

October 13, 2009 | domain-b.com

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Tata Steel's Rs19,500-crore Bastar project gets villagers support

Excerpts:

India's largest private sector steel maker Tata Steel's proposed mega steel project in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district received a major boost yesterday with most of the local residents supporting the project in a public hearing organised by the state government.

"Most of the villagers who attended the hearing gave their consent for the steel plant," Bastar district collector M S Paraste said.

"Tata Steel officials made a presentation at a public hearing on Monday for environmental clearance and committed to invest Rs2,000 crore on environment conservation, Paraste added.

The hearing was organised by the Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board (CECB) at Lohandiguda in Bastar, some 340 km south of Raipur.

Tata Steel has proposed to invest Rs19,500 crore in Bastar district to set up a 5.5-million-tonne per annum plant.

"The public hearing programme was successful. The locals people of Bastar should be congratulated as the proposed steel plant would change the life of tribal-predominated region," Paraste told reporters.

According to officials, the state government has so far acquired nearly 80 per cent of the total 2,044 hectares needed for the project across 10 villages in the Lohandiguda block from 1,707 account holders.

The hearing was attended by Varun Jha, vice-president of Tata Steel's Chhattisgarh project, and other senior company officials.

Tata Steel officials said the company would put its best resources in place to control pollution in the area.