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Thursday, September 12, 2013

## Sriperumbudur landowners condemn meager compensation

Landowners in and around the villages of Sriperumbudur near Chennai are hopeful after the passing of the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill (LARR) in both the houses of Parliament recently that they will get adequate compensation for their land being acquired by the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited (SIPCOT) for industry and other purposes.



Several villages across the satellite town of Sriperumbudur, an upcoming industry hub near Chennai, are under SIPCOT's acquisition and millions of acres of land have been identified and notified in the government gazette for acquisition.

Many landowners said that they had received a letter from the SIPCOT's special tehsildar saying that their land has been under acquisition but are disappointed to see the meager compensation amount mentioned, which, they said, was too low compared to the prevailing market rate.

Govindan, who owns a three-acre land in Vallam village, is all in tears. He has to forgo his land for a meager Rs 200 per sq ft compensation (as announced for his land) whereas the prevailing land value there goes up to Rs 800 per sq ft. He is pinning on the hope that the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill will enhance the compensation. He has two daughters and kept this land for their education and marriage expenses.

The Bill, which is aimed at protecting the interests of the landowners by providing four times the market value of the land acquired, has been passed by both the houses of Parliament on September 4. The last hurdle for the bill to become a law is the President's consent. Once the President signs the bill, it will become a law.

The office bearers of the newly formed 'Sriperumbudur Manai Kappor Sangam' have expressed hope that the



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bill will help their 150-odd members to get a fair compensation. "Most of our members who have lands in villages like Vallam, Vadagal, Palanalloor, Mathur, etc are being offered a meager compensation running from Rs 120-Rs 250 per sq ft, depending upon the proximity from the main road and nature of approvals (whether it is Panchayat or DTCP).



A few members of the Sangam have recently met the Kanchipuram District Collector and gave a representation requesting him to enhance the compensation amount.

Expressing the compensation is very low compared to the market value of the area, Gopal Sharma, who owns a piece of land measuring 4800 sq ft in Vadagal, said he is hopeful that the state government under the aegis of Chief Minister J Jayalithaa would do justice to the landowners in Sriperumbudur by enhance the compensation as per the current market value.

"We are very upset that nearby plots are selling like hotcakes and several frontline builders have already launched residential projects on the Sriperumbudur-Oragadam stretch. The flats are being sold from Rs 3000 to Rs 4000 per sq ft,' rues Ravikanth, who owns a land at VGP Vinoth Town in Vadagal, very close to the six-lane highway behind Rajiv Gandhi memorial. He has been offered Rs 160 per sq ft for his DTCP approved land whereas the current market price for land at nearby areas goes up to Rs 850-900 per sq ft.

To up the ante, some of the landowners have filed cases in various courts against land acquisition. It is reliably learnt that SIPCOT has not sent letters to these litigants.

"We don't want to contest against the land acquisition as the government wants it for industry or public purposes. But we are aggrieved about the compensation part. To make the matter worse, the SIPCOT is hurrying up in settling the compensation to those who are surrendering the documents.

Most of the landowners are staying away from Chennai and they have no time and energy to fight against the compensation. Also, we have no one to pursue the state government. I hope the LARR bill would make the state government to enhance the compensation to the landowners of the Sriperumbudur,' says S Ramamurthy, who owns four grounds in Vallam village.

All the members of the Sriperumbudur Manai Kapor Sangam had individually written to the Kanchipuram collector and SIPCOT Special Tehsildar expressing their inability to accept the compensation amount.

When contacted the SIPCOT, the writer was informed that the special tehsildar has been transferred and new tehsildar will take charge soon.

It is either the collector or the tesildar who keep changing frequently but the status of the 'gullible' landowners of Sriperumbudur remains the same, who neither could build a house nor sell the land.

Posted by [Ramanathan Krish](#) at 11:45 PM

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