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# Tribal rights bill faces forest fire

By Chandrika Mago/TNN

**New Delhi:** Stoking a simmering political fire, the National Forest Commission has used strong language to lambast the government's tribal rights Bill, saying it's not just bad in law but will be an ecological disaster. It ascribes political motivations at some points. Its report, given to the Prime Minister on Tuesday, says another legislation is, in fact, needed.

One member, well-known activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt, has dissented completely from these recommendations.

The controversial tribal rights Bill, finally introduced in the last winter session of Parliament, is being screened by a committee of MPs. The legislation has been described as a paradigm shift in approach towards addressing concerns on tenurial security, livelihood and traditional rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes who have living without legal cover.

The Bill's opponents, however, are alive and kicking. The National Forest Commission, chaired by former chief justice of India B N Kirpal, says the proposed Bill would be harmful to the interests of forests and ecological security of the country. It will be bad in law and in open conflict with rulings of the Supreme Court.

Another legislation, therefore, needs to be framed, providing forest-dwelling communities the right to share from forest produce

on an ecologically-sustainable basis. In clear support of the environment ministry's position through the entire controversy, it says the environment ministry could be asked to do the needful, after getting state inputs.

The Commission doesn't believe the law should apply to national parks and sanctuaries. There is some particularly strong language here: "The politically motivated and ecologically-suicidal proposal of providing temporary rights in these protected areas for a period of five years" and making these permanent if people aren't resettled by then is "a mere facade". They believe the task can never be achieved, given the past record and political motivations. It says grant of such rights will irrevocably impair the ecological viability of protected areas.

The report bears the clear imprint of officials and conservationists who believe the tribal rights Bill will sound the death knell for forests, 'parcelling' out land. Commission members include the director-general (forests) and additional director-general (forests), J S Singh of Benares Hindu University and conservationist M K Ranjitsinh.

The report points to the ambiguity on how forest-dwelling communities who aren't tribals will be treated and insists forest managers should have a say in sustainable "exploitation" of forests — in consultation with locals.



PM: Facing Flak

Tribal right to vote on offer of relief

# Law to tackle land unrest

JAYANTAROY  
CHOWDHURY

**New Delhi, March 28: The Centre wants to allow tribal villages to hold a vote on rehabilitation packages for vacating land for projects.**

A legislation is being drawn up as part of the government's effort to address tribal unrest, one of the most contentious issues dogging development initiatives in the country. The bill will also shift the focus of relief from giving jobs to allocating farm land to the displaced.

The proposal has been mooted in the wake of recurring bloodshed that follows complaints of inadequate compensation by those uprooted by industrial as well as development projects. The latest such flare-up broke out in Visakhapatnam yesterday following differences over compensation for land for a port.

The new legislation, which has been suggested by the National Advisory Council, will be applicable only to central government utilities and companies. However, since the legislation will be based on items that are on the concurrent list, states can use the bill as a model and bring in a uniform policy.

The central law will also

## PACKAGE PLAN

- Tribal villages to vote on rehab packages
- Land for land, not jobs for land
- More cash compensation
- Family to be redefined
- Unmarried adults to get separate status and a share of the compensation
- Grandparents living in separate huts to be considered a new family

incorporate a national rehabilitation council that will vet the packages offered to the tribals. If states pass similar acts, they can have local rehabilitation councils.

Tribal rehabilitation has acquired a sense of urgency after 13 people were killed during a protest against land acquisition for a steel plant in Orissa's Kalinganagar. The tribals were protesting the low land price and lack of job offers.

With tribal disquiet spreading and getting enmeshed in a rising Maoist movement in the tribal belt, officials feel the Centre cannot afford to remain aloof much longer and must coordinate with states to work out a solution.

According to the referendum plan, the rehabilitation policy will have to be cleared

by at least 50 per cent members of the gram sabha. Dissenters' opinion will have to be recorded and attempts made to turn them around. If the gram sabha does not clear the terms, a new package will have to be formulated.

The new "land for land" policy will also seek to give alternative farming land. The government believes that mere cash compensation does not solve livelihood problems. Besides, with few unskilled jobs in mechanised sectors, the old policy of jobs for land is difficult to implement.

Earlier, steel plants used to negotiate packages which included a job for at least one member of each family displaced, besides cash compensation for land, housing estates and community benefits like healthcare.

"Jobs could then be given because these were huge mills and the industrial process required tens of thousands of unskilled or semi-skilled workers," an official pointed out. But with modernisation, the number of jobs has been reduced to a third or fourth.

If farmland allocation is not possible, alternative livelihood — which could be through common ownership of lakes formed by dams for hydel projects — will be considered.

29 MAR 2006

THE TELEGRAPH

# 12-hour Orissa bandh brings life to a standstill

Nageshwar Patnaik  
BHUBANESWAR 7 JANUARY

THE 12-hour statewide bandh called by Kalinga Nagar Surakshaya Samity and supported by all Opposition parties evoked a near total response, with vehicular and train trafficking coming to a grinding halt in almost all parts of the state. Barring a few stray incidents, the bandh passed off peacefully.

Business establishments downed their shutters while attendance in government establishments, banks, industrial concerns and other organisations was very thin. At least 27 trains were stranded in different stations while many could not take off from their originating places.

Bhubaneswar roads wore a deserted look. Not a single four-wheeler, except police vans and media cars was seen plying on the road. Supporters of the opposition Congress, CPI, CPI (M), CPI (ML), Orissa Gana Parishad, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and Forward Bloc blocked the entry points to Bhubaneswar by burning tyres and putting huge stones on the road.

Early on Saturday morning, opposition leaders gathered at AG Square where they condemned the police action on the tribals at Kalinga Nagar and demanded the resignation of chief minister Naveen Patnaik. The most spectacular scene in the

capital was over 200 tribals armed with traditional weapons such as bows and arrows occupied the strategic AG Square between the chief minister's residence and state secretariat.

Apprehending tribal backlash, the chief minister's security advisors suggested him not to leave his office during the lunch hour. Mr Patnaik refused to speak to the press.

At least 18 platoons of armed police forces were deployed in Bhubaneswar while 10 platoons of police maintained law and order in the adjoining Cuttack city. Around 150 protesters were arrested in the capital for indulging in stone pelting and launching assaults on vehicles.

Opposition leader JB Patnaik, state Congress president Jayadev Jena, OGP president Bijoy Mohapatra, veteran CPI leader Mayadhar Nayak, Samajwadi Party state president Baishnab Parida described the bandh as a total and unprecedented success. They maintained that "spontaneous" support of the people to the bandh call signals the end of the Naveen Raj and the ruling BJD-BJP coalition. Mr Patnaik demanded resignation of the chief minister on 'moral grounds.'

Official records maintained 12 tribals and a policeman were killed in the Kalinga Nagar mayhem. Reports from Balasore, Ganjam, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Berhampur, Bhadrak, Rourkela and other places said normal life was thrown out of gear.

# Missing palms stoke tribal unrest

HIMANSHU S. Sahoo  
Bhubaneswar, January 5

THE MISSING palms from the bodies of six tribals aggravated the ongoing tribal unrest in Kalinga Nagar in Jajpur district. When police handed over the bodies of the six tribals to the villagers, the palms on both the hands of all those dead were missing.

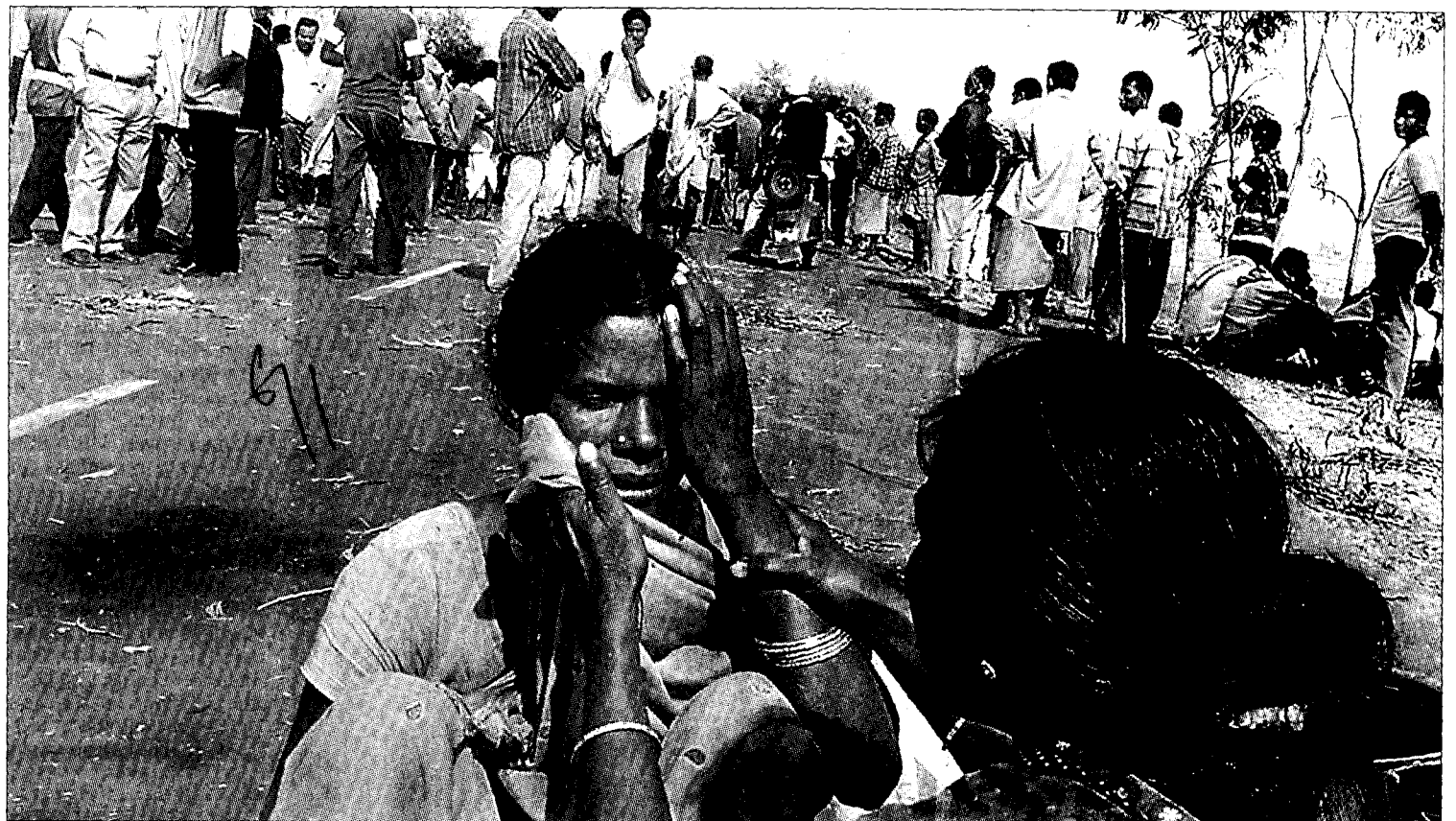
Following Monday's violence in the Kalinga Nagar industrial area, police had recovered six bodies and sent those for a post-mortem examination. After the six bodies were handed over, a mass funeral of all the 12 tribals killed in the police firing was held at Madhuban village on Wednesday. About 10,000 tribals from different villages of Jajpur gathered at the funeral ceremony.

Meanwhile, on Thursday morning, a group of tribals staged a protest in the Duburi area near Kalinganagar, condemning the amputation of palms from the tribals' bodies.

Not willing to accept the authorities' explanation that the palms were amputated from the six bodies for identification, the agitating tribals termed it a "deliberate act of the district administration and police to hurt the tribal sentiments." The tribals, however, called off the protest and stopped demanding the amputated palms after some politicians intervened and explained the facts.

Chief district medical officer (CDMO) of Jajpur Brundaban Biswal told *Hindustan Times* that according to medical guidelines the palms of the six bodies were amputated during post-mortem examination. Since the police could not confirm the identity of the deceased after taking photographs of the dead bodies and their thumb impressions, the palms were amputated.

The 12 amputated palms of the



A tribal woman cries after hearing of her brother's death in Monday's clash at Kalinganagar in Jajpur district.

AP

six bodies are preserved in a chemical solution called "formalin" at the district hospital laboratory for proper identification of the deceased with the help of fingerprints. "Besides, it's a general medical procedure of preserving identity proof of unidentified bodies coming for post-mortem," the CDMO explained.

Ruling out police role in the amputation of palms, Jajpur SP B. Mishra said all the bodies were intact when they were handed over to the medical authorities for post-mortem. Later, the police handed

over the bodies to the tribal villagers in the presence of medical authorities.

Meanwhile, the CPI(M) condemned the the firing calling for a review of the national mineral export policy. "Twelve tribals were killed in state repression. We demand that the export policy of mineral wealth be reviewed by an expert committee to determine as to what extent minerals found in the country can be exported and how much can be utilised within the country," party secretary Prakash Karat said.

## Jajpur collector, SP shifted

THE ORISSA government on Thursday transferred the Jajpur district collector and superintendent of police. The collector, Saswat Mishra, was transferred as joint secretary in the agriculture department. He was replaced by Arabinda Padhee. SP Binaytosh Mishra was shifted as

SP (Crime Branch) and will be replaced by Angul SP Asit Panigrahi.

Both the collector and the SP faced severe criticism with the Opposition as well as the BJP demanding their removal from the district.

Agencies, Bhubaneswar

# Soren warns of tribal stir

*No industrialisation at the expense of poor: JMM*

**HIMANSU S. Sahoo**  
Bhubaneswar, January 4

JMM CHIEF Sibhu Soren on Wednesday warned of a nationwide tribal movement against the killing of 11 tribals in the Kalinga Nagar industrial complex in Orissa.

Speaking to media persons after his arrival at Biju Patnaik airport in Bhubaneswar, Soren condemned the killings and said the JMM would ensure stringent punishment to persons responsible for the massacre. Even though the JMM is not against the process of industrialisation, the bloodshed of tribals for industries could not be tolerated, he said.

On Thursday, Soren plans to visit the tense Kalinga Nagar area, where he will speak to the families of the tribals killed in the police firing. He will also meet several tribal leaders and inquire about the situation.

"I've come here to expose the unholy nexus of the state government with some big companies, for which the lives of innocent tribals were sacrificed.

## UNREST IN STEEL BELT

The police firing at tribals was a conspiracy by the administration to scare away the tribals and suppress the entire tribal community in the state", he alleged.

Before coming to Orissa, the JMM leader met the Union tribal affairs minister and sought a proper inquiry into the matter. After completing his visit, the leader plans to give a report to the Centre, wherein he will demand that persons responsible for the tribal killings be booked under the SC/ST Atrocities Act.

An AICC team — comprising the Jharkhand Leader of the Opposition, Mahendra Kalma, and senior Congress leader Chandan Bagchi — also arrived in Bhubaneswar to inquire into the incident. The team will submit its findings to AICC president Sonia Gandhi.

## Students hit the streets

The students in Orissa on Wednesday took to the streets in support of the families of Kalinga Nagar affected by the incident and warned the state government of a serious student unrest if the demands of tribals were not met soon. Road blockades were staged by college students in different parts of Bhubaneswar and in certain areas of



Tribals in Jharkhand burn effigy of Orissa chief minister Naveen Patnaik in protest against police firing in Kalinga Nagar.

Jajpur, Balasore and Cuttack districts. The agitating students burnt effigies of chief minister Naveen Patnaik and mourned the killing of the tribals.

The students of BJB Autonomous College, Biju Patnaik College, Rajdhani College and Naharkanta College in Bhubaneswar organised separate blockades on all major roads of the city. Vehicular traffic on the Bhubaneswar-Cuttack national highway No. 5 and the Bhubaneswar-Puri national highway was also badly disrupted due to the students' protests. Similarly, in Jajpur, Balasore and Cuttack districts, a large number of college students expressed solidarity with the tribals and threatened the state government with a string of future agitation.

The Orissa State Council of Adivasi Mahasabha on Wednesday has called upon people to wear black badges and hoist black flags in front of their houses for a week. The organisation's state unit secretary Managobinda Besra

said in a statement here that people had been asked to resort to such form of protests to express solidarity with the families of the victims of police firing and support the agitation against the incident.

## Sheer inefficiency: Congress

The Opposition parties in Orissa stepped up anti-Naveen campaign on Wednesday despite the chief minister's appeal not to politicise the Kalinga Nagar incident. The Congress said it was "only speaking up for the oppressed" and alleged that the Jajpur district collector and SP are being made scapegoats to cover-up the intelligence failure and administrative inefficiency of state government. "We are not politicising the incident in which so many persons were killed but it is the CM who is trying to gloss over the tragedy by announcing an ex-gratia of Rs 1 lakh for the families of the victims," J.B. Patnaik said.

## BJP shields ally, blames collector, SP

**HTC and Agencies**  
Bhubaneswar, January 4

THE BJP, the ruling alliance partner, on Wednesday entirely shifted the blame on Jajpur district administration and the police for the firing in Kalinga Nagar.

It even demanded immediate transfer of the district collector and superintendent of police. At a press conference in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday, party vice-president and leader of a fact finding team, Anadi Charan Sahu said lack of proper information from the district administration had led to the incident. According to the BJP, the home department as well as the revenue department were kept in the dark about the growing resentment among the tribals over the acquisition of their lands. "Had the district administration told the state government that there was a serious law and order problem, obtaining permission wouldn't have been so easy." The hasty decision to start constructions stokes suspicion about an unholy nexus between the Jajpur district administration and the private companies," Sahu alleged.

Echoing BJP's stand, three saffron organisations in the state have demanded a CBI inquiry and called for "stringent action" against the Jajpur district collector and SP. The Hindu Jagaran Samukhya, Banabasi Kalyan Ashram and Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, in a statement, squarely blamed the police and administration for the police firing.

**KALINGA NAGAR** ■ Protesters outraged afresh after the return of victims' bodies

# Orissa tribals keep highway vigil as government seeks emissary

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KALINGA NAGAR (JAJPUR)/  
BHUBANESWAR, JANUARY 4

**T**HREE days after the bloody clash with police in Kalinga Nagar, tribals continued to block the Daitari-Paradip Express Highway on Wednesday as 12 of the victims of the police firing were cremated today in an open field near Dholapadar on the highway. On a road damaged at no less than five points, vehicular movement was impossible.

The state government made its first moves today, despatching a team of ministers to Kalinga Nagar. In Bhubaneswar, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik met Governor Rameshwar Thakur and apprised him of the events that had unfolded since the firing.

The tribals have demanded the immediate arrest of the district's collector and SP on murder charges, an increase in the compensation amount for families of the dead to Rs 20 lakh and and the awarding of Rs 10 lakh to the injured.

The state government's high-level official team, meanwhile, trod cautiously today. The team remained closetted at the Kalinga Nagar police station — no member visited the site of the firing or the agitating tribals. Instead, they sought out tribal leader Padmashri Tulasi Munda to relay the government's message for them to the protesters. Assuring



Grieving relatives of tribals who were killed in Monday's police firing at Kalinga Nagar in Jajpur district taking the bodies for post mortem. Express photo by Shamim

them a review of the rehabilitation package, they requested Munda to convince them to send a delegation of representatives to speak to the government.

The team comprised state Agriculture Minister Surendranath Nayak, Women and Child Development Minister Pramila Mallick and Finance Minister and local MLA Prafulla Ghadei. Minister of

State for Tribal Welfare Balabhadra Majhi, Minister of State for Sports and Youth Affairs Debasish Nayak, MP Archana Nayak, MLA Debi Mishra and state Home Secretary Santosh Kumar were also part of the team.

It was thought that the tribals would give up the highway siege yesterday, after they agreed to hand over the bodies of four of their kin. But

anger erupted again at night, when the 12 victims' bodies were returned to their relatives. Some bodies were returned with limbs missing, the tribals allege, saying that this showed that the police had hacked at the injured while taking them to hospital.

Around 2,000 tribals, carrying bows and arrows, stood in mourning as the bodies were cremated by the side of

**We had nothing to do with it: Tata Steel**

► BANGALORE: Tata Steel said on Wednesday that it had "nothing to do" with the Kalinga Nagar violence in which 13 people were killed. The issue was handled by the state government and "we were nowhere in sight", said JI Irani, director of Tata Sons, the Tata group holding company. "We had nothing at all to do with it. None of our officers were present," he said.

Armed tribals, who objected to the construction of a Tata Steel project at Kalinga Nagar in Orissa's Jajpur district, clashed with the state police on Monday, prompting them to open

fire in which 13 people died. Irani said the state had acquired the land for the project and that the Tatas wanted some property for a steel plant. He said since some people were staying on the land, work could not start on the project. Irani said Tata Steel was awaiting the "clearing" of people from the land as well as the firming up of iron ore leases from the government's side to commence work. — PTI

the express highway this evening. Police havildar GP Mohanty, who was hacked to death during the clash, was cremated the same night in his village near here.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Congress has sent its own fact-finding team led by secretary Chandan Bagchi and leader of the Opposition of the Chattisgarh Assembly Mahendra Karma to Kalinga Nagar.

# দেহ আঁকড়ে আদিবাসীরা, এখনও উত্তপ্ত কলিঙ্গনগর

কলিঙ্গনগর (ওড়িশা), ৩ জানুয়ারি: আজ সকালে কয়েকটি এলাকা থেকে কার্ফু তুলে নিলেও এই শিল্পাঞ্চলে আদিবাসী-পুলিশ সংঘর্ষে ১৩ জনের মৃত্যুর ঘটনাকে কেন্দ্র করে উত্তেজনা রয়েছে। একটি বড় শিল্প সংস্থার ইম্পাত প্রকল্পের বিরোধী আদিবাসীরা প্রশাসনের সঙ্গে কোনও আলোচনায় বেতে এখনও নারাজ। তারা দাবি তুলেছেন, মুখ্যমন্ত্রী নবীন পট্টনায়ককেই আলোচনার জন্য এখানে আসতে হবে।

গতকালের ঘটনার জেরে শুরু হয়েছে রাজনীতি। পুলিশের গুলি চালানোর প্রতিবাদে বিরোধী দল

কংগ্রেস নেমে পড়েছে। ভুবনেশ্বর থেকে আসছেন বিরোধী নেতা জনকীবল্লভ পট্টনায়ক। কাল কয়েকশো আদিবাসী চারটি মৃতদেহ নিয়ে দৈতরি-পারাদীপ এল্লগ্রেস হাইওয়ে অবরোধ করেন। আজ তারা ধনায় বসেছেন মধুবন মোড়ে। সব মিলে পরিস্থিতি যথেষ্ট তপ্ত। জেলাশাসক জানান, গতকালের ঘটনায় পুলিশের এক হাবিলদার-সহ ১৩ জন মারা গিয়েছেন। আহত হয়েছেন ১৭ জন। চারটি মৃতদেহ এখনও আদিবাসীরা আটকে রেখেছেন, পুলিশের হাতে তুলে দিতে চাননি।

শিল্পাঞ্চলের কিছু অংশে কার্ফু আজ

সকালে তুলে নেওয়া হয়েছে। কিন্তু উত্তেজনা প্রশমিত হয়নি। উত্তেজিত জনতা গোবরঘাটি গ্রামের কাছে সড়ক অবরোধ করেছে। বিরোধী কংগ্রেস কর্মী-নেতারা জয়পুর রোড, টোমকা, সুকিন্দা, দানাগাড়ি, এই চারটি এলাকায় রাস্তা অবরোধ করেন।

আদিবাসীরা কেউ এলাকার শিল্পোন্নয়নের জন্য কৃষিজমি অথবা বাস্তুজমি ছাড়তে নারাজ। তাদের দাবি, মুখ্যমন্ত্রী নবীন পট্টনায়ককে এলাকায় এসে তাদের সঙ্গে আলোচনায় বসতে হবে। সেই সঙ্গে তাঁদের দাবি, নিহতদের প্রত্যেকের পরিবারকে ১০ লক্ষ টাকা করে ক্ষতিপূরণ দিতে হবে।

গতকালের ঘটনার জন্য দায়ী করে জেলাশাসক ও পুলিশ সুপারের বিরুদ্ধে ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের দাবিও তাঁরা তুলেছেন। গতকালের ঘটনায় গোটা এলাকায় ক্ষোভ এবং আতঙ্ক মিলে একাকার। রাজা সরকার ১২ হাজার একর জমিতে ইম্পাত প্রকল্প গড়ে তোলার অনুমতি দিয়েছে নামী শিল্প সংস্থালিকে। কিন্তু আদিবাসীরা তাঁদের জমি ছাড়তে নারাজ। এই নিয়েই বিরোধ। কাল একটি শিল্প সংস্থা নির্মাণের কাজে নামলে আদিবাসীরা দলে বেঁধে বাধা দেন। যার পরিণতিতে পুলিশ গুলি চালায়। আজও চারিদিকে তাণ্ডবের চিহ্ন রয়ে গিয়েছে। ছড়িয়ে রয়েছে

কাদানে গ্যাসের ঝিলি খোল, ইট-পাথর। বাজার-হাটে লোকজন নেই। এমন এক অস্বাভাবিক পরিবেশে অঝোরে কাঁদছিলেন সানিয়া তিরিয়া। পাশে তাঁর তরুণী স্ত্রী দেওকীর মৃতদেহ, গতকাল পুলিশের গুলিতে যার মৃত্যু হয়েছে। সানিয়া বিলাপের মাঝে একটি কথাই ঘুরেফিরে বলছিলেন, “ও তো চলে গেল, তিনটি বাচ্চাকে বাঁচিয়ে রাখব কী ভাবে?” শিশুরা তাদের ভয়ঙ্কর ভবিষ্যতের ছবি দেখতে শেষেনি। শেষেনি বলেই বাড়ির পিছনে ছটোপাটি করছে। চান্দিয়া গ্রামের ৬৫ বছরের আদিবাসী উপীন জামুদা নিখর হয়ে বসেছিলেন। দু'বছর আগে

দুইটনায় মারা গিয়েছিল তাঁর ছোট ছেলে। কাল পুলিশের গুলিতে লুটিয়ে পড়েছে ৩২ বছরের তরতাজা ছেলে। শ্যাম বারলা ছোট ভাই সুদামের মৃতদেহের উপরে লুটিয়ে পড়ে কাঁদছিলেন। ২৫ বছরের সুদামই ছিল পরিবারের একমাত্র রোজগারো।

কাল প্রবল শীত উপেক্ষা করে মৃতদেহগুলি আঁকড়ে ছিলেন পরিবার-পরিজনরা। আজ তাঁদের মুখ ফুটতে শুরু করেছে। যার সার কথা- “করখানা আমাদের দেবে না কিছুই, কেড়ে নেবে সামান্য জমিটুকুও।” অর্থাৎ, ফিরে এসেছে কৃষিজমিতে শিল্প গড়া নিয়ে সেই বিতর্ক।

# Tribals block key road, want Naveen to step down

Nageshwar Patnaik

BHUBANESHWAR 3 JANUARY

**H**UNDREDS of tribals on Tuesday continued to block the road connecting mineral-rich Daitary and Paradip port. The tribals protested by taking seat on the National Highway with four dead bodies.

They demanded resignation of the Naveen Patnaik government in Orissa and punishment to the district collector and superintendent of police for the killing of local inhabitants. Officials said at least 11 people, including three women and once police constable, were killed on Monday at Champakoila where Tata Steel Ltd was trying to construct a boundary wall.

Unofficial sources have put the toll at 16. Undeterred by the mayhem, the tribals sat down on the road on Monday afternoon and slept there all through the chilly night, bringing traffic to a grinding halt.

"We will not leave this place until the Naveen Patnaik government steps down and guilty

district officials are punished. It was a pre-planned attack on us.

We have been protesting peacefully all along and if the government officials and police become pawns of the industrial houses and ignore our genuine demands, we will not leave our motherland till our death," Natia Angari of Gobarghati village declared amid slogans by the 400-strong tribals gathered there.

Tribals had congregated at Champakoila village on Monday to oppose the construction of a boundary wall by Tata Steel as they were not given due compensation and any opportunity for livelihood.

The construction of the boundary wall began on Monday after the work was stopped for 40 days due to the protests. The district authority appeared determined to go ahead with the construction work and even sought help of a nearby industrial unit to keep the dozers and other machineries, reliable sources said.

"The government has paid us only Rs 37,000 per each acre of

land whereas it has sold the same land to the companies for over Rs 3 lakh per acre. When we tried to stall the operation of the bulldozers, the police immediately fired tear gas shells and then opened fire at us," said Nanika Jamuda, a member of the local Progressive Students' Union. "We retaliated only after the police went on a firing binge", she said.

District collector Swasat Mishra, however, denied that the police opened fire first. "The police was compelled to fire as the mob threw stones and attacks on the security personnel from all directions. When you are surrounded by an angry mob and attacked, there is no other option but to defend yourself," he remarked in defence of the police action.

Till the filing of the report, no police or district official had visited the tribal protesters, who appear to be on a very aggressive mood. Sabita Jamuda of Chandia made it clear that the villagers were not prepared to face the fate of scores of displaced persons.



# 11 killed as tribals attack Tisco plant site

## Police firing claims 10 protesters displaced by project ■ Havildar beaten to death

**SOUMYAJIT Pattnaik**  
Bhubaneswar, January 2

TRIBALS AND policemen clashed over industrialisation in Orissa on Monday, leaving 11 dead. Ten of those killed were tribals, gunned down by the police while opposing the construction of a Tisco project at Kalinga Nagar, Jajpur. The 11th victim was a cop, beaten to death by the mob.

At least 20 others were injured on both sides. Later, the government clamped curfew in the area.

home to a number of industries. Under police protection, Tisco workers had just started erecting the boundary for their Rs 16,000-crore project. At 11 am, 500 armed tribals, armed with bows and arrows, surrounded them and pelted them with stones.

"At first, the police tried to disperse the mob with teargas shells and rubber bullets. The tribals then started to fire arrows, forcing the police to open fire," DGP Suchit Das said.

The 10 tribals who fell to po-

lice bullets included a woman. Incensed, the tribals captured havildar G.P. Mohanty and beat him to death.

The nature of the attack — the tribals had surrounded the site from three directions — suggested meticulous planning. Local MLA Prafulla Ghadei suspects even Maoists may have been involved. Indeed, Maoists have been recruiting people who have been displaced by the projects.

The MLA, who is also the finance minister, said tribals had be-

fortunate incident was waiting to take place," Nayak said.

The government had acquired 12,000 acres of land with large deposits of iron and chrome ore.

Tisco called the incident unfortunate but sought to distance itself from the row over compensation. "The confrontation was between the government and villagers," a spokesman said from Jamshedpur.

As of now, the project will stay on hold. "We have discussed the unfortunate incident with the

government. We will await directions from the government," the spokesman said. The government had given its clearance for construction of the boundary wall. The plant will have a capacity of 6 million tonnes.

The entire steel industry has been rattled by the attack as it happened in Orissa's steel belt, home to over a dozen plants, some already in place and some proposed. Posco's proposed project is not far away and trouble is brewing there, too, with dis-

placed betel farmers staging a demonstration in Bhubaneswar. Other steel units include those of Nilachal Ispat Nigam Ltd and Mideast Integrated Steel Ltd. Coming up are plants of Essar Industries, Visa Industries, the Jindals and Maharashtra Seamless.

Chief minister Naveen Patnaik has announced compensation of Rs 1 lakh to the relatives of the dead at Kalinga Nagar. Those injured will be treated at the government's expense.

See also Page 3

### UNREST IN STEEL BELT

on compensated for the land, acquired by the state in 1994. But CPI leader Mayadhar Nayak said the compensation was inadequate.

"Tisco had paid Rs 3.75 lakh for each acre it acquired, but the displaced tribals got only Rs 62,000 per acre. Even this money has not reached all. Such an un-

# 5 tribals die in police firing in Orissa

## Protest Against Steel Plant Turns Violent

**Kalinga Nagar (Orissa):** Six persons, including a policeman, were killed and several injured when tribals, protesting the proposed setting up of a steel plant, clashed with the police here on Monday. About a thousand people, mostly tribals, allegedly attacked the police and company workers as earth work was being taken up for the Rs 15,400 crore Tata Steel project, leading to the death of a police havildar.

Armed police, stationed at the site, first resorted to a lathicharge and burst tear-gas shells to control the situation but failed, director general of Police Suchit Das said. The crowd was armed with bows and arrows and resorted to heavy brickbatting, he said.

Police then opened fire in which five persons, including a woman, were killed and several others injured. "The crowd dispersed after the firing but tension continues in the area," the DGP said. The local people had opposed earlier too when the company had started earth work for its project, to be set up in two modules of three million tonnes each, in November.

Opposition leader J B Patnaik on Monday described the police firing as "very unfortunate and shocking" and demand-

ed the resignation of chief minister Naveen Patnaik for his "failure" to maintain law and order in the state. "Such incidents are happening repeatedly and the chief minister has not been able to control it. He should own responsibility and resign," the veteran Congress leader said.

Patnaik, who would be visiting the site of the incident, said if there had been disputes over the location of the industrial project or payment of compensation or any other matter it should have been settled through negotiation. Companies willing to spend thousands of crores of rupees on their projects should pay the

people facing displacement adequately. "But the government appeared to ride rough shod over the opposition by the tribals ... It does not appear to be a good omen for the state's industrialisation," he said.

Orissa Gana Parishad (OGP) chief Bijay Mohapatra also condemned the incident alleging it happened after the government wanted to start work at the project site forcibly. Mohapatra said a delegation of six opposition parties comprising representatives from Congress, CPI, CPM, JMM, OGP and Janata Dal(S) would visit Kalinga Nagar to take stock of the situation. Agencies

The local people had opposed earlier too when the company had started earth work for its project, to be set up in two modules of three million tonnes each, in November