
Protesters battle against ArcelorMittal in Jharkhand

Friday, 12 Mar, 2010

CorpWatch reported that in the rural, tribal lands of Eastern India protesters are going head to head with world steel giant ArcelorMittal.

The villagers cry that "We may give away our lives, but we will not part with an inch of our ancestral land. The forest, rivers and land are ours. We don't want factories, steel or iron. ArcelorMittal Go Back."

A vociferous tribal activist, Ms Dayamani Barla, is spearheading the Jharkhand movement under the banner of Adivasi Moolvaasi Asthitva Raksha Manch. She has pled her people's cause from the villages of rural India to the centers of European power.

Ms Barla said that "For any tribal community, land is not an asset to be sold, but it is their heritage. They are neither masters nor its owners, but its protectors for future generations. The natural resources to us are not merely means of livelihood, but a symbol of our identity, dignity, autonomy and culture, for generations."

Ms Barla argues that the Indian Constitution protects Scheduled Tribes people in the affected areas by barring non-tribals and private parties from transfer or purchase of tribal lands and natural resources.

The two affected Jharkhand districts, Gumla and Khunti have a preponderance of Munda tribes, while Keonjhar in Orissa is dominated by Gond, Munda, Dehuri, and Saunti tribes.

(Sourced from www.corpwatch.org)

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