

# Industrialisation, Development and Displacement in India: A Study about Odisha

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## Article Info

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## Abstract:

The growing awareness among the communities who face displacement has given rise to a wide range of protest movements all over the country. Through struggles in Nandigram and Singur of West Bengal Kalinganagar and Paradip of Odisha or the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh people are asserting the need to both democratize the model as well as to seek alternative to them. The protest movement has not only created national awareness of the problem but also has raised question of equity, fairness, justice and equality before law in the matter of distribution of benefits and burdens. Though the process of acquisition of land for setting up mining, irrigation, transportation and other mega projects (mostly in the public sector) is not new, the intensity of adverse effects was never comprehended in the past as it is today. The problem of displacement and resistance is result of present development pattern followed by Indian state.

In the present days the project affected people are no longer in a mood to suffer displacement along with its concomitant attributes like occupational degeneration, social disorientation, pauperization, loss in dignity and often getting cheated of the compensation amount, which serve to make the experience a trauma. This has given rise to protest movements, marked by growing militancy. An interesting feature of the growing protest movement has been the creation of a national awareness of the problem. Also protest movements of the displaced have played a major role in displacement becoming a key issue in the debate on development.

So this study deals with the issue of industrialisation, development and displacement caused by industrial projects, which affects large number of people and the resistance offered by people to this development-induced-displacement in Odisha. It also tries to analyze the role of government in the process.

Key Words: Industrialisation, Development, Displacement, Protest, Investment

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## Introduction

The inherent characteristic associated with any development process is a change of ideas, value system, and mode of production and technique of production. In this process of development, the world scenario has never been uniform in all countries. In the present

age of globalization, India is integrating its local and national economy with the world economy. This involves opening of public and private sector industries to foreign trade and investment. This ultimately leads to rapid industrialization and subsequent growth of allied developmental projects aiming at growth

and poverty reduction. A significant social consequence of such growth of developmental projects is a large-scale involuntary displacement of people. It is industrialization that has, indeed, been pursued with the seriousness suggested in the statement by Jawaharlal Nehru “Now, India, we are bound to be industrialized, we are trying to be industrialized, we want to be industrialized, we must be industrialized”.

Industrialization including mining activities has received wide acceptance as a major strategy for development all over the world. In the post-independence period, India embarked on a course of industrialization under the aegis of the public sector, which assumed “commanding heights”. The private sector also did not lag far behind under a system called ‘mixed economy’.

After a lapse of four decades, there has been a shift in emphasis following the processes of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The strategies, however, continue unchanged though the role of the public sector has been shrinking, assigning an ascending role to the private sector including foreign investors. The corporate houses both private and public are the agencies to carry on directly the programme of industrialization. However, even in the changed scenario, the state, functioning within a system of competitive politics and democratic framework, continues to be the prime mover and guardian of the whole enterprise.

Of late, a new trend is in evidence in the process of development in many parts of the country, which poses a serious threat to the process of industrialization. It not only involves colossal loss and premature closure of the industrial units but also generates a good deal of social tension and political turmoil leading to political instability. While the state taking the advantage of the new economic

reforms starts the process of industrialization, the local people resist the developmental efforts raising a host of questions which affect adversely their lives. In the process the forces which are released create insurmountable difficulties in the path of industrialization, leading to closure of the units in a few cases. The strategy is put to searching questioning, putting the state in a fix.

Odisha, there is a popular statement that Odisha is rich in mineral resources, but it is poor. Hence, industrialization of the state is a must to eradicate the poverty, to open up employment opportunities to be educated and unskilled labour, besides enhancing the state’s revenue. Therefore, in the era of liberalization and privatization, industrialization is primarily geared towards harnessing the vast natural resources in the state. As a result, a large number of mineral processing industries are coming to Odisha to invest particularly in the area of bauxite-aluminium, and iron ore-steel. The high-voltage support of the state government has extended to industrial houses has created widespread discontent among the people who have been affected directly by projects launched on them. Their inability to receive a convincing response to their grievances from the state has compelled them to resort to violent protest as their livelihood and survival are at stake. No one disputes the fact that the state needs industrialization as agriculture alone cannot ensure growth and development. The rich mineral deposits need to be harnessed to achieve prosperity. In this connection, it is important to ask questions: Prosperity, for whom? At what cost? Does this prosperity ensure ‘equity’ and ‘justice’? These fundamental questions regarding the ongoing development paradigm require the scrutiny of planners, development practitioners and corporate magnates that have joined hands for improving the state’s economy. Rehabilitation

and resettlement of the displaced persons require special plans and emphasis on the part of the government to completely equip them with the opportunities they were enjoying and to eliminate the trauma displacement.

### **History of Industrialization in Odisha**

In India, the mining industry plays an important role in meeting the raw material need for industrial growth and attaining a degree of self reliance particularly in the core sector such as iron and steel, power, mining, cement and other essential commodities. Since 1947, India's mining industry has shown rapid growth. In the pre plan period prior to 1950, India produced 24 types of minerals with a total value of US\$ 23 million. Today, it produces 89 minerals, accounting for 3.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product and 11.5 percent of total industrial output. Public sector mines are now privately owned, by 1996-97, India had 3,488 mines. Of these, 563 were coal, 654 were metals and 2,271 were non-metals. In 1990, with the restructuring of the Indian economy into an open economy, the mining sector was liberalized, making easier for mine-owners to obtain permission for prospective mining. In March 1993, with the announcement of India's new National Mineral Policy, the mining sector was opened private initiative and investment. Some 34 mining investment proposals from transnational corporations (TNCs) covering an area of 49,000 km<sup>2</sup> were approved by the national government.

Any contemporary discourse on development in Odisha does give an impression that Odisha is really backward in terms of industrialization, whereas the actual scenario may not necessarily be so. Odisha has been there in the industrial and mining map of the country ever since its inception of mining and industry in

India.<sup>31</sup> The mineral deposit of the state is not only vast but also equally diverse. It is one of the largest minerals bearing states in India, having 16.92 percent of the total reserves of the country. Odisha has 97 per cent of India's chromites and 95 per cent of its nickel reserves, 50 percent of its bauxite, and 24 per cent of its coal reserves. Overall, it has an estimated reserve of about 5, 923 million tons of 18 minerals valued at Rs. 1,674 million in 1996. The very first private sector steel plant established in India in Jamshedpur by Jamshed Tata in the pre-independence period sourced its raw materials from the iron ore mines in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The public sector coal mines have witnessed a number of public sector initiatives in Odisha. Some 370 mining companies are active in Odisha, including public undertakings such as National Aluminum Company (NALCO), Steel Authority of India, Mahanadi Coalfields Limited, Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC), and private mining companies. The total number of mining leases in the state by 2004 numbered 607, covering an area of 101, 947 hectares. Out of these, 339 leases covering an area of 73, 910 hectares were in operation, including the extraction of bauxite, iron ore, chromites and manganese.

Mineral production in Odisha is increasing. Between 1993 and 2013, there was a phenomenal 278 percent growth in mining and quarrying (from Rs. 9,005 to Rs. 49, 489 million) even as production in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector fell by 26 per cent. In 2013-14, total

production of minerals and ores was 108, 283 million tons an astounding increase of 171 percent from 1992-93 levels. Iron ore registered the highest growth in production (36.7 per cent), followed by chromites (192 per cent) and bauxite (121 per cent). The value of minerals and ore production in Odisha was the

highest in the country, constituting eight percent of the national total (Rs.925, 255 million). In 2013-14, Odisha exported 7.64 million tons of minerals and ores valued at Rs. 21, 865 million, representing 321 and 206 per cent growth in quantity and value, respectively, over 1999-2000.

With its abundant natural resources, Odisha attracts Trans National Companies and big businesses (e.g. Aluminum Peshiney (AP) International of France, Norsk Hydro of Norway, Alcan of Canada, Alu Sussie of Switzerland, Broken Hill Propriety (BHP), Billiton and Rio Tinto of Australia, Vedanta, Sterlite, and Alocia of the United States, and NALCO, Hindalco, Larsen and Toubro, Utkal Aluminum International Limited, Aditya Birla, and Tata Group of India) in mining, steel, aluminum and coal-based power projects. Besides the availability of cheap labour, the Government of Odisha offers exceptionally huge subsidies to investors in the form of guarantees and tax concessions. The state currently ranks sixth in foreign investment, having attracted Rs.973, 000 million in investments in the last five years. Project worth Rs. 2,500,000 million are envisioned to be implemented in the state in the next five to ten years, the majority being mining and mining related projects.

This rate of industrialization in Odisha, is feared, may not lead to a reduction of poverty as the process of industrialization has not been democratic and transparent. In fact, the areas which seem to be relatively developed in terms of mining and industrialization also present a horrifying picture of abject poverty and pauperization of thousands of families, mostly indigenous. Industries are linked to being the available natural resources like metals and mineral, forests and water. Diversification and expansion in these sectors have also led to large-scale deforestation (Mining and

industrial sectors have accounted for nearly 39 per cent of total conversion of forest area to non-forest area, and responsible for the acquisition of 622, 463, 94 hectares of land of the poor in tribal and rural areas. As the majority industries and mineral resources are located in the Northern and Southern Tribal dominated regions of the state, they invariably encroach upon the major sources of livelihood like forest produces, forest and revenue lands and forest dwellers.

### **Industrialization and Displacement in Odisha**

Odisha has rich mineral resources. Industrialization takes place rapidly in the habitation of its indigenous populations for state's prosperity and economic development and employment generation. The Government of Odisha has been taking up mining operations and settling up of different industrial projects since independence. Because of its rich natural resources and new investor-friendly development policies, Odisha in recent years has become an attractive investment destination for large cooperation. The mega projects have, however, necessitated the large-scale acquisition of revenue land, forest land and common property resources. A large number of rural poor tribals in the state are dependent on forests resources, forest lands and common property resources for their livelihood; acquisition of such land has led to massive displacement. Since the majority of the displaced persons in the state so far belong to the marginalized section of the population, the impact of such displacement on their socio-economic conditions has been severe.

It is observed that in four districts of Odisha, namely Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Anugul, Sambalpur, Ganjam, Koraput and Phulbani, over half of the Adivasi land was lost to non-

Adivasi over a 25-30 year period. It is found that in Koraput district alone, over 1,000000 Adivasi were dispossessed of their land, including 1.6 lakh hectares of forest on which

they had depended for their survival. More than six percent of the district populations, a majority of them tribal, were displaced.

Table: Number of Families Displaced by Industrialization in Odisha

Types of the Project	No. of villages Displaced / Affected	No. of Families Displaced/ Affected	Total Land Acquired (Acres)
Rourkela Steel Plant	30	2367	7917.8
NALCO, Anugul	40	3997	1570
NALCO, Damanjodi	19	788	3444
Ordinance Factory	14	1200	3115
HAL, Sunabeda	10	468	3764
TATA Steel Plant Kalinganagar	20/30	815/1500	12000/13000
UAIL	24	147	2,800
Vedanta	95	319	8000/10000
POSCO	400	400	6000

The absence of any meaningful rehabilitation contributed to land alienation. The government of Odisha established transmigration schemes for displaced people who essentially eroded their cultures and facilitated their assimilation into mainstream consumer oriented society through industry-friendly education and skill training.

### Industrialisation and Displacement

Odisha is predominantly an agricultural state where nearly seventy per cent of the working population depends on agriculture. The state has nearly forty per cent of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) population, which together make 9.78 million, apart from the people belonging to the Other Backward Castes (OBC). The state is rich in mineral resources. It has 5,428 million tones of iron ore

deposit which is one-third of the total iron-ore deposits of the country. One-fourth of the coal deposit of the country is in the state, in addition to 98 to 99 and 63 percent of chromites and bauxite deposits respectively. Besides, the available infrastructure includes water in plenty, power at a cheap rate, 480 kms of coastline with one large port at Paradip and two proposed ports at Dhamra and Gopalpur.

In order to bring about economic development, the government of late has launched a massive programme of industrialization. In the year 2005 the state government had signed as many as 43 memoranda of understanding with various corporate bodies for setting up of their industrial units at an investment of Rs 1, 60,000 crore. The state has still certain pockets inhabited by tribal and backward class people which have been identified as industrially least



developed areas where the local people are pressing for setting up of industries. It has been estimated that there are as many as 92 industrial units engaged in production of Sponge Iron, which are mainly concentrated in six districts. As regards production of steel, as many as 43 private companies have shown interest to start mining and production. At least eight of them have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) pending follow up action on their part.

Against this background, the resistance movements of the local people against certain industrial units need to be probed deeply for the future of industrialization of the state. Voicing protests against industrialization by the people affected by it is not new in the state but the ongoing movements are different in that they have worked out an unprecedented unity among the tribal and backward masses against the industrial establishments as well as against the state government, making all the major political parties watchful of the situation to derive political mileage. The conflict has caused an impasse. The solution appears to have moved too far.

#### The Kalinga Nagar Industrial Complex:

The Government of Odisha mooted the idea of developing a major industrial complex in the early nineties of the 20th century in the mineral-rich region of Dangadi, Duburi and Sukinda located in the district of Jajpur. The proposed complex has the capacity of producing 15 million tones of steel annually. The complex includes about 13 mineral-based industries such as iron and steel, stainless steel, sponge iron and ferrochrome etc. Iron ore and chromites are the raw materials for these industries, which are available in plenty in the region. The state government has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding with nearly ten units spread over an area of 13,000

hectares. The major corporate houses such as the Tatas, Visa, Jindal, Mesco and some others have already started their projects and a few of them are nearing completion. In pursuance of the MOU, the state government would grant mining lease to the concerned industrial units and provide them with land for setting up their industries.

Further, the state government has agreed to acquire land from the local residents as well as to look into all matters relating to displacement, rehabilitation, and resettlement. However, all the efforts for industrialization are met with violent protest movements with increasing frequency. Since the last one year starting with the attack on the ADM of Jajpur and some policemen on May 9, 2005 during the Bhumipuja of Maharashtra Seamless Limited (MSL) over two dozen incidents of industrial violence have taken place and the MSL had to withdraw. The tribal people inhabiting the region have repeatedly expressed their dissatisfaction over the payment of compensation, which ultimately resulted in loss of life of 13 persons who were from among the tribal community on January 2, 2006. In the encounter that ensued between the police and the displaced people one Police Havildar was killed and four policemen were seriously injured while the compound wall of the 15,500 crore steel plant of the Tatas was under construction.

The compensation package was announced in 1994, according to which a land oustee was to be paid at the rate of Rs 35000 per acre through the Industrial Development Corporation (IDCO), a corporation of the Government of Odisha. Mediating between the State Government and the displaced people, the IDCO sold the land to the industrial houses at a rate of Rs 1,00,000 per acre. The compensation package was revised later in

order to enhance the rate of compensation to Rs 50,000 per acre. The people complained that they were paid less and being forced to lose their means of livelihood. The unfortunate incident of loss of lives of 13 persons not only united the tribal communities of the state but also attracted the sympathy and support of the tribal people from outside the state, giving rise to a complicated political situation and completely stalling the construction work of the industrial unit. The growth of pan-tribal unity is an emerging political phenomenon against the state political leadership.

Since January 2, 2006, the tribals of Kalinga Nagar have launched an indefinite economic blockade on the National Highway 200 at Madhuban Chhak. They are not prepared to work out any compromise with the State Government. So far all efforts of the government to appease the tribes have failed, and the present situation is characterized by a deep emotional overtone. The place where the 13 victims of police firing were cremated has been named as Bir Bhumi and on May 23, about 5000 women from Odisha, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh took out a rally and resolved not to lift the road blockade which is by now one year old.

Among other things the 7-point charter of demands of the Bistapan Birodhi Janamanch includes a complete halt to displacement in the area. The economic blockade has drawn the attention of the judiciary which has issued direction to the state government to take suitable steps to lift it as early as possible.

When the political climate is heavily charged with anti-government slogans and an unprecedented unity among the tribes of the state and of the neighboring states has emerged as a strong political force, the Tata Steel Company has announced a package. The package, it seems, is an act of wisdom on the

part of the concerned corporate house. According to the scheme, every displaced family would be considered as a family of the Tata Steel and the Company would look into their all-round development. The Company would take stock of the social and economic conditions of the displaced families every month and all the families numbering about 700 would be provided with identity cards and their progress in matters of rehabilitation and resettlement would be monitored regularly. Further, the Company would give employment benefit to all the displaced families and also revise the compensation package after proper negotiation with the people. The Company has formed a task force which includes 7 tribal members to look into all matters relating to displacement and resettlement. The package, it is claimed, is the best in the country but so far there is no response to it on the part of the protesters. However, with the passage of time, there is bound to be a change in the attitude of the people, partly as a matter of necessity. The poor tribals cannot resist the efforts made by the state. In fact, gradually people's solidarity is getting diluted; a few of them are coming forward to accept the new package of resettlement and rehabilitation announced by the Government. Nevertheless, people's discontentment persists and no solution has been worked out so far.

### **Land Acquisition and Displacement**

Odisha today is passing through a phase of industrial growth. It was never so good before. Investors perceive Odisha to have much better growth prospects than in the past. Industrialists have shown a keen interest to make investments in the production of steel, aluminium and ferroalloys, power and ports. Both the government and the industries, however, face real difficulty regarding

acquisition of land for setting up industries. There is opposition to land acquisition by the people for fear of loss of an asset which has been a source of income and livelihood for these households for generations. A fear of risk, a feeling of nervousness and uncertainty has gripped the minds of these people. They genuinely feel threatened about their future when along with agricultural land they are asked to part with their homes and homestead land. Promise of cash compensation, jobs, housing, education and health facilities has not been taken seriously by the people to be affected by the projects.

Not getting land creates a problem for industry. Loss of land creates multiple of worries for the project-affected households. While they are told about the opportunities to be made available to them by industry, they see the risks and insecurities that will accompany the promised opportunities. Parting with money is easy for the investors as that will come back to them in multiples, but parting with land is really difficult as that will never come back to the farmers.

The magnitude of displacement in Odisha can be assessed from the following facts which appeared in The Times of India (Bhubaneswar, October 6, 2009) relating to Arcelor Mittal's proposed mega steel plant in the Keonjhar district of Odisha. The plant, to come up with an investment of Rs 40,000 crores, requires 7753.309 acres of land including 750 acres for township. Government will provide 2847.502 acres and the rest 4905.807 acres have to be acquired from private landowners. Acquisition of land for the purpose is likely to displace 4000 families comprising 20,000 persons. Delay in land acquisition for the project has been caused by the opposition of the people. Tata Steel and Posco have delayed the

launching of their steel projects for the same reason.

Displacement has certain visible costs and can be given a monetary dimension. Its invisible costs like family crisis, social dislocations, emotional crisis and disturbances, loss of community attachments and local culture and the threat perceptions can be imagined but cannot be calculated. Making investments in steel may be easier than building schools and equipping them with the right kind of teachers. It is still more difficult to create a sustainable source of income and livelihood for the affected people. Plants can be set up but the wasted Common Property Resources (CPRs) cannot be created. Once displaced, people may find alternative ways of earning a living but will not forget the trauma of separation from their ancestral land.

Overshadowing all the cost and benefits is the future of children of the displaced families. It is their education, their health, their minds and their physical well-being which are likely to suffer the worst. It requires sincere efforts to resettle the students once they have been dislocated and disturbed. The real problem will be in restoring the academic environment for the students and instilling in them the joy of reading after the change which they had to accept reluctantly.

Industries interested in providing schools and health facilities for the displaced families have to address such sensitive aspects of these problems. Yet there may be an undercurrent of fear of social disorders in the minds of the displaced households. Under these circumstances the future of these people and their children would hang by the thread depending on so many unknown factors.

Odisha is a poor State. It naturally will give priority to economic development. Industrialisation will remain an unfinished



business here unless these problems are addressed and dealt with tact and understanding to ensure the desired outcomes in terms of development and inclusive growth.

### Conclusion

The past record of least satisfactory R&R policy and its implementation has developed a sense of betrayal among the displaced people of most of the projects in the country hence there is growing resistances. The incremental nature of R&R is not the solution to the growing problem of development induced displacement. There is the need of human touch. Let us consider them as 'Great Sacrifices' for nation building and be part of enjoying the fruit of development. The mechanical and economic aspects of development projects need transformation and should be looked from the angle of the sacrifices of development. Let the next generation be proud of parents' sacrifices and equally enjoy the fruit of development. The colonial politico-bureaucratic pattern of development should find an alternative mode of development i.e. to ameliorate the plight of teeming Indians through education, health rather than selling the country to the MNC/TNC and domestic large industrial houses through the back door.

Displacement should be avoided or to be as minimum as possible. The fertile land and populated areas should be out of the industrial establishment. The displaced people should be provided land based rehabilitation along with replacement cost of land rather than market determined price for the acquired land. The Resettlement and Rehabilitation measures need to precede the construction of projects. Education and training must be imparted to the affected population before the commencement

of the projects so as to prevent hijack of jobs and other benefits by the outsiders. The reservation of seats in the important educational institutions of the country for the children of displaced people is the need of the days to avoid risk of education of the children. A time bound measure is needed to achieve an all-round development of the affected area. Above all a corruption free administrative mechanism is highly necessary to percolate the desire economic and social benefits to the bottom of the society. Social Security measures like, family pension need to be introduced to all categories of displaced people irrespective of the nature of the projects. Insurance coverage in respect of health, life and property should be provided to the victims of all development projects. Land in the command area of irrigation projects must be acquired to resettle and rehabilitate the displaced people of that project concerned. The corporate house must adhere to their commitment by discharging the corporate social responsibility (CSR) in a vigorous way particularly towards the displaced people. The displaced people of other projects should also be taken in a normative manner so that their deprivation of economic development is minimized and brought back to main stream. To finance displacement, measure like collection of special assessment from the project benefit area, particularly in case of irrigation projects can also be taken. The Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy should be accorded the status of an Act. Last but not the least, before chanting the mantra of development the act for acquisition of land and R&R should content the provision of adequate measure to protect the environment so as to make provision of finite resources for the future generation and to achieve the course of sustainable development.

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