreciate her sacrifice but sadly a potential subaltern heroine was turned into a faceless servant of Abhay Sahoo. The bomb blast which killed 3 people in Patnahat village is another mystery where every investigation thread leads to nowhere, and mutually contradicting multiply narratives makes the bomb discourse difficult to decipher. I spoke to around 30 to 40 people in the Anti-POSCO struggle area about the bomb blast, everyone had a different story to tell. It is like Akira Kurusowa's "Rashoman" where every witness has a different narrative. I inspected the bomb blast site with a senior PPSS activist Suronna, in whose garden the bomb blast took place it is around 15 meters from his house. An elementary knowledge of explosives shows that the official PPSS narrative and the police narrative are completely wrong. Personally when I mentally reconstruct the bomb blast episode I have a totally different version.

The police version is that three people died and the fourth one seriously injured while making country bombs, which is utterly nonsense. In the accidents which happen while making those types of crude country bombs the casualties are low, only in rare cases anyone dies. It causes injury light to heavy in normal cases. If an accident happens during the making of country bombs, usually the hands, face and chest gets injured and people are thrown horizontally. In this case the most severe injuries happened to all of them including dismembering of body parts was below the waist. They were thrown vertically up by at least 10 meters. The blast was very powerful, which is not possible while make much low powered country bombs. My conclusion is it was a powerful remote controlled land mine blast, many local witness's agree with me. The finger of suspicion can be pointed to many people including Suronna himself, and many people in Abhay Sahoo's informal inner circle. In the bomb blast case both the police version and PPSS versions are in correct.

The needle of suspicion points towards Pravash Gochhait, alias Paba. Paba is a filthy symbol of the degeneration, and corruption in PPSS. He is not even a resident of that area, he is only married in Gobindpur. He was the personal sycophant of Abhay Sahoo's sidelined many experienced activists, while promoting Paba. He publicly called Paba is right hand man. Within days of Abhay Sahoo's Arrest Paba defected to the Pro-POSCO camp, now he is the paid hand maiden of POSCO and the district administration, within a week of Abhay Sahoo's arrest he bought a new motor cyclists, he gets a cut in every betel vines destroyed, he comes with the police and points to the betel vines to be destroyed and the house to be raided. He gets lot of construction contracts from POSCO and district administration and sublets it's to the lumpen youth. He gives insiders information about PPSS to the administration. Personally I think Abhay Sahoo is solely responsible for this.

Another big reason for the moral, political, financial denegation of PPSS is its interaction with NGO. The man who was handling the NGO was Prashant Paikray. In the official PPSS office bearers it is Prashant Paikray who got corrupted and degenerated the most. Many of the large urban solidarity groups including Delhi has a large component of NGO's Prashant Paikray as spokes person of PPSS started interacting only with the NGO's, travelling to different cities taking money, attending their programmes. Soon he became governing body member, office bearer in Metropolitan NGO's. He is now a formal invitee through focus on Global South in the National Steering Committee of WSF another NGO dominated International Racket. Prashant Paikray was overwhelmed and impressed by the Lavish treatment the NGO gave to him. They also needed him to justify their politics of supporting mass movements, while corroding and corrupting them. There are hundreds of examples of this. Early this year when the bomb blast happened Prakash Paikray was in Delhi attending a conference on displacement organized by the NGO's. He was put up at the Marriott hotel along with the foreign guests. The conference was held at the banquet hall at the same hotel. It is to be noted that Marriott is a luxury five star hotel in South Delhi which was privatized by ITDC when it was under Govt. of India. It was known as the Qutub Hotel. In the last day of the conference there was an expensive and lavish cocktail party, where who's who and the rank and file of the Delhi NGO's were present. Nobody knows how much money Abhay Sahoo and Prashant Paikray have collected from different NGO's spread across the country. (In fact if I write about the financial irregularity, bungling, misappropriation of large scale funds by Abhay Sahoo and Prashant Paikray it will burst like a powerful bomb in the cyberspace. In the interest of the movement the time hasn't come to write about it at the appropriate time I will write a detailed not on the moral degeneration, financial embezzelment and corruption by Abhay Sahoo and his inner circle). We should publicly question PPSS about it links with NGO's.

### **The POSCO issue what should be our stand?**

It someone asks me is the biggest structural reason for the deal between PPSS and Odisha Govt. and the conquest, moral, political organizational and financial corruption in PPSS. I would answer that it the Parliamentary cretinism and shameless descent into social democracy by CPI. This is the root cause of the problem. Abhay Sahoo and PPSS are not only responsible for this. The National and state leadership of CPI are the main players, they sealed the deal with BJD for a few Lok Sabha and assembly seats. The story of CPI's degeneration started in Odisha in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. CPI and CPM fought the

elections in alliance with BJD, where in the seat sharing arrangements BJD allotted the Sundargarh Lok Sabha seat to CPM and the Jagatsinghpur Lok Sabha seat to CPI. The Anti-POSCO struggle area comes under the Jagatsinghpur Lok Sabha constituency.

In the 2009 Lok Sabha elections CPM lost the Sundergarh seat and CPI won the Jagatsinghpur seat. The sitting CPI MP from Jagatsinghpur Mr. Bibhu Tarai is a political joker and a crook of the worst order. He also played a major role in the deal between POSCO and PPSS official leadership, in the village he calls up Shishir Mahapatra regularly.

The firm contours of the "Deal" between CPI and BJD took shape in the year 2011. In that year Prof. Abani Baral head of the CPI's teacher's front was the central figure in the meeting between Abhay Sahoo, PPSS delegation with the Chief Minister. The whole scene was organized by Abani Baral. And that was the first Major Blunder and compromise of PPSS. In that meeting Abhay Sahoo conceded to Odisha Govt. allowing it to do survey in the villages. Until then the Administration or the Police never dared to touch Betel Vines. Later under the leadership of Abani Baral CPI formed the PPSSS (Posco Pratirodh Sangram Samanwaya Samiti) which played the Central role in concretising the latest deal between PPSS and POSCO to handover Gobindpur. Gobindpur become the sacrificial lamb in the match fixing between CPI and BJD.

The political degeneration of PPSS started with the electoral alliance in 2009 Lok Sabha elections. The moral degeneration started when they interacted with a large number of NGO's, Funds flew into Abhay Sahoo's hand from different NGO's. Abhay Sahoo; personally had control over funds, except him and to some extent Prashant Paikray know about how much came and who got how much.

This time during my stay at Bhubaneswar I had long discussions with Comrade Sivaram the state secretary of CPIML Red Flag, comrade Shrikant state secretary of CPIML (Kanu Sanyal), Comrade Radhakant Sethi CPIML liberation and Comrade Kshitish Biswal ex state secretary of liberation Comrade Sadashiv state secretariat member of SUCI and me were staying in the same house hold in Gobindpur. (Comrade Sadashiv of SUCI has been staying in Gobindpur since summer 2011, he used to stay in the Dalit Mhalla of Gobindpur, now after the police flag marches and raids has moved to a different location in Gobindpur). Everyone was extremely critical of CPI and said CPI has struck a deal with BJD for few assembly and Lok Sabha seats.

In fact in the second week of June SUCI's Odiya Weekly "Sarbahara" carried a front page long lead editorial stringently criticizing CPI's role in anti-POSCO struggle. That issue of "Sarbahara" was widely distributed in Gobindpur and I think some copies must have reached Dinkia and Patnahat. Whenever National leaders of CPI, A.B. Bardhan and D.Raja visit Odisha. I after 2009 Lok Sabha elections, they make a ritual trip to PPSS area then meet Naveen Pattnaik in Bhubaneswar. They express support for anti-POSCO struggle in the villages and talk about so called firm secular alliance with BJD, CPM also has a similar line. But everyone in Odisha especial the left of CPI, CPM forces and people like Prafulla Samantra and Sudhir Pattnaik have seen through the game. CPIML new democracy understood this even before 2009. In the early months of 2008, I used to go for long discussions on POSCO issue with Comrade Y. K. a senior leader of CPIML(ND) at their central office in Delhi. Many times Comrade Y. K. told me that anti-POSCO struggle has become like an illegitimate child of CPI, which it can't disown or own up. The entire state leadership of CPIML ND, CPIML, Liberation, CPIML Kena Sanyal, CPIML Red Flag have been regularly visiting anti-POSCO struggle since 2006 and they have live contacts with the area and they understand the entire game plan of CPI.

Since past few years whenever A.B. Bardhan and D. Raja visited Odisha, they give statements about shifting the steel plant to a different location, in principle they didn't oppose the political, ideological, ecological danger of such projects. Neither they opposed it as a symbol of imperialist penetration in India. Odisha state CPM leadership gives the same logic what they gave for Singur and Nandigram, that industrialization will create a proletariat, which will then make the people's democratic Revolution.

Therefore CPI formed the anti-POSCO opposition at the state level with CPM, RJD, Congress, Forward Bloc Samajwadi Party etc. almost a Bourgeois formation. At Nagbhusan Bhawan the CPIML Liberation's state committee office, I had a long 2 hours chat about POSCO issue with Comrade Kshithish Biswal, after I came back to Bhubaneswar from Gobindpur. Comrade Khistish Biswal is 85 years old and has spent 6 decades in the communist movement, he is very serious and I think he did not lie to me. He told me that just 2 years ago A.B. Bardhan told him that CPI needs two Lok Sabha seats from BJD. This is necessary for CPI to retain its registration with the Election Commission of India as a National Party. The Assembly elections in Odisha will be held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections in 2014. Almost 90% of the people whom I met in Bhubaneswar and the anti-POSCO struggle villages told me that Abhay Sahoo wants the Ersama assembly seat (under which anti-POSCO struggle villages come) for himself or his son Bapi.

Fed up by this political degeneration, and wheeling dealing by CPI and PPSS. CPIML (ND). CPIML (Red Flag) CPIML (Liberation) and SUCI have formed PPJSS, to fight the POSCO plant. Bhibhu tarai the CPI Lok Sabha MP has been consistently talking about shifting the POSCO plants by 2 kms, and this was one of the main reason for the formation of PPJSS.

### **And finally how do we look at the POSCO issue and what should be our stand?**

I think CPI or anyone doesn't have the copy right over POSCO issue. PPSS is nobody's private property, it is a multiparty front of anti-POSCO struggle villages like the organizations at Singur, Nandigram or Kalinganagar. In fact there are many people in the anti-POSCO villages who vote for Congress and BJD. Personally for me it was an heroic anti imperialist struggle by the anti-POSCO villagers, which should not be allowed to be sabotaged by the CPI. Therefore left and democratic organizations and anti-POSCO struggle solidarity group should take a firm stand on anti-POSCO struggle. I suggest we write an open letter to the All India General Secretary of CPI, CPI Odisha secretary with copies marked to all the National Council Members and Odisha state council members of CPI, and ML parties. We should openly seek answer from CPI about the Role of Shishir Mahapatra secretary of PPSS, especially after the arrest of Abhay Sahoo, and CPI should clarify what is the relation of PPSS with NGO's.

We should firmly stand with anti-POSCO struggling villagers, especially men, women and children of Gobinpur, who have suffered tremendously and have made immense scarifies. They have lost 4 bright young men by bomb attacks by paid POSCO goons. Since 8 years they have faced brutal police. Police lathi charge, economic blockades, innumerable false criminal cases, and many times have been the victim of violent Nandigram type vigilante attack by Pro-POSCO organized Lumpen army.

I suggest we should try to help them repair the Betel Vines which were destroyed in the last week of June. Especial Tuna's betel vine, because he has been working as a whole timer in the anti-POSCO struggle from the day one, and since then has not done any work in his own betel vine, his old parents looked after it to keep the family stove burning. I once again appeal to the left and democratic organizations and anti-POSCO struggle solidarity groups to write an open letter to the National and state secretary of CPI.

In Solidarity

Asit

POSCO Pratirodh Solidarity Delhi

Note important phone Numbers of anti-POSCO struggle.

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3. Comrade Sadashiv (SUCI)- +91-8895372841
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5. Manorama- +91-9178162335
6. Prafulla Samantra- +91-9437259005
7. Comrade Shivram (Secretary Odisha CPIML Red Flag)- 91-9861129754
8. Comrade Bhalachandra Shadangi (Odisha State Secretary CPIML ND)- +91-9437166391
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10. Sudhir Patnaik-+91- 9437019365
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## Posco land acquisition over, not the problems

Photos



The land acquisition was completed in Gobindpur village amidst strong resistance from the anti-Posco brigade. (PTI/File)

The major hurdle in the way of establishment of the Posco steel plant project near Paradip was crossed on Thursday with the Jagatsinghpur district administration completing the land acquisition process. The land acquisition was completed in Gobindpur village amidst strong resistance from the anti-Posco brigade. Jagatsinghpur Collector Satya Mallick told this paper that the administration has acquired 700 acres from Gobindpur village. He said that 27 betel vines were dismantled and a compensation of Rs 40.31 lakh was paid. The Collector said that total compensation of Rs 20.95 cr has been paid out of which Rs 16.95 cr was for betel vines and Rs 4 cr was for trees. He said that 1166 betel vines were dismantled in the process. The local administration has already acquired 2000 acres from Nuagaon and other areas for the steel plant. Posco requires 2700 acres for starting construction work for the steel mill. The Collector said that tree cutting from the acquired land will be started after National Green Tribunal (NGT) vacated its stay order.

There are about 40,000 to 50,000 trees in the area and it will take 15 more days for the entire process to be completed. "The acquired land will be handed over to State-owned Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) after the tree cutting is over," Mallick said. The land acquisition for Posco steel project was completed in five different phases spanning over two years, Jagatsinghpur District Collector S K Mallick said rejecting allegation of use of force for the exercise. "We have acquired land from the people who agreed for it," he said. The State Government and the South Korean steel major had signed MoU for setting up a 12 MTPA steel plant near Paradip at an investment of Rs 52,000 crore on June 22, 2005. The company, however, later acquiesced to bring down the capacity of the plant to 8 MTPA. The district collector said that the next phase will be implementation of the cyclone mitigation project in the area at cost of Rs 44 cr. Besides, construction of R&R village will also be started at Jokar village. For the displaced persons of Gobindpur village, alternate land is being identified, he said. Due to stiff resistance, the Government skipped Dhinikia, the epicentre of anti-Posco agitation that is being spearheaded by the Posco Pratirodha Sangram Samiti for the past eight years.

Sub-Divisional Police Officer of Paradip Bhabani Sankar Mishra said nearly 155 Posco-related violent incidents have been registered during the land acquisition process at Kujang and Abhychandpur police stations and non-bailable warrants have been executed against 1440 accused persons. At least five persons died during such incidents. On the other hand, Posco Pratirodha Sangram Samiti (PPSS) activists have strongly condemned the activities of district officials for what they called demolishing the betel vines at gunpoint. "We will fight against illegal demolition of betel vines", said secretary of PPSS Sisir Mohapatra. Many anti-Posco activists have also vowed not to receive the compensation for protesting Posco project.

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Posco-land-acquisition-over-not-the-problems/2013/07/05/article1668772.ece>)

## Kalahandi's Dongria Kondhs refuse to allow Vedanta mine bauxite from Niyamgiri hills

BHUBANESWAR: In a setback to Vedanta's search for bauxite mines to feed its 1-million tonne (mt) refinery at [Lanjigarh](#) in the backward [Kalahandi district](#) of [Odisha](#), Dongria Kondh the [indigenous](#) people who inhabit the plateaus of the Niyamgiri hill ranges, on Thursday made it clear that they would rather prefer to die than leave [the hills](#) for bauxite mining. "We will not leave Niyamgiri. This is our place". "Niyamgiri is our father, mother, God and main source of livelihood. We will prefer to die than leave the hills to Vedanta or any other company for mining of bauxite". These were some of the statements by 36 voters whose opinions were ascertained in the Gram Sabha as per the April 18 order of the Supreme Court. The apex court had ordered that the villagers would have to be provided with basic forest rights in the form of land titles and they alone can decide whether the proposed bauxite mining project would cause harm to their religious right of worshipping Niyam Raja at Hundaljali, about 10 km from the identified mines area. In the first of 12 Gram Sabhas at Serkapadi in Rayagada district, the tribal inhabitants put forth their views in the presence of district judge Sarat Chandra Mishra, host of officials, NGO activists and media persons. The serene Niyamgiri hills, a chain of 4,500-ft high mountains, is [spread](#) across 20 km in Kalahandi and Rayagada districts and inhabited by about 2,000 Dongria Kondhs. The villagers have made it clear that mining of bauxite at the [Niyamgiri hills](#) would adversely affect their religious and cultural life along with their livelihood. Presided over by ward member [Sriram Garadia](#), the tribals claimed their rights over the whole Niyamgiri hill range, according to [Muniguda Tehasildar Tapan Satpathy](#). "We have recorded their views and will accordingly inform the [Supreme Court](#) in due course. The apex court will take a final call on the issue," Satpathy on Thursday told ET. Out of 46 voters, 36, including 16 [women](#), were present in the Gram Sabha meeting flanked by four platoons of armed force, hundreds of Dongria, Kutia and other tribals armed with their traditional weapons. The views of tribals have been video recorded as per the apex court's order, sources said. In the early 1980s, Kalahandi hit headlines for starvation deaths following which top [Congress](#) leaders, including former [Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi](#), visited the region. But it continued to be neglected till Vedanta Alumina's one million tonne refinery came up in 2007. The refinery was closed down on

December 5 last year due to non-availability of bauxite due to the UPA government's refusal to allow mining at [Niyamgiri bauxite reserves](#). Ironically, Kalahandi district has vast reserves of bauxite. Congress vice-president [Rahul Gandhi](#) in September 2010 visited Lanjigarh and backed the ban on mining at Niyamgiri. He had then said he is a 'sepoy' of the aboriginals living in the hills and would carry their voice to Delhi. Later, union rural development minister, [Jairam Ramesh](#) visited Kalahandi district and announced a series of sops for the tribals of the district. Ramesh, as the minister for [environment](#) and forest, had blocked mining at Niyamgiri leading to the closure of the refinery

(Source-[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/news/40681271\\_1\\_niyamgiri-hills-bauxite-dongria-kondhs](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/news/40681271_1_niyamgiri-hills-bauxite-dongria-kondhs))

## **Orissa: Mining lessees to pay for uplift of tribals**

As Vedanta Alumina's hopes of mining bauxite from Niyamgiri hills in Kalahandi and Rayagada districts recede with more tribal villages rejecting the idea in pallisabhas, the Tribal Advisory Committee of Orissa government Saturday approved a draft Act under which mining lessees would have to pay for the development of tribals in scheduled area. In June, the cabinet had proposed the Odisha Scheduled Areas Development of Mine Bearing Area Regulation-2013 under which mining companies would have to pay an amount equal to the royalty for social, economic, health and educational improvement including livelihood promotion of tribals in mine-bearing scheduled areas. This would be in addition to the royalty they are paying for the ore they are raising. The TAC, which met under the chairmanship of CM Naveen Patnaik, on Saturday approved the draft regulation. Currently, mining lessees are paying royalty under Section 9 of the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act-1957. Under the new regulation, the government would form a Peripheral Developmental Committee, which would collect funds from mining lessees. The revenue collected under this would be used for building hospitals, schools, roads and providing drinking water and sanitation facilities. Meanwhile, Vedanta Alumina's hopes of mining bauxite were dampened further after the sixth pallisabha at Bathudi village, Rayagada district, unanimously rejected the idea. Of the 40 eligible voters, 31 including 18 women tribals attended the pallisabha.

(Source-<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/orissa-mining-lessees-to-pay-for-uplift-of-tribals/1147697/>)

## **8 arrested in school girls' gangrape case**

Eight persons, accused in the brutal gangrape of four school girls in Pakur district, have been arrested, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said today. "Eight of the nine accused have been arrested, and the one remaining will be caught soon," he told reporters in the presence of DGP Rajeev Kumar and Home Secretary N N Pandey in Ranchi. Terming the incident as shocking, he said a team would visit the area to probe the grisly act which occurred at a secluded spot near the school run by a mission. "The government will take the responsibility for the minor girls' education and train them in self-defence," he Soren said. According to DGP Kumar, the arrested persons belong to Santhal Parganas. On Sunday night, the girls were forcibly taken away by miscreants at Lobda village under Littipara police station. Pakur police said all the four girls are aged between 12 and 15 and belong to primitive Paharia tribe. While two read in class III, the other two were taking vocational training in the mission school. Soren said the government has given monetary help to the victims. Describing the incident as a cause for concern, he said his government would take steps in giving enough security to schools located in remote areas so that these incidents do not recur. He also said he was yet see the status report of investigation into the alleged rape and murder of two other minor girls in Deogarh district, also in Santhal Pargana region, a couple of months ago.

(Source-<http://www.timesnow.tv/8-arrested-in-school-girls-gangrape-case/articleshow/4432187.cms>)

## One teacher for 143 kids in Koraput school

KORAPUT: The ground reality belies the state government's tall claims of providing better educational facilities to children. BalaSevashram (residential school meant for SC and ST students) in Koraput's Narayanpatna block is a case in point. The school has only one teacher for 143 students from Class I to V. And, this has been the state of affairs for the last three years. Apart from taking classes, the lone teacher looks after the hostel, midday meal and official chores. "I am unable to take regular classes as I have to oversee management of the sevashram. On several occasions, I have intimated the higher-ups about the situation and requested for a few more teachers but to no avail," said Biswanath Turuk. The sevashram has no electricity supply and provision of safe drinking water. The students have to depend on polluted water of a stream, a few metres from the sevashram, for bathing, drinking and washing clothes. "Every day we carry pots of water from the stream to the hostel for drinking. After evening, we face problems studying because there is no power supply," a student said. They also said the hostel does not have bathrooms for boys and girls, no dining hall and insufficient space for kitchen. Only two table lamps with solar batteries have been provided to the school. Activists alleged that this is not an isolated case. Almost all sevashrams located in remote areas of the district are in a similar mess. "As teachers prefer postings in urban schools or places where there is road network, the sevashrams in remote areas were left neglected. The government is ruining the lives of tribal students," said Sadhu Chattriyha, a Koraput-based tribal activist. "Given the precarious living conditions, outbreak of a major health hazard cannot be ruled out," he added. A district official allayed his fears. "Very soon new teachers will be posted in the sevashram and steps will be taken to provide safe drinking water at the hostel," said additional district welfare officer (Koraput) Prasanna Kumar Sahu.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-26/bhubaneswar/40813642\\_1\\_safe-drinking-water-tribal-students-sc-and-st-students](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-26/bhubaneswar/40813642_1_safe-drinking-water-tribal-students-sc-and-st-students))

## Odisha kids made to pay for electricity

BHUBANESWAR: Chintamaniswar Government Girls' High School here has been charging Rs 25 from each student for electricity bill, parents have alleged. Besides, students are also paying development fees for other works like cleaning of school campus, sanitation, repair of furniture and buying accessories. "This month my daughter had to pay Rs 110 to the school on account of Ganesh Puja and electricity fees. She has been paying Rs 25 every month as electricity bill and the school authorities do not even give its receipt," said a parent, whose daughter studies in Class VIII. The school was set up in 1980 as an aided institution, but was later taken up by the government. The school, with about 150 students, is attached to [Chintamaniswar UP School](#) located on the same campus. Headmistress of the school [Kalpana Das](#) said, "I joined the school a few days ago and was surprised to know that students pay fees here. I was told that it was decided by the school management committee and also placed in the teachers-parent meeting. All parents expressed their willingness to pay the amount." She further said, "The government does not pay any grant for the school's development. The amount sanctioned on the head of electricity bill, water tax and house building tax is not adequate to meet the school's needs." A member of the school management committee and local corporator Amares Jena, however, said the committee took no such decision. "The SMC has never taken such a decision to collect electricity charges from students. Teachers might have decided it at their end," Jena said. Strangely, this is not the only government school in the city where students pay development fees without any receipt and the practice exists at most government high schools. Students of classes IX and X in Unit-IV Government Girls' High School said they used to pay Rs 140 for six months, which has recently increased to Rs 240. A parent alleged that the school authorities demanded Rs 200 during admission of her daughter in Class VI, violating the much-hyped Right to Education Act. "The amount provided by government for development of the school is not adequate, so we collect a nominal amount from students to clean school gardens, repair broken furniture, engage sweepers to clean toilets and so on," headmistress of another school, requesting anonymity told TOI. Director, secondary education, Benudhar Dash, said: "Though asking money from students is not right as per the law, many school management committees collect money to pay salary of contract teachers. But since the amount is spent for the development of the school periphery, it is normally not objected by parents."

(Source-<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhubaneswar/Odisha-kids-made-to-pay-for-electricity/articleshow/21348163.cms?>)

## Nine newborns die in Burla medical; probe ordered

Nine newborn babies have died at VSS Medical College and Hospital in Burla during the last 24 hours, prompting the Odisha Government to order an investigation. Although the incident of deaths became public at about 8 am on Saturday, the first death reportedly took place at 4.10 pm on Friday. By the time the news of deaths of the infants spread, the family members were asked to go home. The incident triggered anger among the locals who blocked the road leading to VSS Medical Campus for more than two hours. They attributed the deaths to negligence by the doctors. While two more deaths are believed to have taken place in the Paediatric Ward, it could not be ascertained. The State Government has directed a probe into the incident by the Director of Medical Education and Training and the Director of Sishu Bhawan, Cuttack. The mothers who had delivered the babies hailed from different parts of the region, including one from

neighbouring Chhattisgarh. They have been identified as Sabita Barla of Talsara in Sundargarh, Urmila Sahu of Boudh, Kaikayee Meher of Balangir, Kalpana Bariha of Padampur in Bargarh, Sobha Naik of Sargipali in Chhattisgarh, Jyotsana Meher of Sonapur, Sapna Bhoi of Bargarh, Padmabati Sahu of Paharsirgida in Attabira and Rashmita Patel of Kuchinda. The Superintendent of VSS Medical, Dr L K Dash, and Head of Department, Paediatric, Dr S K Murmu, confirmed the deaths of the nine newborns and attributed it to low birth weight, respiratory problem besides brain haemorrhage and severe anaemia. The Superintendent said he has ordered a probe into the matter. There was tension in the hospital. Sambalpur MLA Jayanarayan Mishra said the newborns died due to negligence. He said no doctor had visited the SNCU last night. Mishra demanded a probe into the incident. He said autopsy would have revealed the reason behind the deaths. Advisor of Odisha Medical Workers Association, Burla Branch, Nihal Singh also demanded that the matter be probed. The Town Congress called for Burla Bandh on Monday

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Nine-newborns-die-in-Burla-medical-probe-ordered/2013/07/21/article1694434.ece>)

## 19 students injured in bomb explosion inside classroom in Cuttack

**Cuttack:** At least 19 students were injured when a low-intensity bomb exploded inside a classroom of a government-run school on the outskirts of Cuttack city today, police said. The blast took place when a teacher of Class IX was taking a roll call in Ayutpur High School. Of the 58 students present in the class, 19 were taken to the SCB Medical College Hospital. While five students, three boys and two girls, were admitted to the hospital, others were released after first aid, Namita Mohanty, the headmistress of the school, said. "The bomb was suspected to be in the bag of a boy hailing from a nearby village," the headmistress said quoting the students. The police, however, were not sure about it. "We have sealed the school and a forensic team is examining the spot to find out what kind of explosive was used," Deputy Commissioner of Police Pravin Kumar told PTI. Mr Kumar said the police hoped to get some clue about the incident after injured students recovered. He did not rule out the possibility of a criminal angle behind the incident.

(Source-<http://www.ndtv.com/article/cities/19-students-injured-in-bomb-explosion-inside-classroom-in-cuttack-386600>)

## 4 Balasore students in hosp after taking midday meal

**CUTTACK:** Four students of a government-run tribal welfare hostel, BapujiSevaSadan, in Nilgiri, Balasore, were admitted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital here for allegedly consuming sub-standard midday meal served in their school, which is located near the hostel. They started vomiting and had diarrhoea on Monday night. Initially, they were admitted to the district headquarters hospital, but when their condition worsened, they were shifted to the SCB on Wednesday night. The four have been identified as Shankar Beshra (12), Ganesh Tiriya (7), Jaba Hembram (8) and Galu Singh (8). Doctors said all four are stable. "Two of the children were admitted to the ICU ward on Wednesday as their condition became serious, but today they are better and so we have shifted them to the diarrhoea ward," said Dr B N Moharana,

emergency officer, SCB. "In monsoon, there's a spurt in diarrhoea cases. The four students may have consumed sub-standard food or taken contaminated water in the school," said the doctor, who was treating them. Around 11 students of the hostel fell ill on Monday night. They study in the nearby Mitrapur Nodal UP School. "On Monday, our school had served 'khichdi'. I started feeling uneasy after that and at night I started vomiting. I also had rice in the hostel at night," said Shankar. "My son never complained that they were being served poor quality food in school," said Sushila, mother of one of the students who is in hospital. The superintendent of the hostel refuted charges that the food served by them may have been contaminated. "At least 115 children stay in the hostel. But only 11 were taken ill. This shows that the hostel food was not contaminated. We also checked with the school authorities and the quality of their food is also good. It seems diarrhoea broke out because of consumption of contaminated water. The district officials are trying to ascertain the reason behind the outbreak of the disease," said Namita Sahoo, superintendent.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678631\\_1\\_hostel-food-diarrhoea-cases-midday-meal](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678631_1_hostel-food-diarrhoea-cases-midday-meal))

## **Scorpion found in midday meal in Odisha, 39 students fall ill**

DHENKANAL (ODISHA): Close on the heels of 23 children's death in Bihar after eating midday meal, at least 39 students on Friday fell ill after consuming food, contaminated by a dead scorpion, served under the scheme at their school in Odisha's Dhenkanal district, officials said. Latika Behera (11), a class-V student of the Upper Primary School at Siaria Tailasahi in Dhenkanal area, while consuming the meal allegedly spotted the scorpion in the served potato-soya curry, they said. Soon, the children complained of uneasiness and started vomiting. They were rushed to the district headquarters hospital here. Thirty-six of them were discharged after preliminary treatment, while three, including two girls, are undergoing treatment, Dhenkanal Block Extension Officer Dhanjaya Mohapatra said. Altogether 39 of the 48 students, most of them tribals, had attended the school today and consumed the mid-day-meal, the officials said.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678260\\_1\\_midday-meal-odisha-upper-primary-school](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678260_1_midday-meal-odisha-upper-primary-school))

## **Crime file: Trainee nun gang raped by 3; Four minor girls gang raped by over 20 people, and more**

**Berhampur/Phulbani (Odisha):** A 28-year-old trainee nun was allegedly gang raped by three youths, including two cousins, after holding her forcibly for about a week in Odisha's Ganjam and Gajapati districts, police sources said today. The two cousins - Jatindra Subhasunder and Jogendra Subhasunder - were arrested, while the third accused was still at large, Kandhamal district Additional Superintendent of Police Gobind Chandra Mallick said. The victim, who was being trained as a nun at the St Mary Convent in Chennai, received a call from a woman informing her that her mother was in serious condition, police said, quoting the FIR. After she alighted from the train at the Berhampur railway station in Ganjam district on July 5, she was picked up by the two cousins who lived in her village. The woman, who hailed from Minjapanka in Kandhamal district, had no reason to suspect them and accompanied them to their village under Bramhanigaon police station, the sources said. But she was taken to unidentified places, including Gajapati district, where the two cousins along with a third man allegedly raped her for a week before dropping her back at the railway station in Berhampur on July 11 with a threat not to disclose the incident to anyone, Singh said. The victim told her mother about her ordeal after reaching home last Saturday, Baliguda Sub-Divisional Police Officer, K V Singh said. The victim's brother was a co-accused in the murder of the father of one of those arrested, Singh said. Police have registered a case under section 355 (assault to dishonour person), 366 (kidnapping), 343 (wrongful confinement), 376 (rape), 501 (printing defamatory matter) and

120(B) (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC. Mallick said the two accused and the victim were medically examined at the MKCG Medical College Hospital in Berhampur. The woman caller was being traced. (Source-<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/130715/news-crime/article/crime-file-ap-priest-minnesota-fondles-minor-arrested-man-held-theft>)

## Godman held for kidnapping minor girls

A 40-year-old self styled Baba (Godman) was arrested for allegedly kidnapping two minor girls from Panikoili area in Jajpur district on Sunday. He had kidnapped the minors from the village by promising jobs to them, police said. The victims were freed from the clutches of the Baba in Salepur on Sunday. He was identified as Bhagaban Das of Sankhaberi village under Baramba police limits in Cuttack district. He used to stay in Rodhapur mutt in Salepur region of Cuttack district. Police said Bhagaban came to Mukundapur village under Korei block in the district a couple of weeks back and was staying in the house of Nilamani Sahu posing himself as Godman. During his stay, he was delivering religious discourses in neighbouring villages. Last week, he came in contact with one Balaram Jena of Baidespatana village and stayed in his house. He claimed that he can do miracle by using his divine power. The two minor girls of the village met the Baba and requested him to use his power to get them jobs. He assured them of help and asked them to meet him during late night. On Friday night, he along the minor girls fled. When the families of the missing girls failed to trace them, they lodged a complaint with Panikoili police on Saturday. Police arrested the Baba from Salepur area on Sunday morning and also rescued the girls from his clutches.

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Godman-held-for-kidnapping-minor-girls/2013/07/23/article1697676.ece>)

## Flood alert in 4 Odisha districts, 60 school boys rescued



A bridge is washed away due to flood at Tentuliguda village of Koraput district in Odisha - PTI

**Bhubaneswar/Baripada:** With incessant rain raising water level in two major rivers, Odisha government on Friday asked collectors of four northern districts to keep a vigil on the situation, even as fire brigade personnel rescued 60 boys from a state run ashram school in Mayurbhanj district. "We have rescued 60 male students at an ashram school in Brahmangaon village. Flood water of Budhabalang river had encircled the school and hostel where they were staying. The children were trapped since last night,"

Bidhan Chandra Ray, block development officer of Bangirposi block, told PTI. Due to heavy downpour for last two days, flood water of river Budhabalang submerged paddy fields under Bangirposi block in Mayurbhanj district and about 200 families in ward number 7 of Baripada Municipality area were shifted to safe places. The affected people were sheltered at three nearby schools, a district official said adding some low-laying areas have been inundated. However, water level has started receding as rain stopped this evening, the official said. However, 15 villages under Badasahi block of Mayurbhanj district, have been inundated due to flood water of Gangahada river, he said. Meanwhile, special relief commissioner (SRC) P K Mohapatra told reporters at Bhubaneswar that the district collectors of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhardak and Keonjhar have been asked to remain alert to eventualities. Appealing to people not to panic over the situation, Mohapatra said the districts along river Baitarani, Subarnarekha and Budhabalang have been put on alert. Meanwhile, the authorities of the Hirakud dam over Mahanadi river system today released first flood waters of this year after a ceremonial puja. The sluice gate no 7 has been opened now and more gates are likely to be opened to discharge more waters if necessary, dam officials said. "It is obligatory to discharge water from the reservoir during this time to improve its retention capacity," said an official adding that heavy flow of water from the catchment areas prompted the dam authorities to release waters.

(Source-<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/130726/news-current-affairs/article/flood-alert-4-odisha-districts-60-school-boys-rescued>)

## Odisha: School building roof caves in, students safe

**Kendrapada:** More than 100 school children had a close shave on Monday as an extended portion of the roof of a government-run school building caved in at Uttar Jamboo village under Mahakadpada police station limits in Kendrapada district. The incident occurred in the afternoon at Ramani Ranjan Upper Primary School in the village when children were inside the classrooms. None of the students or teachers was injured in the mishap. "The 20-foot long concrete structure fell off from the frontal portion of the roof. It generated a big sound. The children got panicky", said Bijoy Nath, sub inspector of schools. Classes were suspended for the day after the incident. District collector Niranjan Nayak said the schools and mass education department authorities have been asked to probe the quality of construction of the school building. The officials have also been asked to assess whether the existing school building is safe for classroom teaching. The school-cum-cyclone shed at Uttar Jamboo had been built from the funding of Red Cross society in 2004.

(Source-<http://indiaeducationdiary.in/Shownews.asp?newsid=24295>)

## Woman kills daughter

A woman Jharana Sahoo of Ghodadian village under Rasol police limits, allegedly poisoned her five-month daughter Padmini to death on Saturday night. The incident came to light when her husband Pravakar Sahoo returned home at around 10 pm. Prior to that, Jharana surrendered before Rasol police and admitted to have killed her daughter following an altercation with her husband. Sources said Pravakar was having an illicit affair with his sister-in-law which often led to quarrels between the couple. After a quarrel with Pravakar on Saturday noon, Jharana poisoned her daughter at around 4 pm. She left the house and surrendered before police in the night.

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Woman-kills-daughter/2013/07/22/article1695987.ece>)

## First dead scorpion, now insect found in mid-day-meal in

### Odisha

**Berhampur (Odisha):** An insect was found in the food, supplied by a private agency, in a primary school at Hinjili in Odisha's Ganjam district. The meal was not served to any student when the insect was detected in the soya curry at Regedi Primary School, Hinjili, local Block Development Officer (BDO), Subhransu Mishra said. Barely nine days back, at least 39 students had fallen ill after consuming food, contaminated by a dead scorpion, served under the scheme at their school in Odisha's Dhenkanal district. The midday meal was returned immediately to Nandi Foundation, a Chennai-based organisation, he said, adding instead of cooked meal, the students were supplied biscuits. Nandi Foundation has been entrusted by the government to supply hygienic and nutritional midday meal to 390 schools in Hinjili and Chhatrapur blocks and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BMC) area in Ganjam district. After being informed by head mistress Shantilata Sabat about this, the BDO rushed to the school. On July 21, an insect was found in the midday meal supplied by the organisation in Tamaya Tank Road Primary School, Berhampur. The district administration has sent the food samples for laboratory testing and the report is yet to be received, sources said.

(Source-<http://daily.bhaskar.com/article/NAT-TOP-first-dead-scorpion-now-insect-found-in-mid-day-meal-in-odisha-4332109-NOR.html>)

## Mid day meal scheme: National Human Rights Commission seeks report

The National Human Rights Commission has directed the State Government to submit a report on 19 students falling ill due to consumption of substandard food at a Government-aided hostel in Nilagiri block of Balasore district. Acting on a complaint filed by human rights activist Akhand, the NHRC has issued notices to the Secretary, Women and Child Development department, along with the Collector and the SP of Balasore, calling for a report in the matter within four weeks. The petitioner had alleged massive irregularities in the midday meal scheme (MDM) and provisioning of substandard food to the children putting their lives at risk.

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Mid-day-meal-scheme-National-Human-Rights-Commission-seeks-report/2013/07/26/article1702714.ece>)

## 'Murdered' youth returns after police nab six 'killers'

SAMBALPUR: In a bizarre turn of events, a youth thought to be murdered earlier this month, returned to Deogarh police station on Thursday, leaving cops thoroughly confused and shocked. They had not only initiated a murder case, but also forwarded six "accused" in judicial custody for the "murder". Dibya Sankar Gartia, a third year engineering student at Bhubaneswar-based Gurukul Engineering School, was missing since July 12. He had come home on July 5 and stayed for two days after which he left for college. His father lodged a missing diary with Deogarh police on July 12 as he had no trace of him. Later, on July 16, police found a body in a jungle near Laimura and Gartia's father identified it as his son's. Police arrested six youths of the town who were last seen with the boy as they all had a feast before he left for Bhubaneswar. They were identified as Harihar Nayak (20), Santosh Jena (26), Sudhir Garia (20), Rabindra Swain (20), Satyanarayan Garia (21) and Alok Behera (20). Gartia, hale and hearty, appeared at Deogarh police station on Thursday morning. He said he had gone to Puri for Rath Yatra and had not been in touch with his father for some time. "We are utterly confused. Our first step now would be to release the six persons who have been falsely implicated in the murder

case. On the other hand, we will also try to identify the body found at Laimura on July 16. Gartia's father had identified it as his son's," Deogarh SP Satyajeet Naik said on Thursday. He said the six had been arrested as they were with Gartia before the latter had gone missing. "Now we have to re-investigate the entire issue from the beginning," the SP added.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-26/bhubaneswar/40813793\\_1\\_police-nab-murder-case-july-16](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-26/bhubaneswar/40813793_1_police-nab-murder-case-july-16))

## Man ties knot with raped girlfriend

JAGATSINGHPUR: A man married his girlfriend even after she was gang-raped in Jagatsinghpur's Balitutha on Friday. Their families were opposed to their marriage but the rape incident changed everybody's heart. The duo was in love for the past three years. The 26-year-old man married his girlfriend (22) at a temple in the presence of their relatives. SP (Jagatsinghpur) Satyabrata Bhoi said the boy and the girl were staying together since July 3 after both the families opposed their relationship. It was during this time that the girl was gang-raped. "The boy remained firm on his commitment to the girl. His decision will provide the required moral and psychological strength to the girl. It will also send a positive message to the society," said Bhoi.

The girl was raped a week ago. The rapists are on the run. "We have launched a manhunt to nab the rapists," said the SP. He said the duo was interested for court marriage and planned to go to Cuttack for it. Sources said on the fateful day the duo reached the railway station in the evening to go to Cuttack but missed the train. The boy turned to a friend for help requesting him to find a place for them to stay at night. The friend arranged a temporary accommodation for Rs 500. But in the night, the girl was gang-raped, while the boy was severely beaten up. The girl lodged a complaint with the police

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-21/bhubaneswar/40708627\\_1\\_girl-cuttack-duo](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-21/bhubaneswar/40708627_1_girl-cuttack-duo))

## Kidnap drama: Man held for molestation

SAMBALPUR: Police on Sunday arrested a complainant, who scripted a kidnapping drama after allegedly molesting a girl in Deogarh district. Police also released three youths against whom the complainant levelled kidnapping charges. Police sources said Shyam Sunder Tripathy (50), who resides in new colony at Deogarh, is known to the girl's family, staying at Samantarapali village, four km away from the town. The girl, who recently cleared matriculation exam, calls him 'grandfather' respecting his age. The girl's father decided to admit her in Budhapal college. Since the college is far away, Tripathy volunteered to take her on his motorcycle for admission on Friday. While returning, Tripathy allegedly molested her and tried to rape her near a jungle. Three youths, who noticed the girl in distress, rescued her and took her to latter's house safely. Tripathy lodged a complaint that the trio have kidnapped her granddaughter and are demanding ransom to release her," said a cop.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-15/bhubaneswar/40589613\\_1\\_kidnap-drama-three-youths-girl](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-15/bhubaneswar/40589613_1_kidnap-drama-three-youths-girl))

## Acquitted Arati hopes for justice in rape case

Berhampur: Suspected Maoist Arati Majhi lauded the judiciary after her release from the circle jail here. "The acquittal proved police had framed me. I had complete faith in the judiciary," she said. The district and sessions court, Gajapati, acquitted Arati and her associate Shyama Majhi on Wednesday for lack of

evidence in Paniganga forest beat house burning case, which took place about four years ago. The 23-year-old now hopes to get justice from the Orissa high court in her rape case. She was allegedly raped in police custody after being arrested in February, 2010, from her house in Gajapati's Jadinga, a few days before her marriage. "The saddest part of my life is that I was falsely implicated and put behind bars for four years," Arati said. She would consult her lawyers and move court against police for framing her, she added. "I will spend some days with my ailing father and mother," she said. Earlier, she was acquitted in six cases, including burning of a bus of Odisha State Road Transport Corporation ( OSRTC) at Gajapati's Raipanka on December 28, 2009.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678853\\_1\\_gajapati-state-road-transport-corporation-police-custody](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-19/bhubaneswar/40678853_1_gajapati-state-road-transport-corporation-police-custody))

## **Bhubaneswar gang rape accused nabbed in Nayagarh**

BHUBANESWAR: Police on Tuesday arrested two more persons in connection with the alleged gang rape of an engineering pass out at Chandaka on July 18. The accused were identified as Ranjan Kumar Sethi and Bikas Sethi. A day after the incident, police had arrested the main accused, Jitendra Kumar Biswal, and seized the SUV in which he drove the girl to a forest at Chandaka, on the outskirts of the city. "Ranjan and Bikas were present on the crime spot. However, they managed to flee during the raid," said IIC of Mahila police station Sarojini Nayak. Jitendra's driver Bikas and Ranjan, an auto driver, were arrested from Khandapada in Nayagarh district. Police said Jitendra, a native of Kendrapada, befriended the girl on a social networking site. He runs a private industrial training institute at Patia. On Thursday, the couple met at a shopping mall at Patia. Biswal had brought his own car and drove her to Chandaka, where he along with the duo allegedly gang-raped her. Some passersby spotted the car at a desolate place and informed Chandaka police.

(Source-[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-24/bhubaneswar/40770915\\_1\\_chandaka-nayagarh-auto-driver](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-24/bhubaneswar/40770915_1_chandaka-nayagarh-auto-driver))

## **Farmers of six districts facing seed shortage**

With the timely onset of monsoon and the State experiencing more than normal rainfall, kharif operations are going on in full swing. Even as the Agriculture department claimed to have delivered 4.40 lakh quintals of certified paddy seeds for distribution among farmers, reports coming from the districts said there is huge deficit of seeds while the demand is more. There is huge demand for BPT and Sambamasuri variety of paddy seeds in Ganjam district, but the Government has failed to meet the demand, reports from the district said. Farmers of Kalahandi, Nuapada, Sonepur, Balangir, Boudh and Ganjam districts are complaining shortage of paddy seeds. After the Agriculture department withdrew from sale of seeds, the job of seed distribution has been given to 944 primary agriculture cooperative societies (PACs) and about 3,000 private dealers. Earlier, certified seeds were available at two places in each block, including the block headquarters. The Agriculture department had 628 sales centres for seed distribution. It was easier for the farmers to have their requirement from the block headquarters. After the closure of the sales centres, the farmers are not aware of new sales centres run by PACs and the private dealers, said farmers' representative Ashok Pradhan from Sambalpur. Of the 3.60 lakh quintals of paddy seeds supplied by the Odisha State Seeds Corporation (OSSC), about 1.5 lakh quintals have been delivered to PACs while two lakh quintals have been given to private dealers. Sources in OSSC said the certified seeds supplied to private dealers have found their way to West Bengal and Chhattisgarh as the demand and market price is more than Odisha. Since there is a huge demand for Swarna variety of paddy seeds in the State, the Government is supplying the seed at a subsidised rate of `15 per kg. However, Swarna seed commands a price of `35 a kg in West Bengal. The all-in-cost of all varieties of certified seeds other than Swarna is `24.90 per kg while the cost is `25.76 for Swarna. The Government is supplying the other varieties to the farmers at `13.50. While the PACs are not adequately equipped for sale of paddy seeds, the private dealers are allegedly indulging in blackmarketing of seed resulting in scarcity. Besides, there is no mechanism to

monitor the private dealers, the sources said. The total paddy seed requirement of the State was estimated at 26 lakh quintals. The Government has planned to supply over 6.67 lakh quintals of certified seeds to the farmers. Expecting a normal monsoon, the State Government has set a moderate target for producing 100.69 lakh tonnes of foodgrain, including 84 lakh tonnes of rice.

(Source-<http://newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/Farmers-of-six-districts-facing-seed-shortage/2013/07/08/article1673477.ece>)

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