

RIGHTS

Telangana: RTI Activist Killed, Prime Accused Husband of BRS Leader

Seventy-year-old Nalla Ramakrishnaiah was a former Mandal Parishad Development Officer. He had been fighting against people who had or were trying to occupy assigned land parcels.

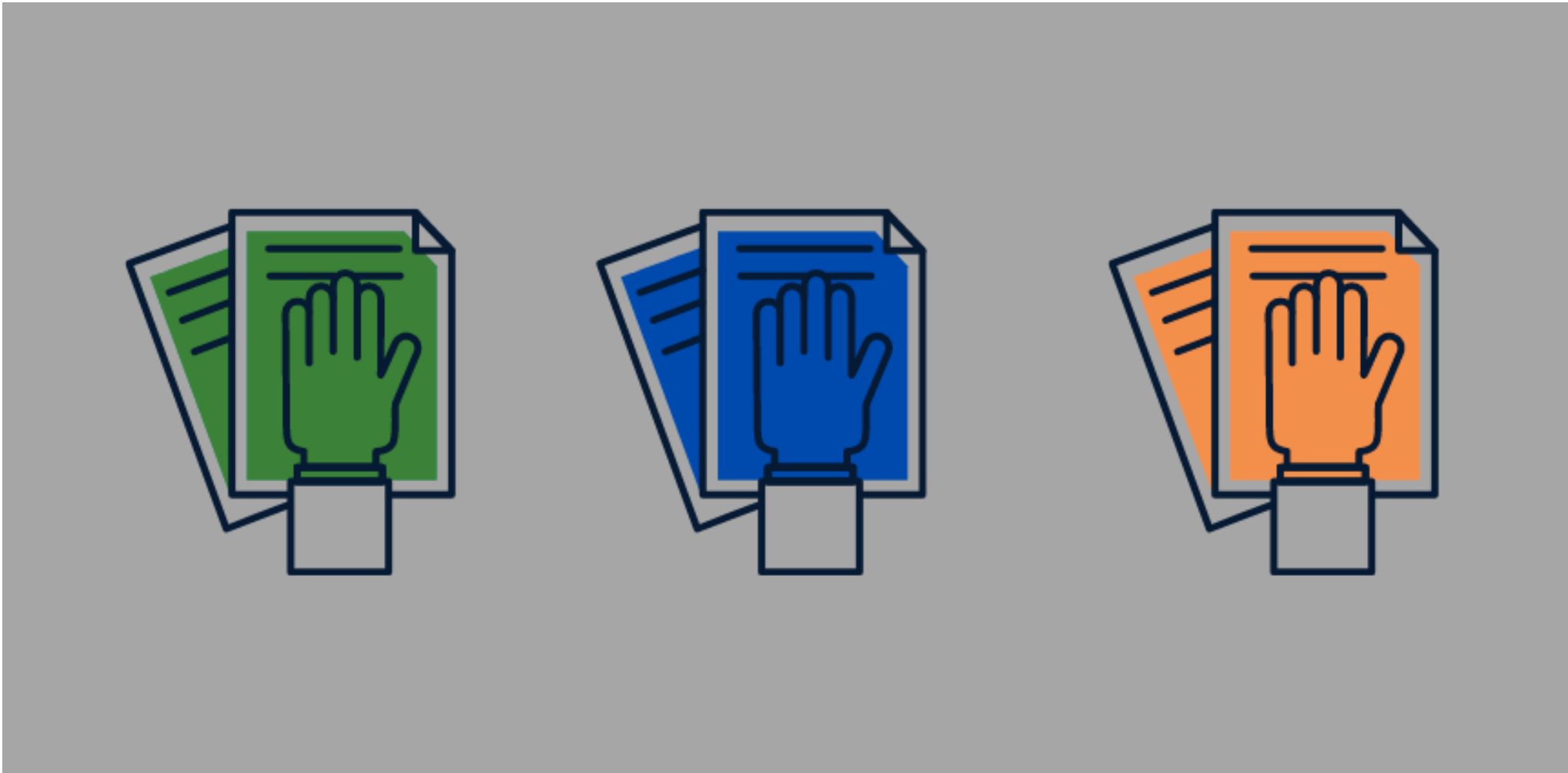


Illustration: The Wire



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GOVERNMENT RIGHTS 20/JUN/2023

New Delhi: Three people with connections to the ruling Bharat Rashtra Samithi in Telangana have been arrested for killing a Right to Information activist.

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Times of India has **reported** that 70-year-old Nalla Ramakrishnaiah's body was discovered on Sunday, June 18, at a quarry in the Champak Hills near Jangaon. He had gone missing from the Pochannapet village on June 15.

Ramakrishnaiah was a former Mandal Parishad Development Officer. He had been fighting against people who had or were trying to occupy assigned land parcels.

Ramakrishnaiah had suspected the role of G. Anjaiah, the husband of a local BRS leader, in the alleged land crimes. Anjaiah is among those arrested for the murder. The RTI activist would approach government officials to act against the illegal occupation of land. Anjaiah had allegedly take 8.2 acres of land originally assigned to Ramakrishnaiah. The latter had filed an RTI request, obtained relevant documents and approached the human rights commission to get the land *pattas* given to Anjaiah cancelled.

Police told reporters that Anjaiah, apparently angered at this, contacted contract killers to kill Ramakrishnaiah. He had earlier threatened the activist.

RTI activists frequently face threats and attacks for their work, across India.

Last year in June, RTI activist **Ranjeet Soni was shot dead** by unidentified persons near the Public Works Department office in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha. Soni had gone there to collect documents on government works.

In November 2021, **the discovery of the burnt body** of a 22-year-old RTI activist, Buddhinath Jha, who had 'exposed' illegal medical clinics that were operating in a Bihar village had led to outrage.

In September of 2021, **Vipin Agarwal**, a Bihar RTI activist who like Ramakrishnaiah crusaded against encroachment by land mafias was shot dead. Six months after Agarwal's murder, his **14-year-old son died by suicide**. His family blamed the police's disregard towards the crime.

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