
Gopalpur land losers revive demand for return of land

Saturday, 13 Jun, 2009

BS reported that the people, who lost their land to the TATA Steel's jinxed steel project at Gopalpur in Ganjam district in mid 90s want back their land, which is lying idle for over a decade following the shelving of the project.

A displaced person said "We gave up our land with a hope to see the project come up. But the company shelved it. The MoU signed between the company and the state government has lost its effect from August 28th 2001."

Mr Ramesh Gouda, a project affected farmer said "As the MoU has lost its relevance, the government should return the land to the land losers."

Mr Babuli Sahu another affected person said "We have submitted memoranda to the revenue divisional commissioner, southern division and the district collector urging them to return our land."

The MoU for the project was signed on August 28th 1995. It may be noted that TATA Steel proposed to set up a galvanize plant and multi purpose SEZ to utilize the acquired land. However, no substantial progress has been made on this front too.

As many as 696 families were displaced from 5 villages and another 1500 families of 12 villages gave up their land to make way for the project. It had acquired 3,800 acres of private land for this proposed shore based steel project which envisaged 10 million tonne of steel capacity when fully completed.

(Sourced from Business Standard)

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