

**VIGILANCE DIRECTORATE
ODISHA, CUTTACK.**



PRESS RELEASE

Dt.01.07.2026

PRASANTA KUMAR PATRA, AE AND PRAFULLA KUMAR BEHERA, JE OF KOTAGARH BLOCK, DIST-KANDHAMAL ARRESTED BY ODISHA VIGILANCE FOR MGNREG SCHEME FINANCIAL FRAUD OVER RS.42 LAKHS.

In a major crackdown on grassroots corruption, Prasanta Kumar Patra, Assistant Engineer (AE) and Prafulla Kumar Behera, Junior Engineer (JE) of Kotagarh Block in Kandhamal district were arrested by Odisha Vigilance and forwarded today i.e. on 01.07.2026 to the Hon'ble Court.

The arrests follow allegations of financial fraud involving the misappropriation of over Rs.42 lakhs in government funds meant for development projects under MGNREG scheme in the Block. The action was initiated following a detailed inquiry into the execution of the Amrit Sarovar (Pond) project and other allied developmental works in the Dharakote Gram Panchayat area. The corruption allegedly spanned a three-year period, from the fiscal year 2023-24 to 2025-26.

A joint physical verification and rigorous technical inspection were conducted to assess the ground reality of the heavily funded rural projects. The findings exposed a disparity between the official paperwork and the actual infrastructure on site. The Official records showed that an amount of Rs.49, 83, 995/- had been fully processed and paid out for the projects. The technical evaluation revealed that the work actually executed on the ground was worth a meagre Rs.7,42,357/-.

A bigger portion of the amount over Rs.42 /-Lakhs was pocketed by the accused without any corresponding work being performed.

The probe revealed that under MGNREGA guidelines, digital geo-tagging of a site at various stages of completion is mandatory before any financial

bills can be generated or cleared. In this instance, no geo-tagged photographs were ever captured or uploaded.

In this connection, Odisha Vigilance has registered vide Berhampur Vigilance P.S. Case No.06 dated 30.06.2026 U/s 13(2) r/w 13 (1)(a) PC (Amendment) Act, 2018/316(5)/61(2) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was registered against the accused persons.

Investigation of the case is in progress.