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## Two Class 10 Girls Found Pregnant in Odisha State-Run Hostels, Triggering Legal Probe

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– Categories: Crime



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Authorities in Odisha’s Kandhamal district have launched an investigation after two Class 10 students residing in state-run residential hostels were found to be pregnant. The revelations have sparked outrage and prompted legal action under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The incidents were reported from two government residential schools in the tribal-dominated Tumudibandh block of Kandhamal. The pregnancies came to light after school authorities noticed irregular behavior in the girls upon their return from the summer vacation. One of the students reportedly declined sanitary napkins during routine distribution, raising suspicion among hostel staff. Both girls were sent for medical check-ups, which confirmed their pregnancies.

Following the confirmation, the respective school headmistresses filed complaints with the local police. Separate FIRs were registered at Kotagarh and Belghar police stations. The police have initiated inquiries to determine the circumstances leading to the pregnancies and identify those responsible. Both girls are minors, aged around 15, and their pregnancies appear to have occurred during their stay at home during the summer break.

Kandhamal District Welfare Officer Saroj Samal confirmed that an investigation is ongoing and that statements from the girls, their families, and hostel authorities have been recorded. He assured that action will be taken in accordance with legal provisions and that both girls are receiving medical care and psychological support.

The discovery has prompted concern about the safety and monitoring mechanisms in state-run hostels meant for tribal and underprivileged children. Education officials have been instructed to review safety protocols and improve supervision in hostels, especially during long vacations.

Child rights activists have called for better training of hostel staff, stricter supervision during vacations, and improved counseling services for students. They also emphasized the importance of comprehensive sex education and community awareness to prevent such incidents.

As the investigation continues, state officials have promised strict action against anyone found guilty and have pledged to strengthen child protection systems in educational institutions.