

# URGENT ACTION

## PROTEST LEADER RELEASED ON BAIL

**Abhay Sahoo has been released on bail after spending more than three months in prison. He has led a seven-year campaign against the seizure of common lands used by local farmers, for a \$12 billion plant of South Korean multinational steel company POSCO. He is still facing false charges.**

**Abhay Sahoo**, a leader of the Communist Party of India in the eastern state of Orissa, was arrested on 25 November 2011 on several charges which appear to have been fabricated in order to halt his campaigning. In 2008–2009, Abhay Sahoo spent 10 months in prison after he was detained and similar false charges were levelled against him.

On 30 March 2012, the National Green Tribunal, a specialized body set up to settle environmental disputes, suspended the environmental clearance which had been granted to the POSCO project in January 2011, after hearing a petition filed by environmental activists in Orissa. Reacting to the suspension, Abhay Sahoo told Amnesty International that the villagers who opposed the forcible acquisition of their common lands felt vindicated. Abhay Sahoo is still facing false charges: Amnesty International will continue to monitor his case closely, and take further campaigning action if necessary.

**No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.**

Name: Abhay Sahoo

Gender m/f: m

This is the first update of UA 364/11. Further information: [www.amnesty.org/ASA20/050/2011/en](http://www.amnesty.org/ASA20/050/2011/en)

Further information on UA: 364/11 Index: ASA 20/013/2012 Issue Date: 5 April 2012

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