

FACT CHECK News / Crime / Odisha priest chops off man's head inside temple to appease gods, ward off coronavirus

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A 72-year-old priest in Odisha hacked a man to death to offer him as human sacrifice to appease the gods and ward off the coronavirus pandemic.

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Mohammad Suffian

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An elderly priest in Odisha's Cuttack allegedly performed 'human sacrifice' to appease the gods and end the coronavirus pandemic. The priest chopped off the head of a local man inside the temple premises to perform rituals.

The incident took place at a temple near Bandhahuda under Narasinghpur police station in Odisha's Cuttack district on Wednesday night.

The accused priest has been identified as Sansari Ojha (72), who is the priest of Bandha Maa Budha Brahmani Dei Temple. He later surrendered before the police on Wednesday night soon after committing the crime.

The deceased man has been identified as Saroj Kumar Pradhan (52). According to the accused, an argument erupted between him and Pradhan at the temple over the 'sacrifice'.

As the argument aggravated, Ojha hacked him to death with a sharp weapon. The man died on the spot after he received the blow on his head.

During interrogation, the priest said he committed the murder after receiving 'orders from god' in his dream in which he saw that human sacrifice will dispel the coronavirus.

Police have seized the axe that was used in the murder. Police have sent the body for post-mortem. Further investigation into the incident is underway.

Locals at Bandhahuda village said the priest had a long-standing dispute with the deceased over a mango orchard on the periphery of the village.

Police DIG Central Range Ashish Kumar Singh told India Today TV, "Preliminary investigation reveals the accused was heavily drunk at the time of incident. The next morning when he came back to his senses he surrendered and accepted the crime."

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The priest also said that he committed the murder after receiving 'orders from the goddess' in his dream and that the human sacrifice will dispel the coronavirus. Police also said that the priest seems mentally unstable.

Social activist Satya Prakash Pati said, "It's unbelievable in 21st century that people still behave in such barbaric ways. We demand strong action against the guilty."

With inputs from Sachidananda Behera in Cuttack

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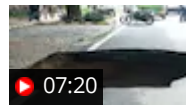
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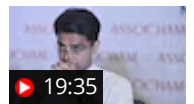
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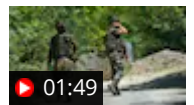
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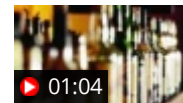


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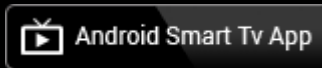
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