

## **Know Our Delegation**

## **Kandhamahals Orissa**

Delhi March 23-25, 2009

**Delegation met the Election Commission of India National Minorities Commission, National Human Rights Commission, and the office of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights (UNCHR) during their three-day visit.**

**The delegation also had meetings with major national political parties.**

Organised by:  
Kuidina Forum for Peace and Justice, Kandhamahals  
Citizens for Justice and Peace, Mumbai

### **PRIYATAMA NAIK**

### **victim survivor**

I Smt. Priyatama Naik aged about 35 years wife of late Abhimanyu Naik of village – Barapali, Chakapad Block, Panchayat – Pasara, Ps – Tikabali, Dist – Kandhamal was severely affected in the last Kandhamal violence. My husband was burnt alive while I was sleeping in my house on Thursday at about 11pm by the Hindu Fundamentalists under the leadership of Jaya Gauda, Prakash Gauda, Prafulla, Rama and many others. I am a housewife and dependant on daily labour and also my husband and we have 4 children. It was an organised crime after the killing of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati. Before the death of my husband he told me the names of the criminals and I formally filed an FIR in Tikabali Police Station in the name of my son. Immediately after the death of my husband I physically watched the dead body of my husband in a helpless and miserable condition alone for 4 days. Half of the dead body was eaten up by the dogs in my presence. The dead body was put into grave with the help of some villagers. On 9<sup>th</sup> day Police came and the grave was dugged up once again and the post mortem was made. Even after the delayed Police action till today, no real culprit has been arrested. I have lost everything including my land records and my land records and BPL Ration card and household materials if I don't withdraw the case and convert into Hinduism. I am not allowed to use my ancestral land, use forest resources like firewood, house construction materials including water, fire and materials for the local shop including the green stick for toothbrush. I am leading inhuman life bring traumatised, half dead and the future is totally for me. I don't say any hope of survival in future. I am also being threatened not to cast vote in the coming election. I appeal Govt. and the civil society for my survival and livelihood.

**BASANTI DIGAL****Local Leader and Victim**

I Smt. Basanti Digal wife of Ajit Digal aged about 28 years of village - Tulasisahi, Shankarakhole, Panchayat – Shankarakhole, Ps- Tikabali, Block – Chakapad, Dist – Kandhamal. I was affected in the last Kandhamal violence as I supported the cause of the affected victims though I belonged to a Hindu family. I am the leader of the local women federation and known to the Govt. Administration and Police for my activities relating to women socio – economic development. I am also an indigenous women from the marginalised society and dependant on agriculture and forest resources. While I was away from my house my house was burnt, property looted and destroyed, my recorded land with foundation is being forcefully occupied by a higher caste gold businessman Kailash Sahoo. My community shop managed by SHG group has been locked up, illegally in my absence Rs. 30,000/- has been withdrawn, all the higher caste business class people have been determined not to allow me to come back to my native place and use my ancestral land. All the indigenous communities were working together with me now the business class people having political and economic motif playing all these divisive tricks and taking lead role in all the violence. My mother has given in writing to the Tikabali Police Station but nothing has happened. Since the situation is very critical even today people are being attacked, and innocent women are being gang raped, it's not possible to come out and take part in elections. I appeal everybody concern for Human Life to intervene in the matter to restore peace and normal life.

**NURNA DIGAL****Victim and Womens Leader**

I Smt. Nurna Digal wife of Tupa Digal aged about 45 years, village – Terabadi, Panchayat – Sraniketa, Ps – Daringbadi, Dist – Kandhamal say that we all the indigenous communities of Kandhamal were leading a peaceful co-existence, the trouble in the name of religion and caste divisions only after 1970 onwards. I myself and the family members since Christian way of life and I belong to the marginal of the section of the society, my family were attacked time and again, physically assaulted the Hindu fundamentalists by 2006 during the year where there were also firing in Kalinga Nagar. I am a social women rights activists and also worked for the restoration of peace in the area. After the assassination of Swami Laxmananda Saraswati on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008 a group of Kirkuti Gandas and Patras came to our village and forced to the villagers to fix saffron flag as a symbol of Hinduisation and also sindur and follow Hindu rituals. The mad several attempts to set fire and destroy the Church but our villagers guarded it.

We are now under terrible pressure. Our land property has been also forcefully taken away by the miscreants. One handicap lady named Prabhati was gang raped. As she could not ran away after the killing of Laxmanananda Saraswati. We all will be gang raped to be threatened and also killed if you don't follow our words. We are under terrible pressure as the local police do not respond to our request and give us protection. We need appropriate intervention to setrite the chaotic situation in Kandhamal.

**RUNIMA DIGAL****Victim Survivor**

I Smt. Runima Digal wife of Late Iswar Digal aged about 30 years, village – Mallikapoda, Ps – Gutingia, Dist – Kandhamal was staying in G.Udayagiri Relief Camp. I was victimised in the last violence took place after the killing of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati. I was a housewife and my husband was working agriculture labourer and also driver of a tractor.

I have been to my father in laws house along with my husband from the camp to see my aslling father in law on 19<sup>th</sup> Sept'2008 evening but the Hindu fundamentalists of our adjacent villagers called us in a meeting and threatened us to kill if don't accept the Hinduism. Out of fear we escaped from my house in the night through the jungle. While we were coming by a bicycle, my husband was killed by the said miscreants on 20<sup>th</sup> morning at about 8am. I manage to go to nearby police camp reported the matter and also inform the wringing to the District administration. Unfortunately till today the enquiry is going on to find out the dead body of my husband who was killed in front of me. I am deprived of my ultimate compensation for last seven months though I am running regularly to the police and district administration. Now I am staying in Tikabali Relief Camp and being pressurised to go back from without any life security as situation is still tense and the killers are moving without arrest. I have also not received any compensation for my damaged house. I have filed in FIR in Paburia Police Station vide No. 48/2008 but no culprit has been arrested.

**BHABANTI NAYAK****Womens Leader and Peace Activity**

I Smt. Bhabanti Nayak aged about 55 years wife of Paradesi Nayak of village Gadabisa, Po – Gressingia, Ps -G.Udayagiri, Dist – Kandhamal was a victim of last violence which took place after killing of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008. I am a social activist and development activist and involved in different issue based action and development programme for last two decades. I am also involved in peace building processes in collaboration with the Govt. In every communal violence in the district. I am also active volunteer of “Kuidina Forum for Peace and Justice” and involved in the ongoing peace process. Since I am Christian, my family was also attacked by the Hindu fundamentalists and all my properties and the house on 27.08.2008, my property also was looted. I have given on FIR in the local Police Station, G.Udayagiri vide No. 92/2008 but no real culprit was arrested. We are prescribed to go back home without any security. In the meanwhile G.Udayagiri Relief Camp was closed and we are completed to stay back outside without any adequate source of income, health care as we are being threatened by the miscreants of dire consequences if we go back home. We are denied of land, construction materials, firewood and even other livelihood activities if we don't accept Hinduism. It is very difficult to take part in coming elections as situation is very tense and there is apprehension of all kind of danger. I wish Right kind of intervention restore normalcy in the region.

**KARPURA DIGAL****Victim Survivor**

I Smt. Karpura Digal aged about 50 years wife of late Kantheswar Digal of Village – Hatapada, Shankarokhole under Chakapad Block, Ps – Tikabali, Dist – Kandhamal was a serious victim of last Kandhamal violence after the killing of swami Laxmanananda Saraswati on 23<sup>rd</sup> August'2008. I am a housewife and daily labourer and my husband was an agriculture labourer just for last 2 years. He has started a small business shop for his economic betterment for which the General caste people were envious for him. That on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept'2008 while the violence was continuing on that area on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2008 while my husband were traveling from Shankarakhole to Phulbani by Samrat bus with a cash of Rs.30,000/-. He was obstructed by a group of Hindu Fundamentalists near Adabadi village and driven out from the bus by Mantu Nayak, Kabiraj Pradhan, Raj Konhar and Biswa Konhar and took him to the near by jungle. Later also he was also bitten by Paramananda Behera, Biranchi Behera, Govinda Amatiya and others. The dead body was detected after about a few days by the Police. A formal FIR was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> Sept' 2008 which was registered by 156/29.09.2008 without the section of murder. That my property has been looted, house and the materials have been destroyed completely. My paddy field has been also looted just to save our lives we stayed at Bhubaneswar. We are repeatedly threatened by the criminals if we returned back home. We are also denied of land, construction materials and use of forest resources. We are also put condition we would be allowed to stay back home if we are converted into Hinduism. We apprehend we would be killed if we go back to cast our vote in the coming election. I pray for the necessary protection and life security. Till now no real criminals have been arrested.

**INDRANATH NAYAK****Victim Survivor**

I Shri Indranath Nayak aged 48 years son of Pakenga Nayak, village – Sujeli, Panchayat – Kalinga, Ps - G.Udayagiri, Dist – Kandhamal. Our forefathers were since last 30 years I have been converted to Christianity. I was attacked on 25.08.2008 at 11am. My house was attacked and set fire and all my household materials were destroyed after the killing of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati on 23<sup>rd</sup> august 2008. On the day of attacked, the rioters changed me to kill me and my family members. Out of fear I went to the forest, after remaining there for 7 days, I went to G.Udayagiri Relief Camp because of inhospitable condition and insecurity, went to Bhubaneswar to stay there. I was also repeatedly threatened there. Out of fear, I have not lodged FIR. Till today I have not received any compensation as my damage has not been assessed. The rioters are putting condition on me if I become Hindu, then only I can return back to my village. It is not possible on my part to return to the village and participating in the voting and I pray for protection and adequate compensation from the Govt.

**KALPANA NAYAK****Victim Survivor (Hindu)**

I Smt. Kalpana Nayak wife of Debendra Nayak aged about 37 years, village – Lingagada, Ps – G.Udayagiri, Dist – Kandhamal was a victim of last violence organised during the month of August after the death of Laxmanananda Saraswati. That the Hindu

fundamentalists created havoc in that area on 26<sup>th</sup> August'2008. Some of the miscreants snatched on my mobile and threatened to my family. On 27<sup>th</sup> Aug'2008 they came to my house and forced me to accompany the move for destruction of others houses to proof my loyalty to the Hindu religion. My house was attacked and property was destroyed in my absence. We escaped and went to the G.Udayagiri Relief Camp. Out of fear we are not able to return back to our village as we are not allowed to use ancestral landed property also construction material like water and firewood. We are moving here and there and yet to get any compensation as our damaged has not been properly assessed. I draw the attention of concerned authority for necessary action.

**JUBATI PRADHAN**

**Victim Survivor**

I Smt. Jubati Pradhan aged about 51 years wife of late Pedra Pradhan, Village – Belkati, Ps – G.Udayagiri, Dist – Kandhamal. That on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2008 my house was attacked by the Hindu Fundamentalists and all my property was looted and destroyed and two of my houses were completely damaged. The miscreants are compelling me to get converted into Hinduism or they will not allow me to stay at village. Out of fear we came and took shelter at G.Udayagiri Relief Camp. Due to lack of security we left the Relief Camp and try to get shelter in other place. At present remaining at Raikia Relief Camp. The rioters are threatened me to deprived me of water and wood and also warned me to vote in the coming election as per their direction. I need life protection and compensation after assessment of destruction of my house.

**NAHA DIGAL**

**Victim Survivor**

I Sri Naha Digal aged 45 years son of Sukara Digal, village- Lujurumunda, Po – Katimaha, Dist – Kandhamal. I live on agriculture and depend on the forest for my livelihood. In the 1994 riot, we have left the village and again on 23.08.2008 after the killing of Swami Laxmanananda, the Hindu fundamentalists attacked my house and destroyed them by setting fire. Along with my house 15 other houses of the village were destroyed and turned to ashes. This incident had been reported to the Police by filing FIR vide Tikabali Ps. Case No. 108/2008 but no step has been taken to arrest the culprits. No compensation has been assessed or given to me for destruction of my house. At present the rioters are threatening us to kill, if we dare to come to our village. I pray for protection and compensation from the Grotto return back to my village.

**KADAMFULA NAYAK**

**VICTIM SURVIVOR**

I Smt Kadambafula Nayak aged about 45 years, wife of late Samual Nayak religion- Christianity of village Ketangananju of Bakingia, P.s-Raikia, Dist- Kandhamal. In the last riot, my husband was killed on 26.08.08 by some Hindu fundamentalist at 10 A.M. by chasing him and butchered him with sword. And there after they burnt my mother-in-law in front of me and they also tried to burn me alive by pouring kerosene over me but I narrowly escaped from their claws. Since then I was staying at Raikia relief camp and at present shifted to Mandakia relief camp. I have been threatened to be killed if I dare to

come back to the village. I have also been warned that if I return back to the village, I will be forced to reconvert to Hinduism by the fundamentalist.

On the other hand, I am living in this relief camp without any security and the Govt. officials are forcing us to leave the relief camp by taking Rs.10, 000/- for construction of the house destroyed by the rioters. But the rioters are not allowing us to go back to the village or arranging construction materials to construct our house.

Our lands also are being forcefully taken away by the fundamentalist on the plea that the land does not belong to us as we have been converted to Christianity. At this critical juncture, the State is not giving any protection to return to our village and forcing us to evacuate the relief camps.

Under the circumstances, unless and until I am protected from the attack of the fundamentalist, I will lose my source of livelihood i.e. land as I am a widow and I have no body to depend for my survival. Hence, I pray for life protection before living the relief camps to rehabilitate in my village by construction of my burnt house.

#### **USTAKIA PRADHAN**

I Smt Ustakia Pradhan, aged about 50 years, wife of late Prahallad Pradhan of village Sirapadati (Tukumaha), P.s- G.Udayagiri, Dist-Kandhamal. I am a victim of the last riot of 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2008. I am tribal women of religious Christianity minority community. As I am a Govt. servant and residing out side my village, my house was attacked on 28/08/08 by the Hindu fundamentalist. The rioters evacuated my family members out side the house, and burnt the house and threatened me of dire consequence if I dare to file F.I.R against them. They had also threatened to take away my service, for which I intimated district Collector over telephone, but no steps has been taken to file F.I.R against the rioters, who have burnt my house. At present, we are being threatened by the Hindu fundamentalist that if we dare to come back to the village, we will be forced to reconvert to Hinduism. On the other hand, the Govt. is providing no protection for my family member to return to our village. Further more the Hindu fundamentalist have forcefully reaped our crops from our land and have threatened us to disposes us from our land. Hence, unless and until life protections are given by the Govt., we are unable to return to our village and cultivate our land for our survival.

#### **ALIYATA PRADHAN**

#### **Victim Survivor**

I Sri Galiyata Pradhan aged about 46 years son of Ludu Pradhan, village Bakingia, P.s- Raikia, and Dist- Kandhamal. As I am a Christian, on 26.08.08 at about 10 A.M., the Hindu fundamentalist came with slogan of “Jay Bajaranga Bali” and ransacked and looted my house in broad daylight. Being afraid of them, myself and my family members went to the near by forest and after straying there for some nights, we came to Raikia

relief camp on 5.9.2008 and since then we are residing in the relief camp. I have informed to the police on 12.09.08 by written complain, but my F.I.R was not accepted by the police and I was man handled by them. Further the Hindu fundamentalist are threatening us to take our life and even though the Govt. has given us Rs.10,000/- for the construction of our destroyed house, we are unable to go back to the village because of threat to our life from the side of Hindu fundamentalist and the forceful conversion to Hinduism is hovering our head and the State Govt. is not giving any protection to rehabilitate us in the village or against forceful conversion. As a result we are unable to go back to our house with our family members. I am praying for life protection and protection against the forceful conversion by the Hindu fundamentalist.

**ISSAC DIGAL**

**VICTIM SURVIVOR**

I Shri Issac Digal, aged about 47 years, son of Nandia Digal, vill/P.o/P.s- G.Udayagiri Bank colony Sahi, Dist- Kandhamal. I belong to Christian religion and I am a pasture, that my house at Gadapadara was destroyed in 1994 riot. Since then I have been staying at G.Udayagiri. While I was away from my house for security reasons at Bhubaneswar my household property was looted by miscreants after the death of Swami Laxamananda Saraswati. Since I was so much threatened by the Hindu fundamentalist and I did not get adequate protection against any miscreants and I did not dare to file F.I.R in the police Station till now I have not received any compensation. I am not able to return back to my village as I am being threaten time to again. I am presently engaged in build peace process and normalcy in Kandhamal by organizing joint community meetings dialogs and for restoration of normalcy at Kandhamal.

**DEBENDRA NAYAK**

**Victim Survivor & Activist**

I Shri Debendra Nayak, aged about 47 years son of late Digambar Nayak, of village Lingargarh, P.s-G.Udayagiri, Dist- Kandhamal. That on 30.03.08 my brother's land was attacked by the activist of the Sangh Parivar and my house was set fire by the rioters that this incident had been reported in the police as well as Human Right Commission, but no action was taken against the culprits. On 27.08.08 several Hindu fundamentalist came arm with weapons and attacked my houses and chased me into the jungle. After remaining at the forest for some days I came to relief camp G.Udayagiri and staying there since then. Even though F.I.R. was lodged on 2.09.08 at G.Udayagiri police station and no action has been taken. More over no compensation has been given for construction of my house and for rehabilitation.

That I am a social right activist, as I am working for the amity of the both the communities, I have been prevented by the Hindu fundamentalist to work for that cause.

**JOHN DIGAL****VICTIM SURVIVOR**

I Shri Johan Digal, aged about 48 years, son of Hari Digal of village Barikia, P.s- Baliguda, Dist- Kandhamal. That I was attacked by a group of Hindu fundamentalist on 27.08.08, while I was in my village the rioters destroyed in my property in my house. After taking shelter in the near by jungle for three days I came to the Baliguda relief camp. As we did not get proper food and shelter in the camp we had to move here and there. On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008 we were forced to vacate the camp with a cheque of Rs.10,000/- When we returned back with the help of police and administration we were forced to be converted into Hinduism. We were once again attacked by the Hindu fundamentalist and all our property was destroyed. We have given F.I.R in the Baliguda police station and took the matter to the notice of Sub-collector, Baliguda Tahasildar, B.D.O and Collector Kandhamal, but no action was taken to give us physical protection. On the other hand a false case instituted against my brother on 29.12.08 by the fundamentalist and a few other members of our village and put to jail. We are leading a very measurable life without proper food, compensation and security of our life we are denied of land, construction materials and forest resources. We are also deprived of daily labour, we are being threatened to be killed if we exercise our vote in the coming election. In this situation we draw the attention of the authority to take necessary action for a permanent peace and justice in the area by taking strong action against the culprits.

**KESHAMATI PRADHAN****WOMAN S LEADER, PETITIONER IN SC****AWARDED BY GOVERNOR OF ORISSA, FOR WORK ON PEACE AND JUSTICE**

I Smt Keshamati Pradhan aged about 45 years, wife of Baleswar Pradhan of co-convenor of “kui Dina forum for peace and justice” of village Nuasahi, G.Udayagiri, Dist- Kandhamal. That I am a social activist working for the peace process in the after math of communal riots in Kandhamal. I have filed a writ petition before the Hon’ble High Court of Orissa vide W.P.(C) No. 428/2009 for protection of the riot victims remaining in the relief camps and pray for compensation to the victims and for a scheme for their rehabilitation by the Govt. But no step yet has been taken by the Govt. even though relief camps are being closed without any proper protection for the life of the victim and against the forceful conversion by the Hindu fundamentalist. That I have been award by His Excellency Governor of Orissa and Chief Minister of Orissa for my work in the field of human rights and for peace and justices.



**SUSANTA KUMAR MISHRA****ADVOCATE ORISSA HC**

I Shri Susanta Kumar Mishra (Advocate) Orissa High Court, Cuttack, aged about 45, son of Krushna Chandra Mishra, Kapila Prasad Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khurda, Orissa. Espousing the cause of the victims of the recent riots of 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2007 and August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 through filing writs before the Hon'ble High Court for their protection and for compensation. From the very beginning, I am observer of the communal tension in the Kandhamal area and is working for peace and justices for the riot victims.

**URMILA KUMARI****Social Activist**

I Ms. Urmila Kumari aged about 30 years based at G.Udayagiri, Kandhamal as a social activist associated with the Women's Welfare Activities and the issues relating to women's empowerment for last one and half decades. Presently I have been co-ordinating the women groups and the women's initiatives for restoration of peace and normalcy in the disturbed areas of Kandhamal.

**HEMENTA NAIK****ACTIVIST**

I Shri Hemanta Naik, aged about 54 years, son of Sukru Naik, of village Nuasahi, G.Udayagiri, Dist-Kandhamal is a human rights and development activist of Kandhamal and working for the right of indigenous people particularly women and children of Kandhamal for more than last three decades. I have been involved in restoration of peace process during the communal disturbance which was created by vested interests for more than last three decades in Kandhamal and contributed a lot in bringing normalcy in co-operation with the district administration. I have been also involved in organizing peace meetings and collective interaction programs even after last two major violence took place in Kandhamal district during December 2007 and August 2008 after the killing of Swami Laxmananda Saraswati along with other groups and activist of the area.

**TEESTA SETALVAD****HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND JOURNALIST**

Teesta Setalvad has visited Orissa several times after the Kandhmahals violence and the magazine that she co-edits *Communalism Combat* has been tracking the growth of the Hindu right in Orissa since 2003.

Ends