

ALOKE BANERJEE KOLKATA, OCTOBER 17, 2009 | UPDATED 10:58 IST

Salims pull out of big Bengal projects

Less than a year after the Tatas announced the decision to withdraw the Nano project from the Left-ruled West Bengal, it is the turn of the Indonesia's Salim Group to inform the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee government that it wants to pull out from the expressway and township project in the state.

Chief minister Bhattacharjee had personally visited Indonesia in 2005 to woo the manufacturing giant Salim Group to invest in various projects in West Bengal.

Four year down the line, Bhattacharjee's dream has turned sour as the Indonesian group, led by Anthony Salim, has formally written to the chief minister's office that they wanted to withdraw from the muchhyped 108 km-long Expressway project because of the government's failure to hand them the required land for the project.

Now, a shocked but helpless government has decided to place an agenda in the cabinet meeting to be held next week to pass a resolution to return Rs.70 crore, which had been submitted by the Salim Group as "development fee." State commerce and industries department sources said this was the first time that a major international group expressed its intention to withdraw from the state after the exit of Tata Motors' Nano because of continuing political disturbances over land acquisition and this could send "very wrong signals."

The state government had assured the Salim Group executive director, Benny Santoso, that the company would be given 5000 acres in South 24- Parganas district to build the Expressway and also a cluster of townships along the road in 2006. The Expressway would have connected the industrial township of Haldia with National Highway 34.

Yet after the Left Front suffered repeated jolts in elections mainly because of the government's aggressive land acquisition drive for industries, state finance minister Asim Dasgupta announced in the Assembly in August that the government would not acquire land and the Expressway project was being shelved. The future of the other major Salim Group project-the proposed Rs.40,000- crore chemical hub-is also in limbo as it is yet to receive the nod from the Union environment ministry.

West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC) managing director Subrata Basu said the agreement with the Salim Group was yet to be scrapped. "The situation has not reached that stage. But it is changing fast. If they want back their money, we will have to return it," he said. Salims had first expressed their intention to withdraw from the Expressway during the chief secretary's visit to Indonesia in April.

Courtesy: Mail Today

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<p>Justin Bieber bood at Billboard Music Awards The singer was accepting the Milestone Award when the crowd</p>	
<p>Ajay, Sonakshi to team up again? If sources are to be believed, the actors will be seen in Prabhudeva's next untitled film.</p>	
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<p>Taylor Swift wins big at Billboard Awards Swift won eight of 11 awards, including top artist and top Billboard 200 album for Red.</p>	
<p>Splitsvilla 6 gets hotter, spicier To be shot in Kerala, the show will also see Sherlyn playing cupid to the contestants.</p>	
<p>Ranbir has taken a road less travelled: Rishi Kapoor</p>	

Rishi praises his son for taking an unconventional route.	
Angelina to play her late mother in biopic The biopic will go into production in 2014.	
Indian tadka at Cannes 2013! Bollywood contingent in Cannes 2013 shines at the red carpet.	
Posh cries as Becks plays last game There was no sign of her usual poker face as she choked back sobs watching her husband play.	
In candid conversation with John Abraham John talks about his likes and dislikes and his personal preferences in a	
Beyonce wanted to be Whitney Houston! Beyonce was determined to be as talented and famous as the late Whitney Houston.	
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Freida's fashion statement revealed! Freida Pinto talks about how Cannes Film Festival is different from any other red carpet	
Indian cinema is on a mission in France Indian actors are at Cannes to show that their industry is more than just Bollywood.	
Justin Bieber buying engagement ring? Justin Bieber is reportedly buying a diamond ring for Selena Gomez.	
Dhanush impresses Farah Khan Dhanush is charming, likeable and screen friendly says Farah Khan.	
Chris Brown's 'soft spot' for Karrueche Tran Chris Brown apparently has a soft spot for Karrueche Tran.	

Lily Allen inspired by motherhood

Lily Allen has joked her new album will be about nappies.

Ashmit was never my friend: Veena Malik

Veena Malik denies any kind of intimacy with Ashmit Patel.

Abhay Deol to play TV host soon

Abhay Deol to host Zee TV's new show "Connected Hum Tum".

Ritu Beri applauds Sonam and Vidya's Cannes look

Ritu Beri gives thumbs up to Vidya Balan and Sonam Kapoor's Cannes

The Great Gatsby director Baz Lurhmann regrets Harry Potter snub

Baz Lurhmann regrets turning down Harry Potter.

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One Direction camped in the wild during the filming of their new 3D movie.

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