

SC to CBI: Present plan to probe 'nexus' between banks, builders

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Utkarsh Anand

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"One thing we are clear about is that we will send the matter to CBI. We want to go to the roots of the problem," it stated.

The matter concerns thousands of homebuyers in Noida, Greater Noida, Gurugram, and other NCR towns, who have alleged that banks sanctioned loans to developers under subvention schemes without proper due diligence. When builders defaulted on their commitments, the financial burden of EMI payments was shifted onto buyers, many of whom are yet to receive possession of their flats.

As homebuyers struggled to fight legal battles in different fora, including the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA), consumer courts and the Delhi high court, which dismissed their plea in 2022, they approached the top court.

A March 4 order of the Supreme Court noted that despite repeated directions, most builders, banks and interim resolution professionals (in case of companies facing insolvency proceedings) had failed to submit compliance affidavits on project completion status and financial transactions, and remarked that the "blatant disregard" of orders hinted at possible collusion between banks and builders.

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"How can you give 60-70% of funds when not even a single brick has been laid?" the court asked, appointing former Intelligence Bureau (IB) director Rajiv Jain — a former National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) member who is currently practising as a lawyer — as amicus curiae.

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However, the court pushed back, underscoring that its con-

cern was not limited to individual cases but about systemic flaws in the scheme. "That would serve only some individual cases, but we are on the systemic faults," the bench noted.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, also appearing in the matter, proposed that the court first review a report from the amicus curiae before deciding on an investigative course. However, the bench reaffirmed its stance on involving CBI.

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their investigation. But we want to go to the roots of the problem. They will have to look into this mess," the court said.

Additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for CBI, was asked to consult the agency's director and revert with a proposal on how the agency intends to proceed.

Singhvi cautioned that a CBI probe into banks could destabilise the banking system, arguing that it might create "psychological instability" in the financial sector.

However, the bench remained firm. "This has created havoc. Lakhs of people are suffering, and the Supreme Court is left to deal with the homebuyers in all types of cases. Let the investigation take place, and if they give you a clean chit, we will accept it. We are not going to go for a witch-hunt. Let an independent investigation take place, and we will then see. We can only hope there is no mafia involved," the bench said.

"If the homebuyers are crying outside this court, we will address their issues. We are not going to send them to NCLT or NCLAT to be compartmentalised into different sections. We will try our best to resolve the matter here. After all, a huge section of society is before us," observed the bench.

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The New Indian Express

MP government faces opposition heat over alleged fake encounter of tribal man

Congress MLAs walked out demanding Rs 1 crore, a job, and a probe, while the government sanctioned Rs 10 lakh, stating a job depends on the inquiry outcome.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/Mar/18/mp-government-faces-opposition-heat-over-alleged-fake-encounter-of-tribal-man>

Express News Service | Updated on: 18 Mar 2025, 10:07 pm

3 min read

BHOPAL: The Madhya Pradesh government faced tough questions from the opposition on Tuesday, as the Congress MLAs raised the issue of the March 9 killing of a tribal man in an alleged encounter between the state police and armed Maoist cadres – on the sixth day of Vidhan Sabha’s ongoing budget session.

While accusing the state police of gunning down the 38-year-old Baiga tribal man Hiran Partha in a fake encounter in the core area of the Kanha National Park in Mandla district, the Congress legislators demanded Rs 1 crore and a government job for the dependents of the slain tribal.

The tribal MLAs of the opposition party, including leader of opposition Umang Singhar, former home ministers Bala Bachchan and Omkar Markam, besides third-time MLA Narayan Singh Patta and first-time MLA Vikrant Bhuria, also demanded a transparent probe into the March 9 killing by a retired High Court judge. Bhuria added that MLAs too should be on that probe panel.

This was the second day in succession that the Congress MLAs raised the issue in the House and outside.

Bhuria, while alleging that the state police had killed the Baiga tribe man in the encounter to achieve its target in anti-Maoists operations, added that innocent tribals are being branded as Maoists and then eliminated.

“The police first claimed that the deceased tribal was a Maoist, but later changed the stand by branding him a Maoist sympathiser. This has put the operations of the police under cloud,” Bhuria said while raising the issue through the calling attention motion.

Responding to the attacking opposition MLAs, minister of state Narendra Shivaji Patel said “The police never said that the slain man was a Maoist or their sympathizer. A standing order of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) makes the magisterial enquiry of every encounter mandatory. In accordance with it, a magisterial probe, which was instituted on March 12, will cover 11 points, including some of those aspects raised by the opposition legislators today.”

“While the issue of whether he (Hiran Partha) was a Maoist cadre or not needs to be probed, the state’s CM, while showing sensitivity has sanctioned Rs 10 lakh to the deceased tribal’s family. Allow the investigation report to come, if the findings reveal that the deceased man wasn’t even a Maoist sympathizer or supporter, then one adult member of the family will be given a government job and if required Rs One crore will also be given to the family,” the minister added.

Reacting to the minister’s statements, the leader of opposition Umang Singhar (who is the fourth time tribal MLA and ex-minister) said, “The CM released Rs 10 lakh for the family and now the minister is saying it still needs to be probed whether he (Hiran Partha) was a Maoist or their supporter. The minister needs to tell us whether the Rs 10 lakh has been given to the family of Maoist or an innocent tribal.”

Some members, including the lone Bhartiya Adivasi Party (BAP) MLA Kamleshwar Dodiya questioned when an assistant sub inspector of police recently killed in an attack by mob in Mauganj district recently can be given Rs One crore as a martyr, then why can’t similar sum be sanctioned to the family of a tribal. “The cost of a cop’s life is Rs One Crore, while the cost of an innocent tribal’s life is just Rs 10 lakh,” he questioned.

Unsatisfied by the minister’s reply, the Congress MLAs tramped into the well of the House and later walked out.

Hindustan Times

Sambalpur man arrested for theft dies in custody, his family alleges torture

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/sambalpur-man-arrested-for-theft-dies-in-custody-his-family-alleges-torture-101742316177515.html>

By Debabrata Mohanty | Mar 18, 2025 10:12 PM IST

Police said Kadir Sheikh was given a clean bill of health in the medical examination conducted soon after his arrest.

A 27-year-old man arrested on charges of stealing a submersible water pump in Odisha's Sambalpur district died in police custody on Monday, triggering allegations of torture in custody.

Police said Mohammad Kadir Sheikh, a resident of Khistianpada in Hirakud area of Sambalpur, died at the district hospital on Monday, hours after he was arrested in connection with the theft of a submersible pump and some wires from a godown. Kadir had been arrested on Sunday evening following a complaint. Police said the stolen pump and some other items were seized from him.

Police said Kadir Sheikh was given a clean bill of health in the medical examination conducted soon after his arrest. But he later collapsed when he was going to be produced before a magistrate. He was taken to VIMSAR, Burla where the doctor declared him as 'brought dead'.

His family alleged on Tuesday that Sheikh was beaten through the day inside the police station after his arrest.

"Why were the family members not informed of his detention and how did he suddenly fall ill in court despite being declared healthy earlier at Hirakud Medical. How did he become so unwell in court," asked his sister.

Sambalpur district Congress president Jay Shankar Mishra met additional SP Amaresh Mishra to seek action against the guilty officers. The delegation also visited Sheikh's family.

Activist Jayant Kumar Das sought the intervention of the National Human Rights Commission, alleging that the police tortured him in a location without CCTV coverage. "He was denied food and water throughout his confinement. His family was not informed about his arrest, violating section 41B of BNS, which mandates police to notify relatives," Das said in his petition.

The Sambalpur police has denied allegations of torture. Sambalpur SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamoo said "the preliminary post-mortem report suggests it was a natural death and there are no visible injury marks on the body."

Business Standard

Three killed in clash over suspected witchcraft in Odisha's Ganjam

Though the exact reason for the incident was not known immediately, previous enmity between the two groups in the village was suspected to be the cause of the clash

https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/three-killed-in-clash-over-suspected-witchcraft-in-odisha-s-ganjam-125031801320_1.html

Press Trust of India, Berhampur | 2 min read Last Updated : Mar 18 2025 | 11:28 PM IST

At least three persons were killed and three others seriously injured in the clash between two groups over suspected witchcraft practice in Odisha's Ganjam district on Tuesday, police said.

The clash took place at Kharipalli village under. The clash broke out due to the suspected witchcraft in the village, police said.

The deceased were identified as Khadal Behera (70), his son Ratnakar Behera (35) and Ramesh Behera (40), they said.

The injured persons were first admitted to Dharakote hospital and later referred to MKCG Medical College and Hospital here. Their condition was stated to be serious, hospital sources said Senior police officers along with additional forces have rushed to the spot.

"Though the situation in the village was tense, but under control after the arrival of the police forces," said SP (Ganjam) Subhendu Kumar Patra. Forces along with police officers were camping in the village, the SP said.

Though the exact reason for the incident was not known immediately, previous enmity between the two groups in the village was suspected to be the cause of the clash, he said. "We are investigating the reason for the clash," the SP added.

Sources said a group of people first attacked Khadal Behera and his son Ratnakar with sharp weapons suspecting that they were practicing witchcraft. The duo died on the spot.

Some of the relatives of Khadal retaliated the attack in which four other persons of the rival group sustained injury. Of them Ramesh succumbed to his injuries at Dharaote hospital, sources said.

(Only the headline and picture of this report may have been reworked by the Business Standard staff; the rest of the content is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)

Times of India

How bonded labour fight gets caught in red tape, govt apathy

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agra/how-bonded-labour-fight-gets-caught-in-red-tape-govt-apathy/articleshow/119160907.cms>

TNN / Sachin Sharma, Mohd Dilshad, Rahul Singh / Mar 18, 2025, 16:53 IST

Agra/Meerut: In a quiet village in Muzaffarnagar, Mohammad Danish, a 35-year-old daily wage worker, sits with his gaze fixed on the horizon, his thoughts weighed down by memories of a year that still haunts him. In 2022, Danish, his 24-year-old wife Shanno, and their two young children were trapped in a brick kiln in Jalandhar, Punjab, along with 41 other families. Their world shrank to the confines of gruelling labour, meagre meals, and constant threats. "We were given just enough food to survive and forced to work for over 12 hours with hardly any breaks," Danish recalled, his voice low, brimming with suppressed rage. "We got no wages. It was out of the question. Any protest would be met with threats to sell us to Kashmir." The family's ordeal ended well after a year in 2023 when an NGO got wind of their plight and somehow managed to secure their release. Yet, freedom brought with it a festering mistrust. "I can never trust any contractor now," Danish said bitterly. His story, while deeply personal, is emblematic of a larger crisis gripping the vulnerable and marginalised across India — a crisis that has forced the Supreme Court to intervene and seek answers and solutions from govt.

The SC's recent directive underscores the urgency of addressing this humanitarian problem whose scale — from Tamil Nadu to Maharashtra and Bengal to Jharkhand — is still largely underestimated and unreported, many activists say. These men, women and children, the poorest of India's poor and often with no voice or agency of their own, rarely have any idea about how they might seek justice. Trafficking Is An Enabler

In their Nov 24 order, Justices K V Vishwanathan and BR Gavai pointed out that while 5,264 labourers were rescued in UP, only 1,101 received financial aid. They have now urged the central govt to draft a comprehensive strategy to combat inter-state trafficking, a step deemed essential to addressing this profoundly entrenched issue. The court noted that disbursal of financial aid to rescued children, especially those trafficked across states for bonded labour, remains a key challenge. It directed the labour ministry to meet with state officials to draft a unified proposal to address inter-state trafficking, including a simplified procedure for immediate financial assistance. "Taking into consideration the importance of the matter, we find that it will be appropriate to have the assistance of the attorney general," the bench observed. The court also directed Centre to involve the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in finalising the procedure.

TOI looked for and met families who had literally been enslaved and brought their plight to the notice of various administrations. The families and individuals — many of whom were forced to work for a pittance, unable to buy enough food, or even tarpaulin sheets for shelter — themselves have little expectation that their lives will change.

Hard To Find Help

In Shamli's Bhajju village, the home of 38-year-old Amarpal Singh stands eerily abandoned, its walls silently bearing witness to a family that "vanished". Amarpal, his wife, and their five children left for a brick kiln in Himachal Pradesh in Feb, lured by promises of fair wages. By Oct, a chilling video surfaced. In it, Amarpal reveals their plight — enslaved and thrashed if they dared to resist. His cousin, Brahmpal Singh, recalled his desperate attempts to seek help. "I went to the local police, but they were indifferent. No one cared," Brahmpal said. "After the video came to light, a team from the local administration visited the village. However, we informed them that Amarpal and his family have not returned yet, following which the team left," added Brahmpal. Local police said they had received no complaint in the matter, while Brahmpal claimed that Amarpal and his family were still working at the brick kiln in Himachal. Stories like these are common across UP. Take the case of Satish Kumar. The 29-year-old labourer found himself and 10 others ensnared by similar false promises. Enticed by the offer of Rs 430 for every thousand bricks and Rs 1,000 as family expenses, Satish and his family arrived at a kiln in Badaun, only to discover it was non-operational. "We were forced to do menial tasks — cleaning garbage, watering the soil — without any wages," he said.

Another worker, unwilling to share his name, described in painful detail the bleakness of their existence. "We worked from dawn until dusk without even basic lavatory breaks. The shelter was made of plastic sheets that collapsed in the slightest wind. Winter was approaching, and we had nothing. Mothers struggled to feed their children while starving themselves."

Victims Of Apathy

The trauma of working as a bonded labourer often lingers long after the rescue. Bureaucratic apathy compounds victims' suffering. The Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers (2021) outlines financial assistance ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 3 lakh for rescued individuals. Yet, this aid remains inaccessible without the mandatory release certificates that identify them as bonded labourers. In the Badaun case, tehsildar Vijay Kumar admitted, "They weren't paid. They were desperate to go home." However, the official report omitted crucial details about their "bonded" status, effectively barring them from accessing rehabilitation schemes. Assistant labour commissioner Pallavi Agarwal said that such administrative lapses are common. "In cases of bonded labourers, the district authorities are supposed to inform the labour department and the DM. But, in this instance, no information was shared," she explained. These oversights are not isolated incidents. Human rights lawyer Vinod Kumar

Singh, who has represented numerous victims, said it was "systemic neglect". One of his clients, 40-year-old Pushu Ahirwar, has been rescued twice in the past five years. "In 2017, 11 of us were abandoned by a contractor in Deoband after months of unpaid work. When we demanded our wages, the site owner claimed he had already paid the contractor," Pushu said. Two years later, he was held captive at a construction site in Delhi. "We were locked in a room and threatened. Even after the case reached court, the cheque we received as compensation bounced." An activist told TOI: "How can such voiceless people seek justice? It's so hard."

Widespread Problem

The scale of the crisis is vast, with large districts like Muzaffarnagar, Azamgarh, Aligarh, and others in UP identified as trafficking hotspots. Labourers from these regions are frequently trafficked to distant states under the pretext of lucrative employment. Nirmal Gorana Agni, convenor of the National Campaign Committee for Eradication of Bonded Labour (NCCEBL), revealed the staggering scope of their work. "We've rescued 25,000 labourers nationwide, including 5,000 children. But the challenges are immense. Administrative cooperation is often lacking," he said. For some the exploitation extends beyond India's borders. Maroof Raza, 19, from Muzaffarnagar was lured to Oman in 2022 with promises of lucrative wages. Upon arrival, he was forced into gruelling work under extreme heat, denied food and even his wages when he protested. His family managed to secure his release after five agonising months but refrained from filing a complaint, fearing retaliation. The stories of Danish, Amarpal, Satish, Sameen, and Maroof are not just isolated tragedies — they are a damning indictment of the systems that fail India's most vulnerable. From the predators who exploit desperation to the bureaucracy that denies justice, the cycle of bonded labour persists. Yet, amidst the despair, there is resilience. Activists, NGOs, and lawyers continue to fight, challenging a system that too often turns a blind eye. An activist in Varanasi who wished not to reveal her identity said, "Even if we can free one family from modern-day slavery, it's well worth it in the end. It is a tough battle to save them and secure their freedom, but if everyone gives up, these people might as well just be dead." Members of Satish Kumar's household in Jahangirabad block of UP's Bulandshahr. They had accompanied Kumar when he was lured to Badaun on the promise of good wages, only to be forced into bonded labour. They were later rescued along with 10 other labourers

Times of India

Students must equip themselves with necessary skills: NHRC

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mysuru/students-must-equip-themselves-with-necessary-skills-nhrc/articleshow/119172615.cms>

TNN / Mar 18, 2025, 22:47 IST

Madikeri: National Human Rights Commission member, Vijaya Bharati Sayani, asked students to equip themselves with the necessary skills. "If our youth are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the demands of the rapidly growing job market, the country will emerge as a major powerhouse of human resources," Vijaya said after inaugurating a national symposium organised by Kodagu University at its PG campus in Kushalnagar on Monday. She said that millions of people around the world, including India, are suffering from unemployment and lack of opportunities. "This is due to the lack of vocational skills. India has a rich tradition of skill-based learning dating back hundreds of years, and the ancient Gurukul system here provided training not only in academic knowledge but also in life skills, crafts, and professionalism along with vocational skills. However, with the advent of colonial rule and industrialisation, the extent of skill-based learning decreased," she opined. She further explained that the NHRC played a key role in upholding and protecting skills and employment rights in India. The NHRC is particularly concerned about the rights of workers. It ensures that in the era of automation and artificial intelligence, workers are not left behind, she added.

Mysore MP Yaduveer Wadiyar said that job opportunities are abundant in this digital era. "Employment skills and employment have become more important. India is lagging behind when it comes to skills, which is causing problems for Indians in getting jobs," he opined.

Rajiv Jain, former director of the Intelligence Bureau, said that the employment landscape in the country is changing rapidly. He said that technology, globalisation, and changing social needs are contributing to the thinking of how, when, and where we work together. Kodagu University vice-chancellor Prof Ashok S Alura said that the role of career development and the need for continuous adaptation to new job models should be explored in preparing the agenda for emerging opportunities. He said that there should be a discussion on whether today's education system is empowering the youth with the tools they need to succeed in their careers.

TheCommuneMag

Bommanahalli BJP MLA M Satish Reddy Raises Stray Dog Menace, Cites The Commune's Report

<https://thecommunemag.com/bommanahalli-bjp-mla-m-satish-reddy-raises-stray-dog-menace-cites-the-communes-report/>

March 18, 2025 | The Commune

The issue of the rising stray dog menace in Bengaluru has once again come under scrutiny, with Bommanahalli BJP MLA M Satish Reddy raising concerns in the Legislative Assembly. During the Zero Hour session, Reddy highlighted the growing threat posed by stray dogs, particularly in the Sun City Apartments of Ibbaluru, located in his constituency.

Residents have long complained about aggressive stray dogs roaming the apartment premises, with reports of attacks on children and elderly individuals. However, despite numerous complaints, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has yet to take substantial action, leading to increased frustration among citizens.

MLA Satish Reddy's Appeal to the Government

Speaking in the Assembly, Reddy urged the government to intervene in the matter, emphasizing that residents are living in constant fear due to unchecked stray dog activity. He noted that stray dogs have been seen chasing pedestrians, entering lifts, and even attacking people inside the apartment complex. Reddy also referenced multiple video clips that depict the extent of the issue, showcasing how strays have taken over parking areas and communal spaces, causing distress to the residents.

The MLA pointed out that this issue is not limited to his constituency but is part of a broader crisis across Bengaluru and other major cities. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had previously taken cognizance of the rising number of dog bite incidents across India, particularly in Haryana, where it had directed the Animal Welfare Board of Haryana to submit an Action Taken Report (ATR) after reports of nearly 22 lakh dog bite cases in 2024.

Sun City Apartments: Stray Dog Problem and Alleged Animal Trafficking Nexus

The Commune had earlier reported in March 2025 about the situation in Sun City Apartments, exposing an alleged animal trafficking nexus linked to an individual named Minu Singh. According to residents, Singh, a self-proclaimed animal activist, has been running an unauthorized rescue operation within the apartment complex since 2010. Her alleged activities include bringing in stray dogs from demolished shelters and other residential areas, significantly increasing the number of dogs inside the apartment premises.

Residents claim that at any given time, 9 to 12 dogs occupy the ground floor, making it unsafe for children and senior citizens. Many have been chased or bitten by these dogs,

yet their complaints have largely gone unheeded. Reports indicate that Singh allegedly relocates displaced stray dogs into the complex, leading to an unpredictable and unmanageable rotation of animals within the residential area.

Allegations of Financial Misconduct And Political Influence

Apart from safety concerns, allegations have emerged regarding financial misconduct tied to Singh's NGO, Minu Rakshe Vahini Foundation. The organization has reportedly raised nearly ₹50 lakh through crowdfunding under the guise of animal rescue, but discrepancies in its registered address and operations have led to suspicions about its legitimacy.

Furthermore, residents allege that Singh has created a network of influence by paying off security guards and using political connections to evade accountability. Her alleged ties to Maneka Gandhi have made it difficult for residents to take action, as attempts to raise concerns are often met with threats, legal complaints, and even accusations of molestation. In one instance, an FIR was registered against 40 residents, further escalating tensions within the community.

Intervention By Authorities And BBMP's Response

Following mounting complaints, local authorities, including BBMP and the police, intervened to some extent. Two illegal dog shelters outside the apartment gates were demolished, and authorities ruled that stray dogs should not be allowed in the basement and ground floors. However, a BBMP inspection still found 19 stray dogs inside the complex, with residents demanding that they be managed by the association rather than external activists.

Despite these interventions, residents argue that the problem persists due to Singh's continued influence and defiance of regulations. Her social media presence has further fueled the issue, as she openly defends her actions while branding residents as "anti-animal."

With the issue now reaching the state assembly, MLA Satish Reddy's push for government intervention has brought renewed attention to the plight of residents in Sun City Apartments. The larger concern remains the increasing number of stray dog-related incidents in Bengaluru and other Indian cities. While the BBMP and authorities have taken limited action, long-term solutions, including proper shelter management and stricter enforcement of stray dog policies, are necessary to ensure public safety without compromising animal welfare.

TheCSRUniverse

Dia Mirza, Shantanu Moitra, Ranveer Brar, Sudarsan Pattnaik Join WWF-India As Ambassadors For Earth Hour 2025

<https://thecsruniverse.com/articles/dia-mirza-shantanu-moitra-ranveer-brar-sudarsan-pattnaik-join-wwf-india-as-ambassadors-for-earth-hour-2025>

By: TheCSRUniverse Team | Published: 18-Mar-2025

New Delhi, Mar 18, 2025: The World Wide Fund for Nature - India (WWF-India) is celebrating the convergence of Earth Hour 2025 with World Water Day this year on March 22, to emphasise the importance of collective action for the conservation of the planet and its precious water resources. In addition to bringing together millions to Switch Off and create The Biggest Hour for Earth, this year, WWF-India is inspiring individuals to #BeWaterWise in all aspects of their lives — throughout the year.

Dia Mirza, actor and UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador; Shantanu Moitra, celebrated music composer and WWF-India's Hope & Harmony Ambassador; Viswanathan Anand, Chess Grandmaster and Education Ambassador, WWF-India; Ranveer Brar, Indian celebrity chef; Sudarsan Pattnaik, a world-renowned Indian sand artist and Padma Shri Awardee; Ricky Kej, Grammy-winning Indian musical composer and environmentalist; and Taba Chake, a Nyishi singer-songwriter from Arunachal Pradesh, are among the voices that have joined the world's largest grassroots environmental movement.

In 2025, participants are encouraged not only to "Switch Off" but also to align with the theme #BeWaterWise, which underscores the importance of water conservation and sustainable practices. In India, where 1.4 billion people share just 4% of the world's freshwater, the need for action is urgent. Estimates from Wetlands International (WI) indicate that nearly two of every five wetlands in India have lost their natural existence in the last 30 years, while 40% of water bodies have lost quality for the survival of aquatic life. This year's World Water Day theme, Glacier Preservation, highlights the critical role glaciers play in supporting nearly two billion people who depend on meltwater for drinking, agriculture, and energy. Alarming, climate change, accelerated by human activity, caused glaciers to lose over 600 gigatons of water in 2023 — the largest mass loss in five decades — contributing significantly to rising sea levels, now 20 cm higher than in 1900.

Sharing his thoughts, Ravi Singh, Secretary-General and CEO of WWF-India, said, "Every year, Earth Hour brings together millions of people across India – and around the world – in a symbolic act of switching off lights for the planet. This year, its alignment with World Water Day has given us an opportunity to drive collective action for water conservation. I thank all our Earth Hour Water Ambassadors, dignitaries and supporters for gracing the Earth Hour Festival and lending their support to this event."

The Earth Hour Festival 2025, to be held from 2 pm to 7 pm on March 22 at WWF-India's Delhi office, will celebrate the #BeWaterWise campaign, combining music, art, architecture, and meaningful discussions on conservation. Renowned musician Shantanu

Moitra will share stories from his journey along the Ganga River and perform some songs with Nyishi singer-songwriter Taba Chake from Arunachal Pradesh, who will use music to highlight his community's connection with nature. An engaging discussion on how water shapes stories and spaces will take place among Tarana Sawhney (Chairperson, Confederation of Indian Industry's Task Force for Art & Culture), Ratish Nanda (CEO, Aga Khan Trust for Culture India), and Vikramjit Singh Rooprai (author, Delhi Heritage: Top 10 Baolis). The festival will also give a platform to five Water Heroes — community stewards of conservation — who will join government dignitaries and the WWF-India team in conversations on grassroots transformation. An exclusive water-themed art installation made for WWF-India by scrap metal artist Gopal Namjoshi will be unveiled and a special address by Bharat Lal, SG & CEO of National Human Rights Commission, will further enrich the event.

Shantanu Moitra, Hope & Harmony Ambassador, WWF-India, said, "I have been associated with WWF-India and Earth Hour for many years now. But this year's theme and message of #BeWaterWise are very close to my heart. When I cycled over 2,700 kilometres along the river Ganga, I realised the significance of water conservation. I'm thrilled to be telling some of those tales and performing a few tunes as part of the Earth Hour Festival 2025 on March 22nd at WWF-India."

Earth Hour 2025 will transcend the symbolic act of turning off lights by encouraging simple actions that help in reducing water footprint, minimising single-use plastics, and cutting greenhouse gas emissions to collectively drive meaningful change.

Actor and environmentalist Dia Mirza said, "Like every year, I'll be switching off for Earth Hour – not only to join the biggest voluntary movement for the environment, but also to spend an hour doing something positive for nature together with my entire family. This year is doubly special as Earth Hour converges with World Water Day and WWF-India's message of #BeWaterWise aligns with my philosophy. It's easy to be water-wise in our daily lives, and every single act of change adds up to leave a big impact on our finite water resources, which face threats from human activity and climate change. It's a timely campaign for the world's water flows that sustain all life, and I'm excited to be a part of it!"

Chef Ranveer Brar said, "I'm excited to lend my voice to WWF-India's Earth Hour 2025 campaign. As a conscious practice, I switch off all non-essential lights every day and especially on this day. This year, its convergence with World Water Day has made the campaign even more meaningful. It's an opportunity for all of us to commit to preserving our limited resources and conserving the planet. #BeWaterWise is a great initiative, and WWF-India's suggested actions are so easy to implement, that I hope everyone will take them up."

Sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik reflected on the coming together of the two campaigns, "I have been associated with both Earth Hour and World Water Day for many years. As they converge this year, it's a timely call for the world to act for the protection of our natural

resources. I'm delighted to join this movement and feel that it is my obligation as an artist to add my own strokes to the canvas of conservation.”

2024 witnessed the biggest switch-off yet, with over 250 significant landmarks, monuments, government buildings, educational institutions, and corporates participating across India, making it the Biggest Hour for Earth. The campaign inspired Indians to ‘Give an Hour for Earth,’ collectively contributing 30 years’ worth of positive actions online and offline, earning India the #2 spot on the Global Earth Hour Leader Board. Additionally, the first Earth Hour Festival was hosted by WWF-India to facilitate conservation-themed activities and lifestyle interests.

Born in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour has grown to become the world's largest grassroots environmental movement, inspiring individuals, communities, businesses and organisations in more than 190 countries and territories to act for our planet.

Hindustan

पुलिस पिटाई के खिलाफ मानवाधिकार आयोग में शिकायत

मुजफ्फरपुर में बाइक चोरी के आरोप में पुलिस द्वारा जीजा रौशन प्रताप सिंह और उनके साले अमन कुमार की बेरहमी से पिटाई की गई। पीड़ित परिवार ने मानवाधिकार आयोग में शिकायत दर्ज कराई है। थानाध्यक्ष पर 1 लाख...

<https://www.livehindustan.com/bihar/muzaffarpur/story-human-rights-violation-allegations-of-police-brutality-in-muzaffarpur-bike-theft-case-201742254881451.amp.html>

Newsrap हिन्दुस्तान, मुजफ्फरपुर | Mon, 18 Mar 2025, 05:11:AM

मुजफ्फरपुर, प्रमुख संवाददाता। पानापुर रियात थाने में बाइक चोरी के आरोप में उठाकर सरैया के बहलवारा निवासी जीजा रौशन प्रताप सिंह व साले अमन कुमार की बेरहमी से पिटाई मामले में राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग और बिहार राज्य मानवाधिकार आयोग में शिकायत की गई है। पीड़ित परिवार ने अधिवक्ता एसके झा के माध्यम से दो अलग-अलग याचिका दायर की है। पीड़ित ने पानापुर करियात थानाध्यक्ष राजबल्लभ यादव पर गंभीर आरोप लगाए हैं।

रौशन प्रताप सिंह के साला अमन कुमार को पुलिस ने बाइक चोरी के आरोप में उठाया था। उसी से मिलने रौशन थाना पहुंचे थे। पीड़ित ने आरोप लगाया है कि थानाध्यक्ष ने अमन कुमार को छोड़ने के एवज में एक लाख रुपये की मांग की। रौशन ने इसका विरोध किया तो उसे भी हाजत में बंद कर दिया गया। रात में हाथ पांव बांधकर बेरहमी से मारपीट की गई। 70 हजार रुपये लेने के बाद दोनों को बाद में थाने से छोड़ा गया। थाने पर उनकी बाइक रख ली गई, जिसे लौटाने के लिए 30 हजार रुपये मांगे गए। पुलिस की पिटाई से घायल रौशन का कांटी पीएसपी में कराया गया। अभी एसकेएमसीएच में इलाज चल रहा है। अधिवक्ता एसके झा ने बताया कि यह मामला मानवाधिकार उल्लंघन के अतिगंभीर श्रेणी का है। जिसकी उच्च स्तरीय जांच की आवश्यकता है।

Hindustan

चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित हुए डॉ. अभिजीत

चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित हुए डॉ. अभिजीत चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित हुए डॉ. अभिजीत

<https://www.livehindustan.com/bihar/araria/story-land-dispute-in-araria-leads-to-violent-clash-two-women-injured-201742323432539.amp.html?articleNo=1>

Newsrap हिन्दुस्तान, बिहारशरीफ

Mon, 18 Mar 2025, 03:33:AM

चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित हुए डॉ. अभिजीत फोटो 17 नूरसराय 01-गोल्ड मेडल दिखाते डॉ. अभिजीत कुमार नूरसराय, निज प्रतिनिधि। पटना के ज्ञान भवन में इंटरएक्टिव फोरम ऑन इंडियन इकोनॉमी द्वारा आयोजित कार्यक्रम में सोमवार को गौतम ग्रुप के अध्यक्ष डॉ. अभिजीत कुमार को चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित किया गया। अवार्ड बिहार के राज्यपाल आरिफ मोहम्मद खान द्वारा दिया गया। राज्यपाल ने डॉ. अभिजीत को स्वर्ण पदक व प्रमाण पत्र देकर सम्मानित किया। बता दें कि यह पुरस्कार डॉ. अभिजीत को समाज कल्याण के क्षेत्र में किये गए अनुकरणीय कार्यों के लिए दिया गया। भारत के पूर्व मुख्य न्यायाधीश सह राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग के पूर्व अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति केजी बालकृष्णन और सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के पूर्व न्यायाधीश ज्ञान सुधा मिश्रा की अध्यक्षता वाली प्रतिष्ठित जूरी ने डॉ. अभिजीत कुमार को 'चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज बिहार के प्रथम संस्करण के लिए चुना था। मौके पर चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड कमेटी के चेयरमैन एडवोकेट नंदन झा, जूरी उपाध्यक्ष सह सुप्रीम कोर्ट के पूर्व न्यायाधीश ज्ञान सुधा मिश्रा, शेखर सुमन, डॉ. सीपी ठाकुर सहित अन्य मौजूद थे। कार्यक्रम में विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में उत्कृष्ट कार्य करने वाले 21 लोगों को पुरस्कृत किया गया।

Prabhat Khabar

भाजपा नेता सुरेश झा को मिला चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड

भाजपा वाणिज्य प्रकोष्ठ के प्रदेश प्रवक्ता सीए सुरेश झा को चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित किया गया है.

<https://www.prabhatkhabar.com/state/bihar/darbhanga/suresh-jha-awarded-champions-of-change-award>

By DIGVIJAY SINGH | March 18, 2025 9:41 PM

पटना में राज्यपाल के हाथों हुए पुरस्कृत दरभंगा. समाज कल्याण के क्षेत्र में उत्कृष्ट कार्य के लिए भाजपा वाणिज्य प्रकोष्ठ के प्रदेश प्रवक्ता सीए सुरेश झा को चैंपियंस ऑफ चेंज अवार्ड से सम्मानित किया गया है. सोमवार की देर शाम पटना में राज्यपाल आरिफ मोहम्मद खान ने रचनात्मक कार्य के लिए झा को मेडल के साथ प्रशस्ति पत्र प्रदान किया. इस खबर से उनके पैतृक क्षेत्र घनश्यामपुर गोई मिश्र लगमा सहित पूरे जिला में पार्टी कार्यकर्ता तथा शुभचिंतकों के बीच खुशी पसर गयी है. ज्ञातव्य हो कि झा अवसर विशेष पर अपने सामाजिक दायित्व का आगे बढ़कर निर्वहन करते दिखते हैं. बाढ़-सूखार, अगलगी के अलावा पिछले वर्षों कोरोना महामारी के दौरान जिस तरह उन्होंने अपनी परवाह किये बगैर समाज सेवा की, वह अनुकरणीय है. प्रत्येक वर्ष शीतलहर के दौरान जिला मुख्यालय में घूम-घूमकर सार्वजनिक स्थलों पर उनका कंबल वितरण चर्चित रहा है. इसे लेकर झा को पहले भी प्रदेश एवं देश के अलावा अंतर राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर सम्मानित किया जा चुका है. अमेरिका के टाइम्स स्क्वायर्ड पर सीए झा का अवार्ड ग्रहण करने वाली तस्वीर चर्चा में रही थी. झा ने बताया कि पुरस्कार ग्रहण करने वालों का चयन पूर्व मुख्य न्यायाधीश एवं राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग के पूर्व अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति केजी बालाकृष्णन एवं न्यायाधीश ज्ञान सुधा मिश्र की अध्यक्षता में संवैधानिक जूरी द्वारा किया गया. यह पुरस्कार कई नामचीन हस्तियों को मिला है.

डिस्कलेमर: यह प्रभात खबर समाचार पत्र की ऑटोमेटेड न्यूज फीड है. इसे प्रभात खबर डॉट कॉम की टीम ने संपादित नहीं किया है

MP Breaking News

हिरण बैगा नक्सली था या नहीं, इस मुद्दे पर खुद के जवाब से मुसीबत में सरकार! कांग्रेस ने किया सदन से वाकआउट

मंडला में हिरण बैगा की पुलिस मुठभेड़ में मौत को लेकर विपक्ष लगातार मध्य प्रदेश सरकार पर आरोप लग रहा है। मामले को लेकर सरकार का कहना है कि जांच पड़ताल जारी है। इसके बाद ही सब कुछ साफ हो जाएगा।

<https://mpbreakingnews.in/madhya-pradesh/hiran-baiga-naxal-or-not-controversy-mp-government-in-hot-water-congress-walk-out-assembly-34-738309>

Sanjucta Pandit

Published on -March 18, 2025

मंडला में हिरण बैगा की पुलिस मुठभेड़ में मौत मध्य प्रदेश सरकार के लिए गले की हड्डी बन गई है। दरअसल, इस मौत को लेकर विपक्ष सरकार पर आदिवासी की हत्या का आरोप लगा रहा है। वहीं, सरकार का कहना है कि जांच के बाद सब साफ हो जाएगा। हालांकि, सरकार ने विधानसभा में कहा है कि वह यानि हिरण बैगा नक्सली समर्थक था जबकि आईजी उसे नक्सली बता चुके हैं।

विक्रान्त भूरिया ने उठाया सवाल

मंगलवार को मध्य प्रदेश विधानसभा में ध्यानाकर्षण प्रस्ताव के माध्यम से मंडला जिले में हिरण बैगा नामक आदिवासी की पुलिस मुठभेड़ में हुई मौत का मामला उठा। कांग्रेस विधायक विक्रान्त भूरिया ने इस मुद्दे को उठाते हुए कहा कि सरकार आदिवासियों की हत्या कर रही है। उन्हें जल, जंगल, जमीन से बेदखल कर रही है। अपने साथ मात्र एक कुल्हाड़ी और थोड़ा सामान लेकर जाने वाले हिरण बैगा को पुलिस मुठभेड़ में नक्सली बताकर मार दिया गया। विक्रान्त ने सरकार पर आरोप लगाते हुए इस पूरे मामले की रिटायर्ड जज के माध्यम से जांच करने की मांग की।

मंत्री नरेंद्र पटेल का जवाब

इसके जवाब में मंत्री नरेंद्र शिवाजी पटेल ने कहा कि वास्तव में हिरण बैगा नक्सलियों का हेल्पर था और उन्हें सूचनाओं पहुंचा कर सतर्क करता था। पुलिस ने जब आमने-सामने की मुठभेड़ में उसे ललकारा तो सामने से फायरिंग हुई और जिसमें हिरण बैगा मारा गया।

विधायक ने सरकार को घेरा

इसके बाद कांग्रेस विधायक नारायण सिंह पट्टा ने भी इस मुद्दे पर सरकार को घेरते हुए बैगा आदिवासी की मौत को पुलिस की हत्या बताया और कहा कि वह बिल्कुल निर्दोष था। विधायक ओमकार सिंह मरकाम ने तमाम सवाल उठाते हुए प्रश्नों की झड़ी लगा दी और मृतक हिरण बैगा के परिजनों के लिए सरकारी नौकरी सहित 2 करोड़ रुपए की राशि की मांग की।

इस पर मंत्री नरेंद्र शिवाजी पटेल ने कहा कि हिरण बैगा के परिजनों के लिए मुख्यमंत्री के द्वारा 10 लाख रुपए दिए जा चुके हैं और यदि जांच में वह नक्सली साबित नहीं हुआ तो उसके परिवार को नौकरी और एक

करोड रुपए, दोनों दिए जाएंगे। पूर्व गृहमंत्री और कांग्रेस विधायक बाला बच्चन ने भी मृतक हिरण बैगा के परिजनों के लिए सरकारी नौकरी और एक करोड रुपए की राशि की मांग की।

उमंग सिंघार ने घेरा

इसके बाद नेता प्रतिपक्ष उमंग सिंघार ने सवाल करते हुए कहा कि यदि हिरण बैगा नक्सली था तो फिर सरकार ने 10 लाख रुपए की सहायता राशि क्यों दी और यदि वह नक्सली नहीं है तो एक करोड रुपए और सरकारी नौकरी देने में क्या परेशानी है। सरकार के जवाब से असंतुष्ट विपक्ष ने इस मुद्दे पर सदन से वाकआउट किया।

मानवाधिकार आयोग के दखल के बाद जांच के निर्देश

इस पूरे मामले में जिस तरह से राष्ट्रीय मानव अधिकार आयोग के निर्देश पर जांच के आदेश दिए गए हैं। ऐसा लगता है कि मामला जल्द सुलझने वाला नहीं और राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भी यह सुर्खियों में रहेगा।

Dainik Bhaskar

थाने में युवक की पिटाई का मामला पहुंचा मानवाधिकार

<https://www.bhaskar.com/local/bihar/muzaffarpur/news/the-case-of-beating-of-a-youth-in-the-police-station-reached-the-human-rights-134660648.html>

मुजफ्फरपुर | पानापुर करियात थाने में युवक की बेरहमी से पिटाई किए जाने का मामला मानवाधिकार आयोग के समक्ष पहुंच गया है। पीड़ित परिवार ने मानवाधिकार अधिवक्ता एसके झा के माध्यम से राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग व बिहार राज्य मानवाधिकार आयोग में दो अलग-अलग याचिका दायर की है। पीड़ित परिवार ने थानाध्यक्ष राजबल्लभ यादव पर गंभीर आरोप लगाए हैं। रौशन प्रताप सिंह अपने साला अमन कुमार से मिलने थाना पहुंचे थे, जहां पुलिस ने अमन कुमार को बंद कर रखा था। पीड़ित परिवार ने बताया कि थानेदार राजबल्लभ यादव ने अमन कुमार को छोड़ने के एवज में जीजा रौशन प्रताप सिंह से एक लाख रुपए की मांग की और जब रौशन प्रताप सिंह ने इसका विरोध किया तो आवेश में आकर राजबल्लभ यादव ने उन्हें भी हाजत में बंद कर दिया। उनका मुंह व हाथ-पैर बांधकर बेरहमी से मारपीट की। जब परिजन पहुंचे और दोनों को छोड़ने का आग्रह किया तब एक लाख रुपए की मांग की गई। फिर 70 हजार रुपए लेने के बाद दोनों को छोड़ा गया। रौशन प्रताप सिंह की बाइक को पुलिस ने अपने कब्जे में ले लिया, जिसे लौटाने के एवज में 30 हजार रुपए की मांग की जा रही है।