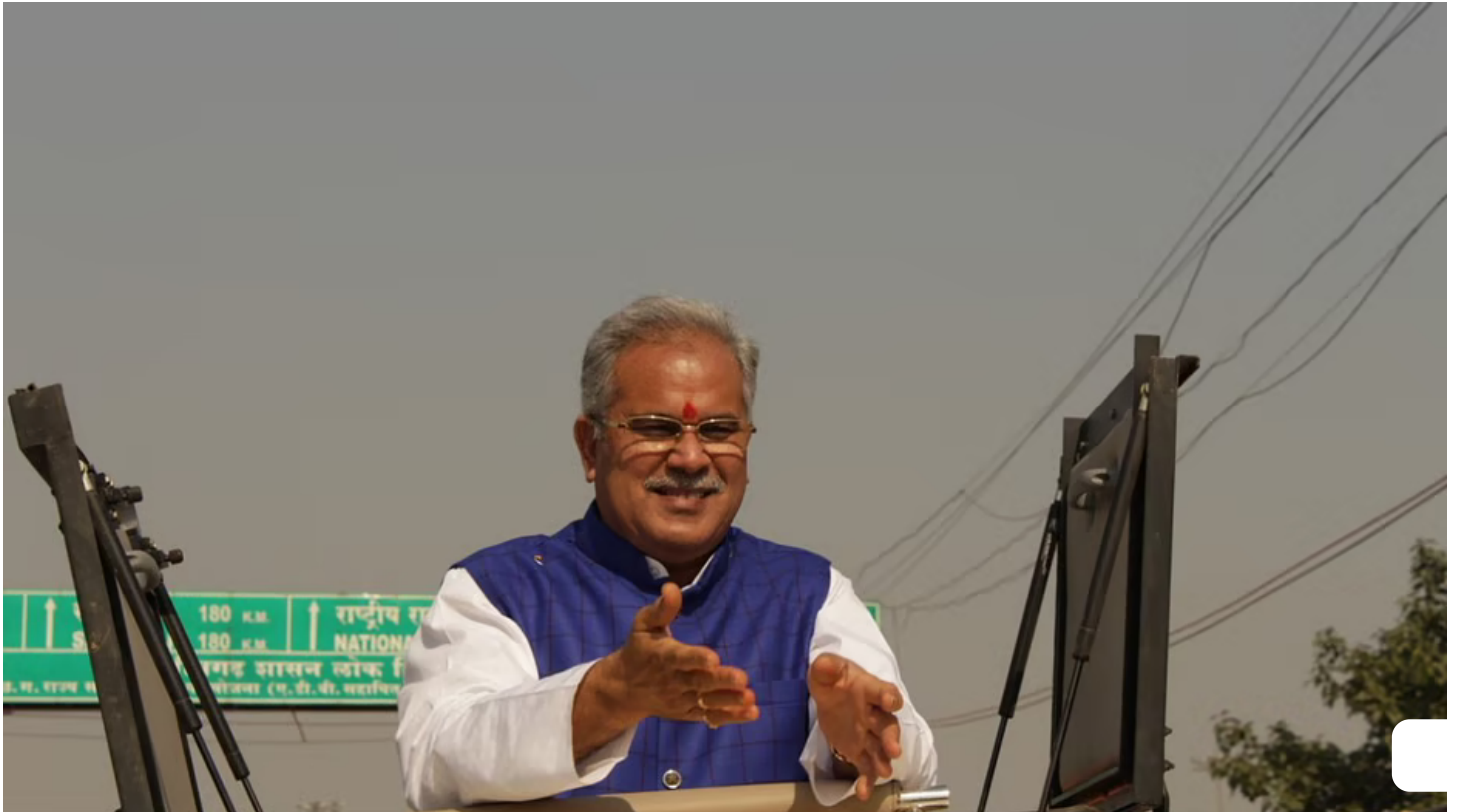


NATIONAL

## Chhattisgarh government to return land acquired for Tata Steel

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday announced that agricultural land acquired in 2008 for Tata Steel would be returned to the villagers in Bastar.



NH



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In pursuance to the promise made in the manifesto before the assembly election, Chhattisgarh government plans to return agricultural land acquired for Tata Steel to the farmers.

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The manifesto proposed that all such agricultural land acquired for industry, where no work has started till five years after the acquisition, would be returned to the farmers.


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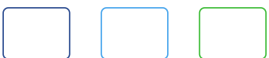
Land covering as many as 10 villages in Bastar had been acquired in February and December, 2008 for the steel plant. But work is yet to commence on the land.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel directed officials to prepare the paperwork for approval in the next cabinet meeting.

Both Congress President Rahul Gandhi and the Chief Minister had promised farmers before the election that the land acquired in Lohandiguda would be returned to the farmers if Congress came to power.

The Chief Minister was sworn in on December 17 and on the same day he had announced a loan waiver for farm loans and had increased the procurement price of paddy to ₹2,500 per quintal.

By announcing his decision to return farmland acquired for an industrial House as big as the Tatas, the Chief Minister has sent out a signal to other industrialists that they can no longer sit over projects and make no investment on land acquired for industry by the government.





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Mineral rich Chhattisgarh had earlier gone on a land acquisition spree by the BJP government in the state. The new government has resolved to review all such acquisition of land and return them to the farmers, if no work has commenced so far.

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