

### **NHRC issues notice to Tamil Nadu Government**

NHRC has taken cognizance of a complaint that due to lack of toilet facility in her office, a Warehouse Manager of TN Govt went outside to relieve herself and died after falling down in a septic tank. She was working in Kancheepuram Agriculture Development office, when this incident happened on December 7. The Commission has issued a notice to Tamil Nadu Govt through its Chief Secretary, calling for a detailed report in the matter including action taken against delinquent public servants who have failed to provide basic facility in a Govt office. The response is expected within six weeks.

# NHRC seeks report on witchcraft in Odisha

‘Spread awareness in villages’

**STAFF REPORTER**  
BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Odisha Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police to submit a report on the steps being taken to create awareness on witchcraft accusations and violence and compensation for the victims.

The commission issued the direction on a petition by human rights lawyer Radhakant Tripathy, who had moved the NHRC drawing its attention to witchcraft-related violence and its impact on the lives of people in Odisha.

## **Call to expedite probe**

Mr. Tripathy had demanded that the State agencies expedite probe and trial of offences under the Prevention

of Witch Hunting Act, 2013 to ensure protection of basic human rights of the victims. “The State government should come up with more innovative programmes to spread awareness against blind beliefs and educate the people about the absurd concept of evil spirits and witchcraft,” the lawyer had submitted.

Hearing the matter, the NHRC directed the Odisha Chief Secretary and the police chief to submit a report on steps taken to conduct the awareness programmes in all villages and the compensation provided to the victims in next 15 weeks.

Mr. Tripathy pointed out that Odisha had recorded many violent attacks on suspicion of practice of sorcery and witchcraft, especially against the women.

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