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## Father Sentenced to 20 Years for Raping Teenage Daughter in Odisha

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A special court in Jajpur, Odisha, has sentenced a 36-year-old man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for repeatedly raping his 16-year-old daughter. The conviction was delivered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act after the court found clear evidence of sustained sexual abuse within the household.

The case came to light in December when the survivor reported the incidents to the police. Following her complaint, authorities arrested the accused and filed charges under relevant sections of the POCSO Act. The prosecution presented testimony from the survivor, medical reports, and corroborating evidence, which the court deemed sufficient to establish the man's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

In addition to the prison term, the court directed the Odisha State Legal Services Authority to provide the survivor with ₹5 lakh in compensation to support her rehabilitation and future well-being. The amount is intended to help the victim access counseling, continue her education, and rebuild her life away from the trauma.

During sentencing, the judge underscored the seriousness of the offence, stating that crimes of this nature within a family inflict severe emotional and psychological harm, often lasting a lifetime. The court stressed the need for strong punitive measures to deter similar crimes and to uphold the protections guaranteed to minors under the law.

The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights welcomed the ruling, noting that timely reporting, thorough investigation, and speedy trial processes are essential to securing justice for victims. Child protection officials have also urged communities to remain vigilant, report suspected abuse without delay, and ensure survivors receive both legal and emotional support.

Authorities confirmed that the survivor will be provided with ongoing assistance, including counseling and safety measures. Child rights advocates emphasized that public awareness and community education remain vital to preventing abuse and ensuring children are protected, especially in situations where the abuser is a family member.

The judgment reinforces the POCSO Act's role in delivering swift and stringent justice, while also highlighting the importance of providing survivors with the resources necessary to recover and move forward.