

STOP FORCED DEVELOPMENT & VIOLENCE ON INNOCENT CITIZENS

To,

Date: 06-02-2013

Mr. Nabin Patnaik

The Chief Minister

Government of Odisha

Nabin Nivas, Bhubaneswar. ODISHA.

Sub: Stop Forced Development AND Violence on Peaceful Citizens in POSCO Project Area.

Sir,

The brutal attack by State police by Lathies, bat of guns and arrest of peace loving women and men at Gobindpur village of Kujang at 4.00 a.m early in the morning of 3rd February 2013 by State police has shocked us and has raised questions on the governance of the State.

It is clear that the local people of Gonindpur, Dhenkia and other villages have been opposing POSCO, the Korean Foreign company for the last seven years. Then why is the government so keen on development project in that particular area only? Doesn't it go against the democracy and good governance of the State?

The moment we hear about development programmes, Investment of National and International companies, the consequences are Human Rights Violence on innocent and harmless citizens of the State. All of us are quite aware that POSCO at Kunjang or Vedanta at Lanzigarh are against the wish and will of the local peoples, particularly of the Scheduled Tribes Peoples. In the development process we have also observed that Scheduled Tribes are denied as share holders in the development. Their land, forest and water are forcibly snatched away. They are displaced, forced to migrate to the cities in search of their livelihood and are going through dehumanizing process in the slums. The companies cannot give them job opportunities as they are not qualified and in history they have been betrayed by most of the projects e.g Rourkela Steel Plant. This is our observation and experience that the companies play the role of Dacoits who plunder and loot the rich man's property and run away. The mining site of POSCO is in Keojhar and in Sundargarh districts where not only Tribals/Indigenous Peoples will be affected worst way, but the whole environment will be devastated too.

The citizens of Gobindpur, Dhenkia and nearby villages of Kujang Block have been opposing the POSCO since its inception. They are raising the question of whose development POSCO project will be? It has been also opposed by most of the citizens and civil society organizations of the State and of the country since last seven years. The State police and

district administrators have filed numbers of cases against them and thus the villagers are disturbed and unrest.

1998-2012 as Era of Disturbance, Unrest and Killing in the name of Development:

We feel Development must be done with the consent of the vulnerable communities and they should participate in the entire development activities. When the would-be affected people are opposing projects, it is a clear indication that it is a forced process. Why should the administration / police violently attack, arrest and disturb them? If the citizens do not want a project, the company should find out some other place or it should stop all these anti people development. It is sad to note that during your regime as Chief Minister 3 people have been killed at Maikanch in Kalahandi (2002), 14 Tribals have been killed in Kalinga Nagar Jajpur (2006), 1 person has been killed in Sundargarh (2008) and hundreds of innocents who wanted their land, water and environment must be protected had been put in jail. Many are still languishing in the different jails of Odisha. Doesn't this prove your violent, anti people and forced development attitude?

We ask you as the Chief Minister of the State, to let the people live in peace and in harmony. Development must be a participative process and according to people's consent. We want peaceful Governance and prosperous State but not violence.

OUR DEMANDS:

1. Immediate withdrawal of police from Gobindpur and Dkenkia areas and No forceful acquisition of the land of the people.
2. Legal action against the police and revenue officials to be initiated for the destruction of betel baraj of the farmers and due compensation to be paid for it.
3. Stop POSCO project as its implementation is an anti-people process.
4. Let the citizens of the State live peacefully according to their own wish.

We hope and ask you as the Chief Minister of Odisha to consider the pain and agony of the people for resisting to protect their land, forest, water and citizens rights. We need to appreciate the patriotism of the people of Kujang, who do not want to give their resources to foreign company, the irresponsible investment of multinational companies that are being discussed at UN and want democracy and peaceful governance.

We request to see action with immediate effect and peace, harmony and democracy around Kujang.

Sincerely Yours

Mr.Mansid Ekka, Ex- MLA.

President

Mrs. Lily Kujur

President

**Jal Jungle Jamin Surakhya Manch, Odisha
Sundargarh.**

Adivasi Nari Surakhya Mandal,

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