

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office
23, West Park Street, 1st Floor,
Shenoy Nagar, Near Post Office, Chennai – 600 030 Tamil Nadu, INDIA
Tel: +91-9994368540 Email : hrda.india@gmail.com

02 July 2013

Mr. Naveen Patnaik
Chief Minister, Odisha
Tel. No.(O) 011 91 674 2531100, 011 91 674 2535100,
011 91 674 2531500, Epbax 2163
Tel. No.(R) 011 91 674 2590299, 011 91 674 2591099,
011 91 674 2590844, 011 91 674 2591100,
Fax No- (91)6742535100
E Mail: cmo@ori.nic.in

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Odisha: Brutal attack of Anti – Posco Leaders by the police in Govindpur village - Reg

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert - India!

HRD Alert - India is a Forum of Human Rights Defenders for Human Rights Defenders. It endeavours to initiate actions on behalf of Human Rights Defenders under threat or with security concerns.

We are now writing to express our grave concern regarding the brutal attack of anti POSCO leaders in Govindpur village, Odisha from 28th of June 2013 till date.

About the Human Rights Defender under attack:

20 persons including Mr. Tuna Baral, Mr. Tofan Mohanty and Ms. Shantilata Swain who are opposing the forceful land acquisition for POSCO. PPSS leader Mr. Kalpataru Mantri of Govindpur village.

The Perpetrators: The Odisha police and Government of Odisha.

Date and Time of Incident: from 28 June 2013 to till date.

Place of Incident: Govindpur village of Jagatsinghpur district, Odisha.

Source of Information: Email information received from Mr. Prashant Paikary, Spokesperson, of the anti – POSCO movement in Odisha.

Incident

The government of Odisha again started the forceful destruction of betel vineyards in Govindpur village of Jagatsinghpur district, Odisha from 28 of June 2013. The Jagatsinghpur Superintendent of Police P. Satyabrata Bhoi and his 10 platoons (300 personnel) of police force beat up elderly persons, women and children who opposed betel vine demolition. They acquired land without consent of the farmers. Some of the protesters attempted suicide by consuming poison at the land acquisition spot. Police took them into custody for some hours. Twenty persons including Mr. Tuna Baral, Mr. Tofan Mohanty and Ms. Shantilata Swain who opposed the forceful land acquisition for POSCO were injured in the lathi – charge and PPSS leader Mr. Kalpataru Mantri of Govindpur village was taken into custody by the Police. The state government had earlier taken the president of the anti POSCO movement, Mr. Abhya Sahoo into the custody.

Appeal

We, therefore, urge you to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that:

- Suspend the POSCO-India project until and unless international human rights standards are fully complied with.
- Ensure full implementation of the provisions of the Forest Rights Act and cease all land clearance and acquisition until and unless the rights claims of forest-dwelling communities are adjudicated and recognized rights-holders consent to the diversion of forest land.
- Take decisive steps to ensure that police officials act in accordance with international standards on the use of force and do not engage in arbitrary arrests and detentions.
- Provide effective protection for project-affected communities against acts of violence committed by private actors.
- Ensure project-affected communities unencumbered access to work, adequate food, healthcare, and education services.

- All necessary measures are taken to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of anti – POSCO leaders.
- All acts of repression are stopped and the illegal, unjust and economically destructive project is withdrawn immediately.
- All human rights defenders in India are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment in all circumstances.
- Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by India is guaranteed

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne

Honorary Working Secretary

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

Copy to:

Shri Jugal Mohapatra ,
Chief Secretary, Odisha
E-mail: csori@ori.nic.

S.K. Mallick ,
District Collector,
Jagatsinghpur,
Contact number 09437239444, Fax no - : (91)6724220299

P. Satyabrata Bhoi,
Superintendent of Police,
Mobile no-09437094678,
Email id: dmjisp@ori.nic.in

Dr Manmohan Singh,
Prime Minister of India
Tel no-+9111-23016857
E mail: manmohan@sansad.in

Sonia Gandhi:
Tel Phone no - (91)11-23014161, (91)11-23012656,
Fax- (91)112301865,
Email id: soniagandhi@sansad.nic.in.

Chairperson,
National Human Rights Commission of India,
Faridkot House, Copernicus Marg,
New Delhi 110 001,
Email: chairnhrc@nic.in

Shri. V.Kishore Chandra Deo
Minister of Tribal Affairs
Ministry of Tribal Affairs,
Room No. 400 'B' Wing, Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi- 110001
Email id: yk.deo@sansad.nic.in