

EDUCATION PLUS

Against all odds



KavitHa Tirkey

JANUARY 16, 20'7 00:00 IST

Banshbadhur Nagvanshi, a student from a tribal community in Chhattisgarh, talks about the challenges he faces in his journey.

Banshbadhur Nagvanshi belongs to a tribal community in Balrampur district of Chhattisgarh. Like other tribal communities in the region, his community too is affected by Naxalite presence.

He has overcome many difficulties to pursue higher education — a master's degree in computer applications from Loyola College, Chennai. He is the eldest of three brothers, enjoys coding and is actively involved in teaching the children of migrant workers. Excerpts from an interview.

Why did you choose Chennai for pursuing higher education?

I came to Chennai to pursue engineering, but due to financial problems I couldn't do so. Then, I came to know about Loyola College and secured a seat in B.Sc. Computer Science. I never thought that I would pursue this course as I always aspired to do engineering. As I am from a rural and underprivileged background, coming to a metropolitan city like Chennai to study was not easy. Everything was new.

What are your views about Naxalites?

The Naxals are ordinary people like you and me. The main reasons for their presence in Chhattisgarh are corruption and poor educational infrastructure. People do not get the jobs they deserve because of corruption. The zamindars exploit the poor and uneducated peasants into signing bonds due to which they lose their land and livelihood. In Chhattisgarh, only a few get the opportunity to pick up a pen.

What is your aim and where do you see yourself in the future?

I have always aspired to become a District Collector, but seeing the poor educational infrastructure in my locality I chose to become a teacher. Even the people who manage to graduate lack in-depth knowledge of their subjects. In the near future, I want to teach and and serve my locality. Besides teaching, I want to help underprivileged people learn various skills such as driving. I want to motivate the people in my locality to educate their children so that they can have a a better future.

What are the challenges you have faced so far?

There were many instances when I almost had to give up my studies. When I was in Class II, my parents decided to pull me out of school in order to rear cattle. But, a family from my village convinced my parents to let me continue my studies. When I was in Class IV, my

parents again urged me give up studies to help the family in the farm. But my teachers persuaded them to let me continue.

After Class IV, I hardly recall buying clothes, taking money from my parents for fee. I did well at school and after Class VIII, I shifted to an English medium school with help from some people. After I completed Class XII, the people who had been supporting me left, and I went into depression.

Who is your inspiration?

My inspiration is my teacher, Mr. Sunil Viswakarma, who always motivated me to work hard. He had other job options but he chose to teach and serve the society.

[<< Previous Story](#) [Next Story >>](#)
