

# URGENT ACTION

## ANTI-STEEL PLANT LEADER FACES FALSE CHARGES

**On 23 December, Narayan Reddy, a leader of the Communist Party of India in the eastern state of Orissa, was detained after being falsely charged with murder. He has been part of a seven-year campaign against forcible acquisition of common lands for a US\$12 billion plant for South Korean steel giant POSCO. The previous leader of the campaign, Abhay Sahoo, is among 11 others involved with the campaign also facing false charges.**

Orissa state police detained **Narayan Reddy** on 23 December 2011, and charged him with murder. This relates to a clash, on 15 December, between workers building an access road for the steel plant and local protestors opposed to the construction of the steel plant. One person died and 25 were injured in the violence. However, Amnesty International understands that Narayan Reddy was not directly involved in this clash.

Narayan Reddy is currently in Samagol prison in Orissa state. His petition for release on bail has just been refused by local courts, but he is likely to make further applications for bail. Amnesty International believes that the charges levelled against him are intended to silence his ongoing campaign against the state authorities' plans to forcibly acquire 1,600 hectares of land in five villages, the majority of which are common lands farmed by villagers, and facilitate their forcible acquisition to make way for the proposed steel plant set up by POSCO. However, for the last seven years, campaigners have blockaded the area, preventing the authorities and representatives of POSCO from gaining access to the area. The planned steel plant constitutes the biggest foreign direct investment project in India.

Narayan Reddy has been leading the campaign against the acquisition of the lands after Abhay Sahoo's detention on 25 November 2011 (see UA 364/11, ASA 20/050/2011). Abhay Sahoo is also a leading member of the Communist Party of India in Orissa. The state has filed false charges against him and 10 other activists.

### **Please write immediately in English or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to immediately release Narayan Reddy if he is held solely on the basis of charges that Amnesty International believes to be false;
- Calling on them to take all necessary measures to guarantee that those campaigning for marginalized communities' land rights in Orissa and elsewhere are able to carry out their legitimate and peaceful human rights activities without fear of arrest, harassment and intimidation.
- Calling on them to ensure that, while law and order should be maintained, those who are engaged in peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of assembly and speech are able to do so without fear of violence or harassment.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 23 FEBRUARY 2012 TO:**

Prime Minister of India  
 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh  
 South Block, Raisina Hill  
 New Delhi 110 00, India  
 Fax : +91 11 2301 7931  
 +91 11 2301 9545  
 Email: Through the site:  
<http://pmindia.nic.in/feedback.htm>  
**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Orissa Chief Minister  
 Chief Minister of Orissa  
 Naveen Patnaik  
 Naveen Nivas  
 Aerodrome Road  
 Bhubaneswar 751001, India  
 Email: [cmo@ori.nic.in](mailto:cmo@ori.nic.in)  
**Salutation: Dear Chief Minister**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation  
 Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
 INTERNATIONAL**



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Name: Narayan Reddy  
Gender m/f: male

UA: 8/12 Index: ASA 20/002/2012 Issue Date: 12 January 2012