

Chhattisgarh security act challenged in Supreme Court

The People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), a human rights organisation, has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the validity of the Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, 2005 (CSPSA).

'PUCL has challenged the constitutional validity of CSPSA in the Supreme Court. The petition was filed May 14, the day PUCL's vice-president Binayak Sen completed one year in prison having been illegally detained under the draconian law,' a PUCL press statement said Saturday.

'The petition has been drafted by former chief justice of Delhi Rajendar Sachar, senior advocate Sanjay Parikh and advocate Anita Shenoy,' the release added.

PUCL and several other human rights bodies and NGOs have been strongly opposing CSPSA, accusing the state government of using the act as a tool to put those people behind bars who have been highlighting government's alleged human rights violations.

The rights body said that 43 people have been detained in the state under the stringent CSPSA. Binayak Sen, 58, a physician was arrested May 14, 2007 for his alleged link with Maoists at Bilaspur town.

Right organisations and NGOs fighting for Sen's release and repeal of CSPSA got a major boost when 22 Nobel laureates recently sent a letter to President Pratibha Patil and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, asking them to allow Sen to travel to Washington to receive the Jonathan Mann Award for Global Health and Human Rights.

Sen was chosen for the Jonathan Mann Award by the US-based Global Health Council in April. The award ceremony is scheduled for May 29 in Washington.

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