



# HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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**March 30, 2018**

To,

**Mr. Srinivasa Kammath**

National Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Deputy Registrar  
National Human Rights Commission  
Manav Adhikar Bhawan,  
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,  
New Delhi – 110 023  
Email: [hrd-nhrc@nic.in](mailto:hrd-nhrc@nic.in)

Dear Sir,

***Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – RTI activist and human rights defender Mr. Baby Jena assaulted & Ostracised for raising Voice against corruption in Puri district, Odisha- Regarding***

**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 writing to express our grave concern over the physical attack and Ostracising RTI Activist & human rights defender Mr. Baby Jena, R/O vill-Hantuka, PS-Chandanpur, Dist-Odisha

**Status of Human Rights Defender:**

Mr. Baby Jena is an active member of the Puri District Committee of Odisha Sookhna Adhikar abhijan (OSAA). OSAA, is a state-level network of civil society groups and Right to Information (RTI) activists who are spearheading the campaign for effective implementation of Right to Information Act in the state. He is associated with OSSA for the last couple of years and has been active in his block level in different social work and been campaigning for RTI Act.

**Source of Information on the Incident:**

- Communication with the HRD Mr. Baby Jena
- Communication with members of OSSA working committee
- Regional Coordinator of HRDA for East of India

**Perpetrators:**

1. Girija Pattnaik, Inspector In Charge Chandanpur Police Station
2. Mr. Ajay Chandra Jena, President Cooperative Society
3. Mr.Purnachandra Jena, Secretary Cooperative Society

**Details of the Incident:**

As per the sources, Mr. Baby Jena filed a complaint under RTI before the district cooperative president seeking information about the total number farmers registered in his block and the amount of loan sanctioned to each farmer since July 2017.

The president and secretary of the district cooperative union did not provide the information as sought under the RTI Act. After being denied information, he approached the Appellate Authority and finally filed a case at the State Information Commission at Bhubaneswar. It will be pertinent to mention here the District Collector levied fine on the president and secretary of the district cooperative society who did not provide information under RTI Act due to their negligence.

Meanwhile, the president and secretary of the district cooperative society tried to bribe Mr. Baby Jena and his other friend and they refused. Later Mr. Baby Jena and his friend were physically attacked by the goons and Mr. Baby survived with injuries. Mr. Baby made a complaint of this at Chandanpur Police Station. Since there were no actions taken on the complaint, he went on a dharna before the police station and on the same day police arrested Mr. Baby Jena's attackers.

During the previous month, the president and the secretary of the district cooperative society, taking help of the village leaders (mukhias) have ostracised Mr. Baby and his family members. This was brought before the District Collector and the Superintendent of Police, but even after so many days no action has been taken yet against the perpetrators.

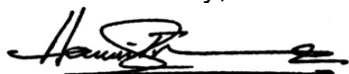
**Appeal:**

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps and:

- Order an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned incident of attack and harassment of HRD Mr. Baby Jena and his family members
- Ensure that adequate protection is being given to the HRD and his family
- Order the state police officials to take necessary steps on his complaint against the perpetrators

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



**(Henri Tiphagne)**  
**National Working Secretary**

Copies to:

**Chairperson, Odisha Human Rights Commission,**  
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**Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders**

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