

Laxmidhar Panigrahi (1964-2007)

(An Extract from the Obituary-cum-Appeal by Mr. Sankarshan Hota, Mr. Manoj Pradhan, Mr. Pramod Pattnaik, Mr. Sukanta Mohanty, Mr. Mahendra Parida, Mr. Bibhu Prasad Tripathy, Mr. Santosh Pattnaik Mr. Dharendra Panda mailed on 28th July 2007)



We are very shocked to inform you that a well-known and senior social activist Mr. Laxmidhar Panigrahi has passed away on 22nd July 2007 early morning. In an unexpected condition he breathed his last resulted by his continuous suffering from cerebral malaria and under an extreme psychological disorder-like condition. He left behind his wife Ms. Gitanjali – a housewife and a 5-years' daughter Bidyasha under unexpected and unimaginable sorrow and suffering.

Mr. Laxmidhar Panigrahi was born on 1st October 1964 in a remote village called Karamul, Ambapada near Joranda in Dhenkanal district. During 1985 – 1992, he was involved in organizing land labourers, kath (khaira) workers in Rairakhol area in association with Jana Sanghati Kendra, Young India Project and others. He was one of the leading campaigners of the movement on right to work in Orissa during 1988-1991. In 1992 to 1994, he campaigned against child labour in Rairakhol block in association with CACL. He was also involved in Life and Forest Movement and Jana Jungle Chetana Yatra during 1994 – 1996. As a

leading member of Swachha Sebi Samanwaya Samity (SSSS) he participated in various activities and campaigns.

Particularly, his leadership helped Katha (khaira) Workers to be organized into a Union and to take up a long fight for their rights. He led a 15-dayss' Dharana of Katha workers in front of Orissa Legislative Assembly, on which the honorable MLAs expressed their concerns inside the Assembly.

His contributions, in numerous ways, to the victims of super cyclone and subsequent floods in different areas of Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts are noteworthy.

He participated in various campaigns against the issues such as communalism, globalization, water privatization, industrialization and mining during 1999 – 2004 in association with INSAF and Orissa Khadya Adhikar Abhijan. He also worked as the State Convener, INSAF – Orissa during 2000 to 2003. Just after Gujarat riot he had organized a photo exhibition in April 2002 in association with SAHMAT, INSAF and AISF at Soochana Bhawan, Bhubaneswar.

He participated in preparatory process of a mammoth adivasi rally organized by ODAF and OAAA. He was associated with various campaigns, organizations such as CPSW, ODAF, ODMM, Orissa Social Forum etcetera. He was also actively involved in creating awareness among people about the employment guarantee scheme in Koraput and Kondhamal districts and could able to highlight the corruptive attitude of the officials in the implementation of the programmes at different forums.

His long involvement in different social movements and actions made him a popular both among friends and foes. Like many social activists, he also could not do well as per the expectations of his family. He left his wife and kid with unimaginable losses, which can never be made up. Under acute poverty at the face of an uncertain future; now his widow, kid have to shoulder his debts more than fifty thousand rupees.

Although we can not meet the entire crisis caused to them due to the sad demise; but we can raise a little fund to repay the debt of Laxmidhar and contribute an amount about two lakh rupees for the education of his child.

With this backdrop, we appeal everybody to, kindly, contribute whatever you can through cheque or DD in favour of his daughter in the following address.

**Ms. Bidyasha Jnanadeepa,
C/o – Mr.Sankarshan Hota,
Plot No – 966 - A,
Prakruti Vihar,
Baramunda,
Bhubaneswar – 3
Contact Numbers - 9437014450 (S.Hota) , 9338232536 (Dhirendra)**

The collected amount will be deposited in a bank in the name of his daughter after paying their debt.

Once again we are appealing you to be sympathetic to the cause and contribute.