



Thompson Rivers University Students' Union
Local 15 Canadian Federation of Students

900 McGill Road
Kamloops BC
V2C 0C8

t: 250.828.5289
f: 250.852.6350

Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik
Odisha Secretariat, 3rd Floor
Bhubaneshwar-751001, Odisha, India

January 19, 2018

Release *Adivasi* Activists Judhishtira Jena and Babula Samal

Dear Chief Minister,

On behalf of the Thompson Rivers University Students' Union we are writing to urge you to release **Judhishtira Jena** and **Babula Samal**, to drop all politically motivated charges against them and other activists organizing in Jagatsinghpur district, and to process individual and community forest rights claims before putting the acquired land to any other use.

We are deeply troubled by reports from Amnesty International of an organized campaign to use the legal system to harass and intimidate anti-steel plant activists and *Adivasi* residents to prevent them from exercising their rights.

We strongly believe that you and the government of Odisha have a responsibility under domestic and international law to investigate these reports, including the *2006 Forest Rights Act*, which recognize local and community rights over common lands. If your investigation finds these reports to be true, then we would urge you to take action to release **Judhishtira Jena** and **Babula Samal**, halt the harassment of these activists, and hold any responsible person or official accountable for their illegal and immoral actions.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Tatiana Gilbert
President
TRU Students' Union

Caitlin Orteza
Vice-President Equity
TRU Students' Union

cc: Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh, High Commissioner Vikas Swarup, District Superintendent of Police Jai Narayan Pankaj



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