

JSPL Retorted

10th December, 2007.
Patratu, Jharkhand



Jindal Steel and Power Limited faced a strong public retort in attempt to acquire land for integrated steel plant in Jharkhand.

Last month on 8th of November the Company has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Jharkhand Government to set up 6 million tons per annum integrated steel plant and 1000 MV Captive power plant near village Balkudra, in Patratu block, district Hazaribag in Jharkhand state.

Company has stated that 2538 acres of land will be purchased from villagers. Company has already acquired 600 acres land by purchasing the closed Bihar alloys and steel limited (BASL, renamed as UMI steel limited) The proposed project threatens to displace the villagers of Balkudra, Rasda, Jainagar, and Kurse Village.

In the process to acquire land and get environmental clearance (NOC) an environmental public hearing has to be held today. Villagers rejecting the proposal while announcing their mandate they shouted slogans that the company should go back.

According to the rules Public hearing should be held in the village which is going to be most affected and this should be well informed to general public.

Villagers were not informed about this meeting till a week before. When they came to know about this by themselves they raised the voice against it.

Public hearing was not scheduled in the Public Place but in the BASL Campus. When Villagers tried to enter the venue they were terrorised by the Police.

Villagers have to say that they are Adivasis and according to the Law of the Land (the CNT Act) their lands can not be transferred to non-tribal, in this case Jindals.

The acquiring of BASL campus by Jindals is also illegal as it is originally an Adivasi Land and after the Closure of the Company it has to be returned to the riyats (the original tillers and owners of the land) according to the law.

Referring to the news papers cutting villagers said that there are serious allegation of crop damage, pollution, illegal mining and revenue burglary on JSPL hence Jharkhand government should not allow this company to state.

On the other hand Chief Minister has already laid the foundation stone on 18th March 2007 much before the MoU and NOC for this Patratu Project.

This shows great disrespect to environment and peoples. This is a gross humiliation witnessed today on the Human Rights Day.