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# *Political Career*

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# A FORERUNNER IN MANY FIELDS

**Sivaji Patnaik**

The gravely shocking news of Com. Surendra Mudali's demise came as a bolt from the blue. In the twilight of the third of the month, Com. Lambodar Naik passed on to me over phone such pitiable news which was almost unbelievable. A few days before, I had met him on the occasion of the inaugural ceremony of my autobiographical book, "Sangharsha O Sankalpar pathore" ("On the Road of Struggle and Achievement"). He was looking quite hale and hearty then. He was younger to me by five years in age, but heart-stroke is something which is beyond anybody's control. In this context, a few lines of the poet Radhanath Ray echo in my mind:

"Ruthless is the nature of Time  
Least trust it makes with any  
Disbelief is its primary core  
Its abrupt encounter with many."

After I conveyed my love and regards unto his memory in the day-to-day meeting of C.I.T.U. at 'Shramik Bhawan', I was waiting for the arrival of a vehicle which would take the corpse to the Institute at Pahala which had been established by him. At this pensive mood, in the deep corner of my mind flashed the memories of Comrade Mudali's in a trajectory of pictures. After the second general election of 1957, while we were taking tea and chit-chatting with a few friends in a refreshment shop of repute, at Choudhury bazaar of Cuttack, he came there alone and gave his self-introduction. He was carrying in his hand a file with my signature which I was using during Students' Federation. Pointing at the card-board file with him, he told: "We have been continuing the work left half way." By then, I was the whole timer of the party. After giving us a brief idea of the work schedule within a few minutes of discussion, he informed us about their efforts to re-publish a discontinued journal of "Agamee". That was the occasion of our debut meeting with him. I was happy to see his inner enthusiasm.

A few years elapsed when I heard that he was carrying his legal practice at Rourkela, but I had neither contact nor communication with him. Comrade Sadananda Mishra, the Communist M.P. Uday Shankar Mishra's cousin was engaged with some mini merchandise at Rourkela. After formation of C.P.I.(M), I had planned to contact him and then push forward to Rourkela, but due to the repression of the Government, I had to go underground, and was eventually taken to custody. As I was released from the jail in 1966, I established my contacts with Sadanand Mishra and went to Rourkela. As I reached the station I found Com. Surendra Mudali along with his wife Mrs. Janaki had come with Sadanand Mishra to pick me up in his vehicle. We all had high time when we reached the house of my cousin-brother Ashok Nana. Soon our programme was settled down and from that very evening, all programmes were initiated.

During this phase of more than a week, when I conducted several sittings of the Organization in Rourkela, sector after sector, the foundation of the Organization was laid down. It paved the path for

different publishing agencies - “Janpath” in Oriya, “Peoples Democracy” in English, “DeshHiteishee” in Bengali. Mudalibabu’s contribution was immense in this regard. He was the first convenor of that Organisational Committee. I moved with him to Tensa and arranged a number of sittings. By that time, the Ispat workers of Rourkela had started a movement demanding their legitimate bonus. After demise of Dhuleswar Bastia, the Movement was spearheaded by Raj Kishore Samantray. Overcoming all barriers, we pushed our workers as an integral part of that movement. Likewise discussions and debates continued with lawyers in the court, so also arguments, and counter arguments took place with political opponents, on the issue of collecting funds for the party organ “Janpath.” In Tensa, while laying the foundation stone of the Organization inside the CPI-led Union, we had gone through an astounding experience, an experience which is true of all organizations, in the beginning of the beginnings.

When I used to go to Rourkela on tour, I usually stretched my sojourn for eight to ten days. My stay there at Rourkela used to cause disturbance and interruption with the legal practice of Mudalibabu. The reason was that he had to abandon the court work in order to move along with me. So, since the beginning, he demanded appointment of a worker at Rourkela, who could be a full timer. We fulfilled his demand after a year. As we could foresee the feasibility of establishing a Union of our own within the movement of the Traffic workers of the Steel Plant, under the leadership of our own party workers’ Union, Comrade Lambodar Naik proceeded to Rourkela. After the formation of C.I.T.U. in 1970, as the workload of the Union maximized, Com. Laxmidhar Biswal was deployed from West Bengal. On the eve of the foundational Conference of C.I.T.U., Com. Mudali represented all the Comrades of Orisha, and delivered the inaugural speech there. In the same way, Mudalibabu was the CIP(M)’s electoral candidate for the State Assembly from Rourkela constituency. Thus, in almost all matters, he was the “FIRST.” Despite our party’s weak standing, Mudalibabu was the pioneer leader in giving a definite shape to the programme, “Rourkela Bandh.”

In Tensa, as soon as Barsuan Iron Ore Mines Union was affiliated to the C.I.T.U., the latter came under devastating attack from all fronts, so much so that all the labour workers of the Nineteen-member Executive Committee were retrenched from their jobs. Only Birendra Ghosh, M.P. Surendra Mudali and I were the exceptions. A large number of strikes, uproar in Parliament and appeals in High Court and innumerable united movements on this issue forced Mohan Kumar Mangalam, the then Union Steel Minister to withdraw such punitive measures along with his comments that such punitive orders were unprecedented. As the Union pervaded the smaller units of other mines and took the nomenclature of “United Mines Mazdoor (Workers) Union,” it was MudaliBabu who adorned it as its first Secretary. Starting from Rourkela Ispat Workers Union, he was also other founder of many other unions. He was not only the leader of C.I.T.U. in the state level, but also the State Committee Member of CPI(M). Under the given circumstances, he refrained from all affinities, yet was devoted to Marxism until the end. Though he established an Engineering College by utilizing the higher education and experience of his son Sangram (Mantu), he also founded a specialized residential institution for providing free education to the tribal boys and girls. He also brought out a sixteen-page progressive Oriya Weekly of which he was the founder-Editor. He had also made all efforts to give it the shape of an Oriya Daily. In the beginning of this year when he came to me seeking my advice, I had asked him to arrange competent associates and perennial financial sources, along with the cooperation of the political left-parties. If this could be made a reality, it could hold the living memory of Comrade Mudali.





In this age of liberalization while the country is under attack of the communal-fascists, Com. Mudali had consciously organized a series of lectures headed by that of Justice Katzu to create an awareness on the minimal rights of the common man. There is a dearth of such conscious programmes in our state. He had laid his efforts to mitigate this shortfall. If such work could be advanced, that would be like paying real homage to his soul. At last, with sincere condolences to his wife Janaki, Son Sangram (Mantu) and Daughter Itee and his Colleagues and Associates, I pour all empathy and pay heart-felt homage to his memories deeply.

Ex-Member of Parliament  
Bhubaneswar



## **MUDALI BABU, A CO-FIGHTER AMONG US**

**Kshitish Biswal**

The fact that MudaliBabu passed away before me has been causing great agony in my heart. I have spent a lot of time in his company. He had great reputation as a left wing leader, competent lawyer, an educationalist of the state, and a social worker. In Rourkela, I had accompanied him to places like Kalta, Koirra, Purunapani and many other places on organizational programmes. I have watched his sincerity as well as determination during the course of work. On many occasions, he used to come very frequently to Nagbhusan Bhawan and we took up a lot of issues as topics of our discussions. Though, at times, the debate reached a climax, it never affected our friendship. Since I was older than him, he always enquired of my health with other friends. While I paid homage to him in APEX premises by garlanding him with flowers, I accepted his demise, the hard truth of life with a nonchalance. He has installed a numbers of institutions in which he has left the imprints of his memories. All this, I am sure, would not only give a lot of inspiration to the future generations, but also create ample opportunities for them. He would always reflect on my mind deeply. In his memory, I pay my last tribute to him with all consolations to his family members. Long live Comrade Mudali.

C.P.I. (M.L.) Liberation



# The Portrait of a Philanthropist:

## Advocate Devi Prasad Dash

Prior to my professional contact with Sj. Surendra Mudali, I had certain sense of understanding about some philanthropic activities done by various eminent Indian historical personalities like famous physician Dr Radha Gobinda Kar, alumnus of ‘Kolkata Medical College and Hospital’, ‘University of Edinburgh’ and several others and huge cores of rupees of donations given by present corporate tycoons like ‘Ajim Premji’ for welfare works. I had heard a lot about Sj. Mudali as a senior legal professional well established in Raurkela since early 1960s and about his generous qualities of extending unconditional support to those who solicited his support for the sake of their living in the ‘Steel Township’. Such unique quality of Sj. Mudali lured many people of our areas encash his favors and as per my knowledge Sj. Mudali disappointed none. A lot of people got well settled in Rourkela with his help, care, and support. He was a person having outstanding courage of voluntarily extending his helping hands to his fellows and comrades at the time of their need and he tirelessly continued his noble deeds till he breathed his last on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2017.

Incidentally I came in contact with him in 1998 during my holiday trip to his village, Aling, near Adaspur in the district of Cuttack. Being a senior member of legal fraternity, with a lot of caution I interacted with him only for a couple of minutes and through the conversation I learnt about his close association with my esteemed senior Sj, Rama Kant Mohapatra as well as a very respected and state well known figure, Sj. Prabir Da (the then Senior Advocate). The second chance meeting happened after about two years in my senior’s chamber as Sj. Mudali wanted me to be engaged in a case related to Berhampur University under the prudent guidance of my senior. The work continued for about two years. My professional attachment with Sj. Mudali was further strengthened when I solicited his legal guidance for interpretation of a comprehensive judgment rendered by 11 Judges Constitution Bench of Supreme Court in ‘TMA Pai Foundation’ Case.

Then I realized his unfathomable knowledge in legal pursuit and his excellence to be at par with any other Senior Counsels I have ever been associated with. Perhaps his in-depth knowledge in streamlining the complicated issues of law had appealed my senses to call him as ‘Sir’. I had heard a lot about his stature from my seniors and several other counsels including Sri. B. M Patnaik, Sr. Advocate and former President of High Court Bar Association, as a lawyer of excellence especially in the fields of labour and industrial and trade union laws. Late Sj. Murali Parija, one of the most established and renowned practicing lawyers of Raurkela started his legal profession under the guidance of Sj. Mudali.

Individual reputation in legal pursuit is perhaps not the only reason for others to keep one’s memories alive in perpetuity, unless his sacrifices and contributions towards the different spheres of society and for its causes have been vividly witnessed by others. As per my sense of feelings based upon readings; “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is ‘what are you doing for others?’” One has the moral indebtedness for doing good for the benefit of others thus; it is his obligation to discharge it at the best possible manner. All pay respect to those who try to change the world for better, rather

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than just complain about it. In essence, a real philanthropist takes the time to see the world through the eyes of others.

In my humble contemplation, Sj. Mudali was not only a genius lawyer of his era specially in the fields of labour, industrial and trade union laws, he was simultaneously a generous personality in doing charity by way of extending his rigorous works, co-operations and providing donations for establishing organizations with the objective to uplift the downtrodden, to fulfill the wants of the poor and neglected, irrespective of their religion, caste, race, or creed. His efforts to cherish charity were ceaseless and lasted till his last breath. I hope his philanthropic objectives would continue through his charitable entities letting indelible memories in others.

**Portraits of Sj. Surendra Mudali:-  
'Janata Vidyapitha', a Secondary School, (in his Village)**

The School was established with the active involvement of Sj. Mudali, in his remote village in the district of Cuttack. He was obsessed with the objective of spreading the light of knowledge amongst aspiring generation by way of providing high school education. Subsequently his dream came true when a number of brilliant students passed out from the school. In the later part of his life, Sj. Mudali confessed that he actually took a lot of pain at the time of establishing the School as it coincided with the initial stage of his legal profession. Even some situations compelled him so much so that he put mortgage of valuable ornaments with private creditors to meet expenses of constructions. Moreover, he owes this to his mother who accepted his request and reposed confidence on him while letting her valuables mortgaged.

**Sundargarh Law College:-**

By the time of establishment of the said Law College, Sj. Mudali emerged as a reputed Lawyer and became an eminent political and trade figure across the State and became one of major promoters of the said Law College.

**In 1975:-**

Like several other Statesmen, he went to Jail opposing imposition of Emergency in the Country.

**In 1980:-**

He contested Assembly Election in Rourkela as CPI – M candidate.

Elected as the President of 'CITU' and became a Member of the CPI – M State Committee.

**National Institute of Science and Technology (Berhampur):-**

Sj. Mudali's philanthropic conscience prompted him to call back his IITian children from the USA. Together with his children he established NIST at Berhampur to realize his dream of producing quality technocrats from Odisha so as to meet the needs of technologies/industries at national and global levels. His said dream was fulfilled proving the institution one of the few best engineering colleges of the country.

**Diganta School and ITC:-**

Perhaps, 'Diganta' was the exclusive dream of Sj. Mudali meant to provide education to downtrodden tribal children. Later on he fulfilled it and at present about 800 poor children from different corners of the State are getting their education in a completely conducive residential environment of the school campus, whose entire responsibility rested on the shoulders of Sj. Mudali.

**Janabadi:-**

Janabadi, a weekly newspaper started its publication being founded by Sj. Mudali to espouse the cause and concerns of downtrodden streams, to raise voice against injustice and discriminations. The standards of writing of his newspaper have been appreciated by many right thinking personalities.

Apart from his above noted handmade Portraits, he was a constant and relentless patronizing man for others at the time of their needs by way of understanding the purpose behind one’s sufferings and also trying to eradicate the same through best possible efforts. I think he used to give emphasis on the concept: that to give away money is an easy matter but difficult is that to decide to whom to give it to and how, when, and for what purpose. Thus in such sense of conceptions with him had not rendered his charitable efforts in vein depicting the same as misplaced charity.

Descriptions about Sj. Mudali especially of his philanthropic deeds is quite difficult in writing especially in my acumen, but a few days before when I was requested to assume the office of ‘Democratic Lawyers Forum’ by Sri Chakradhar Pradhan (an Advocate practicing in Bhubaneswar, former student leader and organizer in his college days during 1980s), who also happens to be a close political and professional associate of Sj. Mudali, I accepted his request with the condition to host the ‘Jayanti’ of Sj. Mudali to commemorate his days, thinking and trying to make him alive in others which Mr Pradhan accepted expressing his unequivocal intention like mine. So, in my meager opinion, convention of one ‘Jayanti’ is not only to host his past glories but to instill his goodness in others as Julia Lofaro Martin Luther King Jr. says: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is ‘what are you doing for others?’” It will surely and certainly drive the future generation in the path of sacrifice and charity in order to meet the common good of people who are in stress and at need. And, their efforts would not be vanished, but be remembered for ever by way of celebrations of ‘Jayanti’.

I welcome and express my immense pleasure of having noticed about the fact of the unanimous decisions of ‘Democratic Lawyers Forum’, Bhubaneswar, to celebrate the ‘Jayanti’ in the remembrance of its former President, Sj. Surendra Mudali and wish Success of the said great event.

Secretary of ‘Democratic Lawyers Forum’,  
Bhubaneswar.

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# IN MEMORIAM OF MUDALI BABU

**Manmohan Naik**

From the last part of 1968 to 1992, and from the end of 1999 to that of 2017, I had a strong and intimate relationship with MudaliBabu politically, professionally and also from the standpoint of family. To me, he was at once my well-wisher, benign helper, and my elder-brother-like for me. I had free access to his residence at Rourkela at any time. His wife, who was like my elder sister-in-law (*Bada Bhauja*) had never stopped short of love and affection for me. Especially, his son Sangram (Mantu) and daughter Sanjeeta (nick name: Itee) address me as “Sir” (*Guru*). It was because, in their earlier age, I had guided them in their studies during my leisure time. Even till this day, Sangram (Mantu) has deep regards for me. I had deep intimate attachment with all the members of MudaliBabu’s extensive family which consisted of his brothers, Sister-in-law, Brother-in-law and his Mother. This relationship included the members of his Father-in-law’s house.

## **Regarding my First Introduction with MudaliBabu and My Involvement with the Political Events:**

In 1967, I left my village and went to Rourkela. There I saw in the office of the Employment Exchange thousands of Oriya youths had registered their names, but not a single person could get a job, rather non-Oriya youths availed some jobs here and there. Against this existing situation, I formulated “Utkal Unemployed Youth Association” and organised demonstration in front of Steel Plant, and other offices of both central and state Governments. Since, at that time, I had no adequate experience of staging demonstrations, I asked my elder brother which Communist leader I should meet. He stated that it was advisable on my part to go to MudaliBabu who was a CPI (M) member and also a lawyer. In 1968, I gathered the frontline youth of 15 to 20 Organizations, and all of us met him. By then, the strength of the members of the Unemployed Youth Association rose to 1000 members. While I met him, he gave me such *mantra* about the organizational strategies that I was totally astounded, and ever since I remained totally involved with him. Soon after, in the last part of 1968, at Ambagaon, a big public meeting of C.P.I. (M) was held, in which Com. Shivajee Patnaik, Com. Surendra Mudali and I were the speakers. The advocate Com. Harish Ray presided over the meeting. After staging a procession of 3 kilo metres, about 1000 unemployed youth reached the meeting venue at Ambagaon. As the public meeting proved to be a great success, SivajeeBabu inquired about me and told MudaliBabu: “Who is this boy? You should involve him in the Party.” In response, MudaliBabu told: “I know his elder brother NarendraNaik, who was an old party member.” Later on, he met my elder brother with whom he discussed the matter. My brother said, “Please ask him personally; he is an extremely angry man, obstinate and married.” After that, MudaliBabu told me: “Please come with me to attend to the day-to-day court, the rest I shall take care of. From that day onwards until 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016, MudaliBabu’s advice has been felt quite effective. Mudalibabu and Manmohan moved together; wherever MudaliBabu was there, Manmohan was also there.

## **MudaliBabu’s Socio-Political Movements:**

1. In the year 1969, joint leadership in Talcher-Bimlagarh Railway Lines Movement, and joint imprisonment.

2. Pioneering role in organizing the Lenin Seminar in 1969.
3. Traffic Employees Strike in Rourkela Steel Plant.
4. Joining in C.I.T.U.'s Foundational Conference
5. Initiative taken for Registration of **C.I.T.U./ (S.E.T.U)**
6. Leadership in Tensa Union Strike
7. Candidate for Assembly Election from Rourkela Constituency (both for General Election and Bye-Election)
8. Opposition to the Jubilee Celebrations of Rourkela Steel Plant during the Chief Ministership Rajendra Narayan SinghDeo, and courting imprisonment.
9. Taking lead in 2000 Contractual Workers' Strike in 1973 before the Rourkela Steel Plant, and going underground, ultimately leading to his imprisonment under M.I.S.A.
10. Active Role in Railway Strike
11. Imprisonment in 1975 under Emergency
12. Formation of Union in Purunapani, and his active role in organizing a Strike.
13. Pioneering role in the Formation of Peasants Organisation at Kuanramunda
14. Organization of the Anti-victimisation Convention in Rourkela against repression of workers in Bisra Stove Lime Ltd (BSL), Birmitrapur
15. Playing key role twice in the Bonai Assembly Election
16. Playing leading role in making Manmohan Mishra a non-contestant candidate for the Assembly Election in the Rourkela Constituency
17. Playing a key role in establishing the Party Office of the Union in Rourkela
18. Playing a prominent role in the organization of Central Workers' Coordination Committee
19. Playing leading role in holding the first State Conference of C.I.T.U. in Rourkela
20. Taking the chief responsibility for the Party Fund Collection
21. Chief responsibility for managing the publication of the Party Organ in English, Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam and Oriya languages
22. Prime Leadership in Peace Committee to counteract the State Communalism in Rourkela
23. In 1970-72, MudaliBabu occupied a pivotal position in organizing at national level Steel Plant Workers Conference, Democratic Youth Federation (D.Y.F.), Student Federation of India (S.F.I.) and Democratic Women's Organization under the special leadership of his spouse Ms. Janaki Mudali.

It is of special mention here that it could never be disagreed that MudaliBabu was the founder of the C.P.I. (M) in Rourkela. It is because during 1966-67, all the Party Members excepting MudaliBabu joined the Naxal Organization, namely C.P.I. (M.L.). In 1967-68, he initiated Bikram Choudhury, Sajjal Dasgupta, B.B. Saha (Worker) and me as Party Members. During this period, we were only five C.P.I. (M) Members including Mudalibabu. All the great deeds achieved by him are quite visible today. I have tried to throw adequate light on all the invisible works of his like Movements (Strikes) and (Philanthropic) Service. I am of the expectation if his young budding illustrious son Sangram (Mantu) who is himself a great progressive educationist publishes a book basing on his father's (Daddy's) eventful life of struggle and challenges, that would be, I believe, a source of inspiration to the present-day younger generation.

Trade Union Leader



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# COM. MUDALI - LAL SALAM

Lambodar Naik

“Comrade Mudali Passed away” -listening to this news from a friend, early in the morning of the very day, I broke down. Long since 1967, I had relations with him. He is probably 10 years older than me by age. My last meeting with him was in a literary gathering on 13th May at Jayadev Bhawan, which was the date of a book release ceremony. His happiness knew no bound when I presented him a copy of the Oriya translation of the prominent historian Irfan Habib’s book “On *Socialism : Selections from Writings of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I.Lenin, J.V.Stalin, Mao Zedong.*” Slightly weakened and fatigued, he instantly blurted: “Please come home; there’s much to talk.” Every occasion of meeting with him prolonged for hours together on some issue-based topics. I suddenly felt that hereafter I shall be deprived of such opportunities. There must be a full stop now to the fifty –year long uninterrupted bonding with him.

He was a Leftist. He was associated with the Socialist Movement from the beginning of his student career. He was an established lawyer in the Rourkela Bar, and he had been selected twice as the candidate of CPI(M) for Assembly Election from Rourkela Constituency. He was the Secretary of the Branch Party Committee, of which I was an active Member. In the post-Naxalite-Peasants’-movement of 1968, many Comrades, especially of Rourkela Steel Plant and Bank employees had left the Party. That was a unique period which was the glorious period of Vietnam Liberation War. A Party Union consisting of Steel Plant Workers had been formed under the leadership of a few militant Comrades. In the Nineteen hundred eighties, with the efforts of some of the leaders, most terrific strikes in the sections of Traffic and Blast Furnace were being organized. In the lead was Com. Mudali. In the later period, it was he who had taken the leadership of the nationwide Railway Workers Strike. The seniormost Janata Dal Leader Hrushu Ray, Manmohan Mishra and I were arrested along with others under MISA, and were confined in Sundargarh Jail.. In this decade, since Surendra Mudali took the leadership of nearly 15,000 contractual workers and organized strikes from time to time during the regime of the Industrial Minister, Mohan Kumar Mangalam, he too was arrested. Labour leader, Laxmidhar Biswas and I could escape the MISA warrant and, somehow, managed continuing the strike. As a result of the strikes, wages of the Workers in the Steel Plant were heightened from Rs.3/- to Rs.5/- a day. During next phase, Com. Mudali was also arrested under MISA with the declaration of Emergency. A few days after this, I was also taken behind the bars. Com. Mudali had taken the leadership of the Mines Workers of of Kalta, Tensa, Koida and others by being strongly associated with them. During this phase, the most striking Movement was “Gorakhpuri Dadan Workers Liberation Movement.” We had managed to sustain these Movements by hiding ourselves in the Doda Reserve Forest and avoiding the arrest by police for months together. Many a time, our Comrades had been the victim of brutal attacks. Sometimes, they were murdered. Such difficult times had created leaders like Anant Raut and Amiya Das. Not long after, they were murdered. It has come to my notice that Com. Mudali was the leader of an aggressive mass movement with the demand of Talcher-Bimalagada Railways and was subjected to a fierce Police attack. The burning platform of the Movement had given birth to many student leaders who had entered into the mainstream of the Labour Movement.

In this process, leaders like Com. Bishnu Mahanty, Late Surendra Bisoi had come to the surface of the Movement. In these circumstances, C.I.T.U. was established in Calcutta in 1970 in an All India basis under the leadership of Com. B.T. Ranadive. Both of us, Com. Mudali and I joined the foundational congress along with others. For quite a long period, Com. Mudali was a Member of the State Committee of C.P.I. (M) and adorned the chair of the Vice-President of C.I.T.U.

Till the end of his life, Com. Mudali's residence was the Centre for intellectual Calisthenics ("Adda") for the Humanitarian and Socialist Workers. Every day, many Comrades gathered there to take part in different sittings. He was the Founder Editor of the progressive Oriya Weekly, *Janabadi*. The Weekly was very well known for its non-compromising Editorial. Soon after his demise, *Janabadi* dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 made it clear that Com. Mudali would no more "spill-ink" in the Editorial column. Yet the ink of the Editorial will not dry up, because, to my belief, he has created, in his life time, innumerable reputed philanthropists, educationists, established thoughtful leaders and lovers of mankind who could combat the evil united. He had given importance to one single thing; that is the progress toward the socialist society could make a progressive development only through an all-out efforts of the leaders to fulfill the total wants of the mankind. And for this, proper movements are necessary at all levels.

Com. Mudali was very fond of friends. He had always made an attempt to extend a helping hand to the weaklings. In his province of life, he had his own definitions of friend and foe. He suffered from pangs of pain when his self-fashioned leadership was dragged into useless controversies. He had a high order of self-respect, too. Even though he had been impaired by somebody at the organizational level, he never missed an opportunity to help out in his/her need. There are a series of examples to prove it. It was possible only on the part of a man like him to donate one lakh rupees for the publication of the Oriya translation of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*.

When I reached late near the casket of the dead body, Com. Mudali's son, Sangram clinged to my body embracing me and, tearfully, said, "Father passed away." I asked, "Where is Iti?" Since there will be delay in Iti's arrival, we are taking the body to the village. I came to know that Sister-in-law, Jaani had come. Surendra Mudali's last pilgrimage to eternity was in the direction of his village, Alingi. When I saw the casket in front of me, I felt the first-hand experience of a full-flooded river was piercingly cleaving into my heart. I realized in the heart of heart an agony arising out of meaningless jealousy, utter selfishness, greedy craving for amassing riches and wealth, shades of hypocrisy like betrayal against others, and imperialistic globalization, power conflict, and a terrible lack of the capacity for sharing pleasure and pain in a splintered society, seriously afflicted by deceitfulness and conmanship.

Com. Mudali had established a residential school in his village. An ornithologist in his own right, he had taken away a pair of swans from our house, which I had collected ten years ago. I cannot say whether they are alive or not. He was the Founder of N.I.S.T. (National Institute of Science and Technology) which has found itself a place in the best hundred Engineering Colleges of the country.

Com. Mudali was also the architect of "APEX," the Engineering College in Bhubaneswar. Only a person who is a first-hand witness can tell how much his son Sangram who stood to his left, and the daughter Iti who stood to his right, respected each of his desires.

At the end, this heart which has been totally immersed in pain and anguish salutes Lal Salam to Com. Mudali. Towards the fag end of his life, he was regarded as the most respectful person and first rate leader for each and every person who was conscious of the fundamental human rights and the rights of citizenship. The unique person who could embrace the intellectuals suffering from political

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vendetta, torture and abuse has gone to the oblivion. This great loss can never be easily compensated.

In the last meeting with him, Com. Mudali had elaborately discussed the French Economist, Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twentyfirst Century*. At the end, he said, "Lambodar! It is an important treatise; translate it into Odia." I am about to complete this work. Come what may in terms of time, it is in fitness of things to dedicate such a stupendous work in honour of him. There is no end to the commemoration of his good work. Comrades and friends would never hesitate in memorizing the good work done in his life.

CITU President



**MEMORIES OF  
MUDALI BABU  
HAS TO BE KEPT ALIVE**  
**Judhisthir Mohapatra**

MudaliBabu was an exceptional genius. Firm self confidence, sincerity, dedication, sense of discipline, uprightness adorned him. Empathetic and amiable, he was endearing to one and all. As a lawyer, he had organized many movements to uphold the interest of the peasants and workers, and had fought many legal battles. Establishing Engineering Colleges like NIST and APEX, Social Organisation like 'Digant', publication of Oriya Weekly like "Janabadi" speak of his organising ability and his far-sightedness. His passion for protecting human rights, and his uncompromising fight for others became a source of inspiration for others. His contribution as a leader of the Left party will always be borne in the memory of common people for all the times to come. Others have felt his youthful spirit even at the age of 82. The brighter side of his novel personality lies in helping others who are in trouble. It is because of this, people from Rourkela to Bhubaneswar, from Pahala, Bhubaneswar to Alingi and Patrakana, who were familiar with him have been shedding streams of tears uninterrupted. I have known him for a little more than thirty years. My intimacy with him developed since I became a Member of the C.P.I. (M) State Committee. When I met him last on May 21, he was telling me that he was feeling weak and sleepy for a longer time. I consoled him by saying that it could be the side effect of having too many medicines at a time, and he would be free from this ailment soon. As I returned on May 31 from the Central Committee at Siligudi, I was informed that he passed away on 2<sup>nd</sup> June night. It was difficult on my part to accept the fact. He was always harping on one single thing: "Always struggle hard to do a good work; don't be afraid of anything, nor be tired, and then, and then only you will surely achieve success." I believe that I shall feel the presence of MudaliBabu whenever I shall do good work and put up a struggle of a Movement for human rights and dignity." I am sure that in the absence of MudaliBabu, the Institutes which are the products of his workmanship will go a long way in future. At the end, I herewith pay homage to his fresh memories on behalf of C.P.I. (M.L.) Liberation Orissa State Committee, and convey condolences to his family.

State Secretary  
C.P.I. (M.L.) Liberation, Orissa State Committee



# HE WILL BE IMMORTAL IN 'JANABADI'

**Shiv Ram**

On the demise of Surendra Mudali, a leader of left dexterity, CPI (M-L) Red Star Odisha State Committee offers its fathomless tributes. In the annals of Odisha People's Movement as a communist organizer and working class leader, he will remain conspicuously embossed. At the later part of his life an Odiya media weekly like 'Janabadi' is a great contribution to the oppressed and repressed people of Odisha. At the instance of time, when all the Media has been captured by the junta of Corporates, Capitalists and Fascists, to publish a Weekly like *Janabadi* and above all to keep intact its people-oriented character was an uphill task on the part of MudaliBabu. His primary role in continuing its publication and his inordinate courage to maintain it cannot be forgotten. Perhaps, his efforts to hold on to it at this juncture is unparalleled. Mudali's contact with our party was not very long. To be precise, as of now, he had met me only four times. We had heard a lot of MudaliBabu's name. When we planned to meet him for the first time, along with our Party member, Com. Rebat, we were filled with doubts and suspicion as to how a person of his stature, who is the proprietor of an established Engineering College, would receive us. But we were taken aback by his exemplary behavior shown to us. He was so friendly in his talk and behaviour toward us, we felt as if he had known us intimately for years together. He said that he had kept all information about us. He further said to us: "It has come to my notice that you have all been doing work with full commitment, and I have been always with you." During all the discussions, he was always feeling sorry and was getting angry, because the Communists were not getting united. He was of the opinion that, sans unity in the Party, nothing could be done. He never listened to my argument that division in the party was mostly historical and ideological, and that unity amongst the parties could be realized only through the medium of dialogue. He claimed that the point of agreement amongst all Communist Parties was more than ninety percent. He used to ask where is the difficulty to work united on the basis of the high point agreement. He always expressed dissatisfaction with us remarking that we never put it into practice. We must admit that we did not have a short-cut and ready-made answer to all his grave questions. As a matter of fact, his love for the Communist Party and his anxiety for the unification of the Communists were but the reflection of his concern for the freedom of the general public of the country and for establishing a Workers' Rule. MudaliBabu would always be memorable. To keep his brain child, Janabadi alive in the present juncture will be the greatest tribute to him. It is Janabadi which would keep him alive amongst us, and it is Janabadi again which would realize his life-long love for the common man. Com. SurendraMudali! May he remain immortal.

State Secretary,  
CPI (M.L.) Red Star



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# WHAT'S THAT I KNOW ABOUT COMRADE SURENDRA MUDALI

**Janardan Pati**

Comrade Surendra Mudali breathed his last at 10.45 hrs of the 2nd of this month. At about 11.30 p.m. in the night, Suryamani Mishra let me know this heart-throbbing news over phone. The last chapter of one actions-oriented man came to an end.

I became deeply attached with Comrade Surendra Mudali during that period when I was bestowed with the responsibility of the Party office of Sundergarh district in the year 1986. The District Office of C.P.I. (M) was very close to his residence. I used to put up in the office itself. Interestingly, it was he who had built up this house. While going out I had to pass by his door, as such I used to have the Tea ceremony there. MudaliBabu's wife was an amiable person. She also used to join the Tea Ceremony.

Surendra Mudali was involved with the leftist politics right from his student career and was a card holder of the undivided Communist Party. After the bifurcation of the Communist Party of India, he enrolled himself as a Member of C.P.I. {M}.

He began his professional life in Rourkela. Advocacy was his profession. Along with the legal profession, he took to the leadership of Labour Movements. He had been true to the Workers throughout his life. He was the leader of the United Mines Majdur Union which was the most militant union of the State. He was very popular among all the Mines Workers of Biramitrapur, Nuagaon, Kalta, Koida, Roxi, Barsuan and Tensa.

For strikes of contractual workers at Rourkela, for linkage of Talcher-Bimlagarh Railway tracks and for Emergency, he was arrested thrice on the basis of MISA Rule, but never did he bow down before the ruling class.

At Rourkela, he was many a time the party candidate for the Legislative Assembly Election. He was a very trustworthy leader of the party. He was very popular amongst the national-level leaders of the Party. National leaders like Jyoti Basu, Pramod Dasgupta, B.T. Randeve and others used to acknowledge his contribution to the Party.

SurendraBabu maintained close proximity with the then Party Leaders of Orissa like Banmali Das, Iswar Das, Sivajee Patnaik and others. He was a great votary of Socialism and had waged his constant struggle against Capitalism.

In the decade of 1990s, he released himself from the active politics and kept himself pre-occupied with his efforts for the spread of education. Consequently, with his efforts, two technical Educational Institutes, namely N.I.S.T. at Berhampur, and APEX at Phulanakhara, have been established which have gained importance at the national level.

This apart, he has established a School and a Hostel for the orphan children, and he himself manages it. Both his son and daughter also have been associated with this novel humanitarian

programme. He is well known as a Leftist leader. Over a period of the past three years, he has been publishing an Oriya Weekly, named *JANABADI* which happens to be the brain child of MudaliBabu.

After the sad demise of Comrade Surendra Mudali, all the spectacular events of his life-work flash in my mind like different episodes of a film. His ideals of Marxism-Leninism, his vision of socialism have come under attack by the Right-Reactionary forces. Com. Surendra Mudali's demise has come as a bolt from the blue at a time when all the Rightists and Reactionaries have been making an attempt to destroy the Indian national character. What is of prime importance now is that his followers and his close associates should stand in good stead, supporting his philosophy and objectives of life. His life-philosophy was not confined to spiritualism. He hated hypocrisy, and deception. He called a spade a spade. He was an extremely innocent and amiable person.

I owe my heart-felt sympathy to his widowed wife, his son and daughter, along with other family members.

“Comrade Mudali! Lal Salam.  
Comrade Surendra Mudali! Thou will be immortal.”

Ex-Secretary, CPI (M)



## A WORD FOR SURA BHAI

Biswapriya

I had heard of Sura Bhai since my high school days. It was also known to me that Surendra Mudali of Aling, our neighbouring village, used to do legal practice at Rourkela and was steeply involved both with Labour Organization and also with CPI(M). In the latter days, he came to Berhampur from Rourkela, and took a leading role in establishing a private Engineering College which is at present popularly known as N.I.S.T..

Around 2000, I had my preliminary meeting in his office-cum- residence near Forest Park, Bhubaneswar. At that time, one of his old C.P.M. associates was also present with him. While having a pleasant conversation with him, I had also the privilege of having light refreshment with him. Since that moment till his last breath, I had cordial relationship with him. Many a time, I had heated discussions with him on matters relating to Human Rights. Sometimes, we had differences of opinion but it never strained our personal relationship. Amongst the notable works of his life, the ones which stood apart as unique are publication of the Weekly Odia Magazine *Janabadi*, and the establishment of the Residential School called *Digant* which catered to the needs of the poor and helpless children of the weaker sections of the society, belonging to the suburban areas in and around our *mauza*, Patrakana .

I herewith pay my homage to S.N.M. or Surendra Bhai as I used to call him fondly. I hope and believe that the Magazine *Janabadi* with its mission of Human rights, and the Residential School *Digant* in the village Patrakana will continue to exist after his demise, and that will be a real tribute to Sura Bhai.

Biswapriya (As called by him)  
Advocate, Humanrights Activist



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# A MAN WITH A SENSE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Santosh Das

That MudaliBabu was sick was known to almost all the people who knew him, but it was beyond their conjecture that, all on a sudden, the light of his life will be lost to the oblivion. I had talked to him for the last time in the last month of April. He had given me a call after he came back from Delhi having consultation with Doctors. We had talked to each other for a long time. We exchanged our views and opinions on the political events of the period.

‘MudaliBabu’ – with this name he was well-known all around. In Rourkela, it is a practice to address people more with the surnames than with the names proper. At places, wherever someone needed to mention his name, he uttered his name, not in full, but in abbreviation – S.N. Mudali.

For the first time in 1971, I came in contact with the name, “Mudalibabu” during the election period, when he, as the Party candidate of CPI(M) from the Assembly Constituency of Rourkela, was contesting against both, the then Chief Minister Biswanath Das, and the opposition leader Binayak Acharya. In 1978, I got a scope to talk to him when the 9<sup>th</sup> State Conference of C.P.I.(M) was held in Berhampur. At that time, I, on behalf of the Central S.F.I., joined the state unit.

In the first meeting with him, I highly regarded him, because his words were replete with his loving and inspirational tone. A young Cadre expects this much in minimum from a senior leader of the party. Later on, I had gone to Rourkela and came closer to him during Students’ organizational work and Students’ movements. During Party programmes, I had greater scope to meet freely with him. Towards the fag end of his life, he had gained further reputation as the Founder of an established Technological Institute. I had the scope to meet him further in various educational institutions and intellectual gatherings. He used to attend any programme, whatsoever, even on getting SMS invitation. During this long standing relation, the intimate things that I got from him were his love and inspiration. It is not merely my personal experience, but it was something which was realised, by everyone who came in contact with him.

MudaliBabu’s personality fruited during the post Independence period, marked by a rapture of people’s victory. His mental agitation as to what ought to be the social system of India in a post-independent country, and what should be the rights and opportunities for the students, turned MudaliBabu to be a virtual student leader. Socialism happened to be his ideal. He dreamt a dream of an alternative society through the principles and ideals of socialism. To materialize his dream into reality, he had organized the class of labour-dependent humans. Besides the profession of Law, organization of Trade Union and Communist Party became his way of life.

I found an exceptional quality of his sense of responsibility when his son Sangram got admitted to Ravenshaw College. He had introduced him to me from his school career. He told me to make both his son and daughter understand about S.F.I. Sangram was a very brilliant student. He used to meet me regularly during his studentship in Ravenshaw College. Also, he worked for S.F.I. While many

parents, especially progressive parents refrain their wards from students’ organizations and movements, MudaliBabu was certainly an exception to this.

In his private capacity, MudaliBabu established a Technological Institute ‘NIST’ in the context of the students’ yearning for technical education in Orissa, and the limited scope and availability of technical education to the students of Orissa. Though he proved his professional efficiency by establishing the Technological Institute, he had never forgot his responsibility and commitment to his idealism. He was determined about his duty for extension and application of this thought and consciousness.

No one can exactly recoup the social vacuum created by the sad demise of MudaliBabu. The memories he has left behind are the memories of social responsibility. He had perfectly understood the sense of social responsibility as a student leader, as a lawyer, as a Labour Leader, as an Organizer of a Communist Party, and also as a Founder of an established Technical Institution, and had put it into practice in his life time. The very responsibility consisted of his brotherhood feeling for people, empathetic service to them, fight for the human rights through strikes and unions, and the readiness for alternative total achievement. He was totally dedicated to staging both legal and political struggle for economic and social justice for the poor, repressed and exploited. If we could derive learning from his sense of social responsibility and turn it into a way of life, that will be the like paying real homage to him.

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CPI (M) Leader

# IN MEMORIAM... TO SURENDRA MUDALI

**Santosh Kumar Mohapatra**

Although he was not associated with any of the groups of the Communist Party that was numerously divided, he liked very much anyone who was associated with communist ideals. In the Marxist Communist Party, he build up his own identity as a robust organizer, a sharp Trade Union Leader, and, as a senior Lawyer. He was disgusted and irritated owing to envy and grudge of his own party Comrades, and left for America where his son and daughter were living. However, the call of his motherland made him revive as an *avatar* of an Educationalist. In the oft neglected South Orissa, he established an Engineering College, which is recognized today as number one Institute of Odisha.

In the name of ideals to sack off the able organizers has become the character of the Communists. Revisionists, Neo-revisionists, Radical Revolutionaries, Extremists and many other nomenclatures are used to drive out true and able Communists. On the plea of the peoples’ struggle different permutations and combinations are made only to find at the end there is nobody in the Party to hold the banner. The result is that each single person, under the signboard of one’s own, declares to be a self-styled representative of a Party. Inaterestingly, MudaliBabu allowed free admission into the Engineering College to the sons and daughters of those very Members who had a hand, directly or indirectly, in removing him from the Party, and made them settle down in the Society as efficient engineers. This benevolent act SurendraBabu’s will be remembered forever.

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Advocate, Berhampur

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# LAL SALAM TO MUDALI BABU

**Dandapani Mohanty**

My closeness with MudaliBabu stands there for last 45 years. His death news has shocked me. With this background, few words I depict here. In 1972-73, by the call of C.I.T.U., a Workers' Strike was held in the Rourkela Steel Plant on the issue of regularising the contract labours. On the other side, Quarry Workers' Movement also arose in Barsuan, Purunapani, Tensa and Kalta. Comrade Mudali, Laxmidhar Biswal, Lambodar Naik, N. Apparao and Anant Rout had played a pivotal role in managing and expanding the Movement and in organizing the intellectuals of the city in support of the movement. As per the decision of the Ganjam C.P.I. (M) unit, I had gone to Rourkela as its representative to participate in the programme of the Movement. From that day till his last days, I had maintained my relations with MudaliBabu. He had also demonstrated his efficiency in legal profession. To safeguard the interest of the working class, he was firmly making application of the law with all competency. He had to bear the brunt of the Emergency and suffer from 26 months' imprisonment for proving his efficiency in law and for being the illustrious hero of the Working Class struggle. In this fight, his wife's commitment and affection for the Working Class will always be remembered.

In the year 1980, I have watched from close quarters, at Puri State Conference of CPI(M), how MudaliBabu, stood against the revisionist leadership as a staunch critic of its programmes. He had made constant efforts to solve out the internal conflict within the party by appealing to the highest echelon of the party. In the year 1991, a group came out of the party, and formed Orissa Communist Party which he did not appreciate. In 1991, I had met him along with Com. Nagabhushan. We had persuaded him through an elaborate discussion to join C.P.I. (M.L.) liberation, and I.P.F. What prevented him from joining the direct Movement were the possibility of the division in the Left Movement, and the downfall of the Socialist camp etc. Then, he said to us: "Left unity in present- day times is absolutely necessary." So I will take the role of a friend to Left democratic, progressive programme, and he had lived up to that role till the last moment.

He had proved his commitment by joining the Programme of anti-communal fascism, attack on alternative expression of right, anti- green hunt programme, attack on repression of tribals or the meeting programmes of Arundhati Ray, Binayak Sen and Urvara Rao.

He was not only a militant Leader, but also an Educationist. For expansion of education, he established N.I.S.T. in Berhampur, and had faced many complicated situations. In-fighting often caused in him anxieties and worries. Despite all that, he had played a vital role in providing engineering education to the children of the Leftist, Progressive Democrats. In this process, he had given my son an opportunity to be a student there, and there is ample proof of his being vigilant of his activities in the Institute.

In 2013, the State Govt. arrested me in a false case, and bringing MudaliBabu under the purview of police investigation he was indirectly threatened to give more information about me. He had faced these intimidations with great dexterity.

25th May was the date of my last meeting with him. On that day, he not only explained the cause of his absence in my son's marriage, but also recorded the phone number of my son with a view to inviting home to both my son and daughter-in-law, the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June being the exact time.

During that talk, he mentioned about the urgent necessity of organizing a strong and striking protest movement to obstruct the spread of communal fascism movement. He had also asked a minute report about the weaknesses of the State Democratic Movement. With the demise of Mudali Babu, we have lost a great friend of the Progressive Democratic Leftist Movement. He has left the imprint of commitment, friendship, affection, and determination everywhere, be it Bagan of Rourkela, Quarry of Kalta, N.I.S.T. or Digant. He deserves our homage as a dazzling leader of the Tribals of Kalta Mines. My family members along with me are too much shocked at the demise of Mudali Babu. He will be immortal as the pathfinder of the struggle of the repressed mass. In these hard times, I have great hope that his wife, son and daughter, and the family of N.I.S.T., Digant and *Janabadi* will face the situation with strength and determination.

Communist Leader



# SRI SURENDRA MUDALI AN ENDLESS STRUGGLE

Panchanan Kanungo

“My Village is great, my Region is great, my State is great.” A person, imbued with such a thought, is simply overwhelmed with pleasure, when he finds another person of his region in a different place as a forerunner in various fields. Many people may treat such an attitude of the person as rabid parochialism. Basing on the law of decentralization, when a person finds another person of his village passing through the centrifugal force and occupying a position in a new place, he becomes elated and feels oneness with him. If anybody sees an Indian in a foreign domain, he finds a kind of familial kinship with him despite many dissimilarities with him. That exactly happened when I heard of Surendra Mudali, a man of my village Alingi in the position of a front leader of the Communist Party at Rourkela. Despite differences between our ways of thinking, it was quite but natural to have intimacy and friendship between ourselves as we belonged to the same region. That was my initial introduction with him. Later on, he created an identity of his own in Orissa as a Revolutionary in the field of education. In Ganjam, he established a Technological College, which ranked number three amongst the Engineering Colleges of Orissa. When he turned his face homeward, he built up another Engineering College (APEX) at Pahal on Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Road. Again, he ran homeward. He began his work for enabling the youth to create avenues for self-employment, and, towards that end, he established a College which aimed at imparting learning in industrial skill development. At the time of his sad demise, I think, it is not proper to assess how much he achieved in his lifetime. Only this much can be concluded that the endless fight of the Revolutionary Surendra Mudali has been a grand success.

He is no more. He had a pleasurable death. The bold witness to his inspiration, the Magazine *Janabadi* is always ready to render Social Justice to the common mass.

At the demise of Mudali, his followers, friends and the people of alike thoughts, concepts and ideology, I believe, will carry forward his struggle, his Institutions as well as the Weekly *Janabadi*, the fountain of his inspiration, in their endless journey. Death put a full stop to one of the great identities of our region. The State lost one judicious fighter for all times to come. But the imprint he has left behind will remain forever.

Former Finance Minister  
Govt. of Odisha



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# FUTURE GENERATIONS NOT TO FORGET COMRADE MUDALI

Radhakanta Sethi

Around 12 O'clock in the mid-night, when an abrupt telephonic message reached me through SuryamaniBabu; the message was: "MudaliBabu is no more." While on the way back from Berhampur, MudaliBabu felt pain in the chest; by the time he reached Apollo Hospital, matters came to an end. I was instantly dumbfounded. I could not think of what to pronounce. Since I was far away, it was not possible on my part to reach there instantly.

After I kept the receiver, I could not manage to sleep in the night anymore. I cannot rationalize why all old scenarios flashed in my mind. Prior to my joining in CPI(M) as a full timer, I knew SurendraBabu, but he did not know me then. At Rourkela, he was quite well-known, as a Party Leader, Labour leader, and a Lawyer. During State Conference of Students Federation, I had talked to him. Even today, I perfectly remember how he discussed social issues with a sense of possibility, and suggested us to carry on work in right earnest. In a later phase, owing to bifurcation of the Party, there was no scope of meeting him for quite a long period.

In the year 2000, after joining CPI(ML), I got an opportunity of meeting SurendraBabu, not as a Party Leader, rather as a Manager of an Educational Institution. I was astonished to see that the earlier dreams of the past which he had cherished during the Organization of the Party, had not completely died down. MudaliBabu had collected all information about us, specifically about me from my friend my friend Chakradhar Pradhan. Even today his words echo in my mind: "Think up, what can we do?" "All of you must do something." Then, I reinstated the trust I had lost in connection with my earlier old Party Members. Sometimes, when I talked to him over telephone, he would tell me: "Make some time to come over here and we shall talk." With an open mind and heart, he used to aid and assist in the organization of various Movement and Party Programmes. Whenever we demanded of him: "You are to do this job," he always did it with a smiling face, a rare quality which I never found with anybody else. Surendra Babu had a strong desire of opening a State-based P.U.C.L. / P.U.D.R. in Orissa, congregating all the progressive intellectuals of the State. For this, he was always prepared to provide all cooperation on his behalf. From time to time, he was holding discussions on this and drawing attention of many people about the utter necessity of having such an organization. He was of the opinion that the Govt.'s planned actions of swarming upon the Peoples Movement and individual freedom must be curbed. In order to make the people aware of the stark reality, there is a need to have an action-oriented Organization which would not only work as a bridge between the Workers of the Movement and the people, but also would be able to expose the true character of the Government. But it could not be materialized under the end. That desire of his could not be fulfilled. Whenever he meets me or telephones me after publishing *Janabadi*, he would ask in first instance: "How is the quality of the writings of the Weekly? What are the people saying about it?" I seldom see in others the qualities in him which lies in his constant endeavour to instill in the mass the people-oriented thoughts.

Many might be thinking that he was completely away from the organizational work of the Marxist Party, but, on the contrary, he was himself doing the Work, and was also getting the Work done by others, with total involvement with friends and Comrades who were making new applications of Marxism. Ageing could not restrict him.

The persons who had seen him might know how in his talk, in his work, and in his gleeful encouragement to others, he had always retained a sportsman spirit. The future generations would surely remember his life-long efforts to advance the progressive thoughts in the society. If he was deriving pleasure in the management of his educational institutions, he was getting greater pleasure in organizing progressive programmes, and also extending help to various Parties and their Organizers.

His bodily sickness could never obstruct him from doing work. Until his end, he was working with great pleasure as the Editor of *Janabadi*. My last meeting with him was while we approached for some help for the magazine *Akshar*. He was very much rejoiced reading *Akshar* and profusely praised Amiya. While he instructed him to keep up such efforts, he had given implicit suggestion of extending future assistance to *Akshar*, which was quite encouraging. A Leftist thinker who always gave companionship to the people, journeying forward with the Movements of progressive thoughts on their shoulders, has left us for all times to come. We can never forget the constructive role Comrade Mudali played as an active associate of the progressive Leftist Movements, and, above all, as a well-wisher of the people-oriented politics.

Ex-MLA, Pattamundai



# COMRADE MUDALI THE VOICE OF THE REPRESSED

**Jyoti Ranjan Mohapatra**

A Leader of the Thinkers of the Leftist philosophy, an Educationist, a Militant, Com. Surendra Mudali began as a Revolutionary right from his student career. His bold self-confidence accompanied with his Marxist philosophy shaped him as an exceptional entity. His distinct imprint was unmistakable everywhere whether it was the framing of the Organizations of Labourers or exploited, repressed people, or the Leadership thereof, or it is the establishment of educational institutions. Till the fag end of his life, he had robust faith for the Leftist ideology. One of his rare creations, the Weekly Magazine, *Janabadi*, both published and edited by him was devoted to preaching and expanding this idealism, and sharpening the tone of the deprived and repressed people. The sad demise of such a sharp and upright man of my birthplace Niali area has not only created a vacuum, but also put an end to a symbol of sacrifice and commitment. On the demise of Com. Mudali, I offer tributes to him on this eleventh day ritual, on my own behalf, and, also, on behalf of our Party, All India Forward Block, Orissa State Committee.

General Secretary, All India Forward Block.



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# COMRADE SURENDRA MUDALI – AN INSPIRATION FOR REVOLUTIONARY IDEALS

N. K. Mohanty

On the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1966, I resumed the job of Office Assistant in the Personnel Department of the Rourkela Steel Plant. Owing to non-availability of residential accommodation in steel township, I took my transfer in Aug. 1967 to the office of the lime stone quarries at Purunapani. To cope up with the circumstances, I joined A.I.T.U.C. At that time, Com. Nityanand Panda, then the State Leader, was in charge of the Sundargarh District affairs. At once, he announced my name as the Branch Secretary of the United Mines Mazdoor Union, Purunapani Branch, Tensa. I was completely ignorant of the political dynamics of Marxism. In the Guntur session in Andhra Pradesh, AITUC was divided, and, as a result, Calcutta, CITU came into existence in Calcutta. At that time, Comrade A. B. Sabhapati, President of the United Mines Mazdoor Union, and Surendra Mudali from Rourkela came to Purunapani, and I had the opportunity to meet them. Com. Surendra Mudali was to address the General Body. He boldly pronounced: “We shall put up a fight with the proprietor; we will not compromise with the Government’s anti-Workers policy.” Being inspired with the quotation of Surendra Mudali, many members like Late Shivaprasad Jena, Dhruvalal Karmakar, S. K. Dutta, M. R. Ramchandran, P. C. Pati and others seceded from A.I.T.U.C., and joined along with me in C.I.T.U.

Under our leadership, about one thousand Workers of Purunapani lime quarry, with the demand of payment of arrear salary, *gheraoed* the Manager’s Office. In the previous night of 25th May 1975, Emergency in India had already come into force. The Police from both Hatibari P.S. and Biramitrapur P.S. made a joint venture in the mid-night and arrested me along with others like Shiva Prasad Jena. Dhruvalal Karmakar, Surendra Singh and Vidya and presented us in the Magistrate’s court at Uditnagar around 2 p.m. next day, urging the Magistrate not to grant bail to us since, in their eyes, we Naxalites, but Surendra Mudali and Jajneswar Mohapatra put forth strong arguments against such charges, as a result of which we were ultimately granted bail. Afterwards, my courage to fight for the cause of the Workers got enhanced and strengthened further.

At that time, Com. Laxmidhar Biswal took charge of Sundargarh Distt. Marxist Communist Party. Under the inspiration of Com. Surendra Mudali and Com. Laxmidhar Biswal, I joined C.P.M. in the year 1971.

During Emergency in 1975, the Authorities transferred me to Rourkela Steel Plant. Com. Mudali was behind the bars under MISA. Com. Lambodar Naik was arrested under D.I.R.. Com. Bikram Choudhury was also arrested and was sacked off his job. Com. A. B. Sabhapati was retrenched from his job and was arrested. Com. Laxmidhar Biswal, to escape from arrest was underground in my quarters. The then Student Leader Com. Bishnu Mohanty was arrested under MISA. Secretly, I was doing the Trade Union work inside the plant, and I was managing communication at my risk. Being released from Jail, Com. Mudali, Laxmidhar Biswal, Lambodar Naik, and Manmohan Naik together

engaged themselves with the management of both C.P.I. (M) Party, and C.I.T.U. Union.

By taking leadership in various Movements like Traffic Workers Movement, Contractual Workers' Movement, Students Movements, Talcher - Bimlagarh Movement, Tensa-Barsuan Permanent Workers Movement, Kalta-Koira Quarry Workers Union Movement, he got many successful agreements signed by the proprietors. Owing to his efforts, C.P.I.(M) Office, A.K.G. Bhawan was constructed at Shaktinagar. He always advised the Workers to organize united and disciplined Movements. He dealt with them with adequate sympathy, patience, and impartiality. He was opposed to following Marxism blindly, and advised the Party and Union Workers to judge its applicability, and choose decisions and lines of action on the yardstick of success. He had attracted many leaders of Mass Movements to the C.P.I. (M) Party. Today, his wife Janaki Mudali suffers from loss of memory because of senility. Comrade Mudali was much above from blind beliefs, Com. Mudali's death causes least loss to her heart.

Comrade Laxmidhar Biswal's death, owing to a heart-stroke, and brutal deaths of the Leader of the Mines Workers, Anant Rout, and Amiya Das made him a lone worker in the busy life of the Party as well as the State Party, and as such he released himself from the busiest schedules of party life. While he remained busy in the rest of his life by establishing N.I.S.T. Engineering College, a Residential School in his village, publishing Odia Weekly (*Janabadi*), he kept himself abreast of Marxist line of thinking without any distortion. During our occasionally meeting, while we discussed the existing National and Global issues, he was able to analyse the matters without any mistakes. With least hesitation, he endorsed financial assistance to Left parties. As per the revelations during discussions with him, he had more support for C.P.I. (M.L.) Liberation's work schedules. While he was Gen. Secy. CITU Union, Member of Editorial Board of Sundargarh Distt, C.P.I. (M) Committee, Secy. of CITU Steel Federation, N.J.C.S. Alternative Member, he had sharpened my line of thinking with a lot of advice. While the Leader of U.T.U.C. (L.S.) Com. Satyapriya Mohanty and I were confined inside the Plant for 7 days, my wife got perturbed and came to him. He not only convinced her about the justness of the strike we had staged together, but also gave her help and solace to remain firm. For me, he was memorable pillar of political ideals. By losing a competent Comrade of mine, I feel a great sense of loss.

On the occasion of this memorization of pride and glory, I offer my homage to Comrade Mudali by presenting the following lines which I have composed with utmost reverence to this great personality:

How many times did I die?  
Oft have I arisen merry.  
Mobility, the Truth in Life-and-Death,  
I'm an eternal Revolutionary.

Rourkela



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# THE SUN OF THE BATTLE

## SURENDRA MUDALI

**Amiya Pandab**

Although he was not maintaining good health, still then MudaliBabu was enthusiastic and active in pursuing his work. In the early 1990s, i.e. in 1991, he was bubbling with aggressive rationality when I met him first at Rourkela, while working for the Student Federation; it was the same undaunted decisiveness that was distinctly marked in him still, when a few months back I saw him at his residence.

Just after he recovered of his sickness, despite doctor;s advice, he made best of his efforts to do his work with alacrity. He used to take into account national and international news, and made an analysis of the same. He often discussed the “Contents” of Janabadi. In the 1990’s, we were always doing our day-to-day work in A.K.G. Bhavan at Shaktinagar, Rourkela, and, as such, availed the opportunity to go to SurendraBabu’s house which was its adjacent house. Even at that time, he was a man of influence and a respectable personality. He had high regard as a man of trust in the Party as well as in the entire city. Later on, he distanced himself from the party, and I also left Rourkela. After a gap of many years, I met him in his office in the premises of Apex. Age had not withered him. In spite of the burden of the age, the same militancy, the same gesture, the same straightforwardness, the uncompromising comments which I had noticed ears before were evident in him., rather they were sharper and pungent.

In the last three years, I had met him many a time. He was always worried over the facts of communal chaos arising out of bigotry and fundamentalism, human rights violation or annihilation, and state repression etc. . He was keeping every detailed information about what action was being taken and not taken with regard to these matters. He was disconsolate at the fact that fighting against these repressive forces was not done as it was expected. He was really a unique exception so far as his support for the Leftist, Progressive and Resistant forces was concerned. He had always kept his door and coffer open for these activities. He was an empathetic fighter, so much so that in spite of rational and intellectual differences and incompatibility with others. He had freely extended help to many people, power blocs and organizations. The militant Surendra Mudali had cherished many hopes and dreams. As a true Leftist, he had an unflinching desire to construct a society on the basis of love and equality.

He was in fact a radical Red Star. Until the end of his life, he had undivided trust and firm belief for alternative and people-oriented politics. In spite of his success in business, his life philosophy and life style were characterized by his inalienable strategy of conflicting lines of thinking and idealistic perspectives.

He was very happy to see the Magazine ‘Akshar’ and had strongly promised me that he would provide incessant support and cooperation for such a venture. ‘Akshar’ would remain obliged to him for all times to come for such help and coordination. Today, he is not physically present amongst us, but we realize his presence very much. His sudden demise is a terrible shock to all of us, and is an irreparable loss. Nevertheless, his militant personality, his generous empathy, his decisive perspective, and above all his indomitable warmth will make him immortal for all times to come. Until the voice of protest against inequality in the society persists, Com.Surendra Mudali will dazzle like a bright star in the firmament and will pave the path-finder like the lighthouse of the revolution.

Militant Com. Surendra! Be immortal!  
Editor, “Akshar,” and “Angikar”, Bhubaneswar

Editor, Akhyara

# GOOD BYE! MUDALI BABU

**Alikishore Patnaik**

I have been conversant with the name 'Surendra Mudali since 1972-73. By then as students we were active with "Students Federation of India and determined to form the CPI(M) at Berhampur. By then we heard of the name Surendra Mudali who was at once the Lawyer, Trade Union Organiser and CPI(M) Leader. Comrade Bishnu Mohanty, Surendra Bisoi and other comrades were not only active, but also taking leadership in SFI. Behind them stood MudaliBabu who was an inspirational leader.

Such an opportunity was not available for us at Berhampur. We, the students while reading in Khallikote college and taking active part in Students Federation, formed the CPI(M) here. Locally there was no other leader to guide us. We, ourselves formed the CPI(M) unit. We were at once Workers, Organisers and Leaders for ourselves. Then, we used to remember Comrade Surendra Mudali.

In 1975, in the midnight of June 25th or to be exact on 29<sup>th</sup>, Emergency was proclaimed in the country. Democratic rights like expressing free opinion, holding meeting and committees, and the opposition parties' right to conduct their day-to-day functions were nullified all over the country. To express free opinion in media was also sieged. All democratic systems, rules and procedures were curtailed and the dictatorship rule of the Congress was imposed on the citizens of the country. Thousands of Non-Congress leaders and workers, belonging to the State as well as the Centre, were put behind the bars on one consideration or the other.

During that period I was arrested on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1975 and sent forth overnight to the far off Sundergarh District Jail. Sundergarh was completely a new and alienated place for me. I felt lonely, because by that time no political leaders or workers had been arrested and confined to the Sundargarh Jail. After four days, both MudaliBabu and JajneswarBabu came from Rourkela to Sundergarh Jail. In association with Mudalibabu, I felt as if I had got a guardian. MudaliBabu's arrest was the third time arrest under MISA. It was good that he was a lawyer, too. So he had enough experience and legal knowledge about MISA law. My stay with him for 25 days in Jail was an unforgettable experience. His warm and comradely behavior accompanied by his political discussions was for me a source of inspiration. After emergency was lifted I had the wonderful privilege to work with him together from 1977 to 1991-92. In C.P.I.(M) State Committee, we both had worked together. Of course from 1992, MudaliBabu did not take part in active politics, but he took great care in organizing Mines Workers in unapproachable regions of Sundargarh, fighting for their rights, in uniting and re-organizing the Workers of the newly coming-up Industries, and in lending a political voice to these new organizations by bifurcating them from the professional Trade Unions.

MudaliBabu had successfully created his own identity in the stature of a Communist Trade Union Organiser and Leader. As a result, his contribution to the organizing of CPI(M), Sundergarh District unit was worth noting. When Com. Laxmidhar Biswal, an experienced Trade Union leader from Calcutta joined as a full timer as an Organizer of C.P.I. (M), Rourkela, the duo could be of great help in organizing the Party and developing the progress of the Trade Union.



MudaliBabu moved away from active political work and kept himself busy in social activities until the end of his life. Till the end of life, he had strong belief in Leftist politics, Communist ideals, and struggle for social change, and put himself up as a model of total liberation for the struggling man. This was the ultimate belief of Mudalibabu. For the last few years, he has created an exceptional identity for himself by publishing a Weekly, entitled 'Janabadi', in which he put forth the alarming problems of Workers, Peasants, Dalits and Tribals' along with their struggle to achieve their desired end.

By the time of his death, MudaliBabu had transformed himself into an institution. He had left an unforgettable stamp of his originality everywhere – in his founding of Technological Institutions like N.I.S.T. and APEX in collaboration with his worthy son Sangram for the spread of technical education in the State, in the establishment of the Residential School in his village for the education of the Tribal students, and in the publication of the Weekly, *Janabadi*.

Secretary  
CPIM, Odisha State Committee



## A MEETING BLOCKED WITH MUDALI BABU

**Kulamani Jena**

I had close acquaintance with Mudali Babu since long, when I was a Lecturer in Vedvyas College, Rourkela. He was a regular reader of "Agnée Vina." Occasionally, we were meeting each other. Later on, in the year 2000, I left Rourkela. Perhaps, much before me, he had left Rourkela. Although MudaliBabu was pre-occupied with his family matters and professional activities, he had a knack for the formation of the Leftist organizations and their programmes.. After a long time, I met Mudali Babu in a cultural programme which was organized on the eve of Arandhuti Ray's arrival in Bhubaneswar. During the course of interaction with him, I suggested him to be active with Media and Publication works. After a few days, he published a small newspaper, called '*Janabadi*'. MudaliBabu's close associate, ChakradharBabu communicated with me regarding this newspaper, and, also, the activities of other Media. I suggested him for formation of a publishing unit of the progressive newspaper. Further, I asserted the need for the publication of a news-based literary magazine in Odia language. Chakradhar Babu proposed for having a discussion with MudaliBabu on this matter. The suggestion remained as a suggestion only. I could not have the opportunity to meet MudaliBabu. It is because he bid us farewell for all times to come.

Rtd. Lecturer, Department of Odia



# IN MEMORY OF COM. SURABABU

**Bansidhar Das, Lecturer**

Chakradhar telephoned me to communicate the news that Surababu passed away. This was an initial information. Since I had been bed-ridden for the last two months, I could not go to see him. I cried over phone and told him to communicate my condolences to his family members. People in this society believe in heaven and hell, also sin and virtue. After death of every man, people pray for the dead to go to heaven. Some people take the dead to *Swargadwar* ('the Gate to Heaven'), because the soul at *Swargadwar* will straightaway move to heaven; also, because there is no problem of police or traffic. Sometimes, in memory of our dear ones, we give a good feast to people, and take a lot of credit for that. In other words, if a man dies, there are proper systems to send him to heaven. Surely, such a notion is not only fallacious, but an imaginative conjecture.

After death, man does not go to heaven; he stays here; he lives amidst earth, water, air and dust of the place. If he has done noble deeds, people remember him. He gets laurels for his good work; it is this which keeps a man alive. There is a saying: "Nobody knows where he goes after death." In the words of the renowned ancient philosopher Charbak: "*dehasya punaragamanam kutah*" ("Whither goes the body again?" There is nothing called *Atma*; after man's death, his body is turned into ashes; thus, there is neither soul, nor the return of the soul.. That is why Charbak was beaten to death by the followers of Brahminism. What is more he added to that line of hymn: "*runam kruthwa ghrutam pibet*" ("Drink ghee by incurring loans").

If we analyse the life of SuraBabu from these perspectives, it will come out that he was a thorough humanist. We two were childhood friends. We graduated Law together. At a time, we started our service career; I became a teacher in Bentakar High School, and he became a teacher in Upali School. As Members of C.P.I., he became the Secretary of Sundargarh District, and I became the Secretary of undivided Cuttack District.

Our personal bondage was so thick that whenever he came to visit "Digant," he started searching for me and we dined together. As a person, he was a real human. His contribution to education is unforgettable. To my knowledge, the kind of expansion of education that he has done in the rural villages through the establishment of two Engineering Colleges and one I.T.I. Institute, has not been done by anybody else. He has provided all kinds of facilities to the students of rural villages in his institutions. In his "Digant" the destitute home was established where the poorest children of the tribal infested areas have been given education with free boarding and lodging. It is something unique in this part of Odisha. It is worth mentioning that he provided free medicine to the poor and disadvantaged people of the villages. He can never be forgotten in this regard. He will remain immortal for his welfare work. At last, I offer my heartfelt homage to my friend.

Law College, Jagatsinghpur

