POSCO war zone - Administration suggests more compensation

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In a major boost to the proposed INR 52,000 crore POSCO project in Orissa which has been marred by delay due to protests over land acquisition, the district administration in Jagatsinghpur has initiated steps to expedite land acquisition and other activities.

As per report for the purpose, the district administration led by Mr Gyanaranjan Dash collector of Jagatsinghpur recently conducted a review meeting with the POSCO officials and other revenue officials.

Despite resistance from the public and the rift between the anti & pro POSCO activists, the district administration has chalked out the strategies to win the hearts of the affected people and convince them in favour of the project.

The efforts of the district administration to expedite the land acquisition for the POSCO project has come at a time when the POSCO Pratirodha Sangram Samiti the organization spearheading the anti POSCO movement has somewhat been weakened following the arrest of Mr Abhya Sahoo the anti POSCO leader in October 2008.

The district officials have given a suggestion to the POSCO officials to increase the cost of compensation towards land from INR 300,000 to INR 1200000 to INR 1500,000 per acre and also give INR 10,000 per decimal to the betel cultivators instead of INR 6,000, as prescribed in the state policy, towards the loss of betel vines.

The officials also suggested the company to open training centers immediately for training the local students on various trades and to construct well designed buildings with all facilities for rehabilitation of affected villagers.

The district collector emphasized on the need to develop rapport with the affected villagers as their cooperation was needed to expedite the project.

During the discussions, the POSCO officials informed that the company has decided to construct a 10 kilometer marine road from Dhinkia to Paradeep for safety of the affected villagers. This road is being considered as an important road for transporting raw materials during the installation of the POSCO steel plant and also to protect the local villagers from tidal waves as hundreds of villages are being swept by the tidal waves during cyclone and depression.

(Sourced from Business Standards)

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