

Development-Induced Displacement (DID) - A Historical Experiment at Kalinga Nagar in Odisha

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Odisha became free from the aegis of the colonial regime along with India on 15th August in 1947¹. It inherited backwardness and deprivation under long years of the foreign rule which was caused due to multifarious factors. However, in the post- independence era which started from the construction of multi-purpose river valley projects like Hirakud, Machhkund, Balimela dams, and others, to the establishment of heavy industries like the Steel Plant at Rourkela, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited at Sunabeda, Thermal Power Project at Talcher, NALCO at Damanjodi and Angul, and others and implementation of Paradip and Dhamara port projects, and many industrial establishments from year 1990 till date which truly gave a new facelift to the land and became harbingers of a 'New Odisha'.

'Development-induced Displacement' (DID)

'Development' is a battery of positive and productive changes in the existing system for the betterment of the communities. The process involves progress, growth, upliftment, and welfare of the masses with an objective for the 'greater good' for common people.¹ The human being strived towards the path of Development since the inception of its Civilization. This process got

its gear with the progress of the civilization. The Development is more visible and pace in greater scale with 'Modern Era'. Today every country wants to lead the path of 'Development' and the entire world is broadly divided with new nomenclatures 'Developed', Developing and 'Under development' countries with a 'rate race' towards development. Almost all countries of the World today have been marveled for the positive aspects of various development projects.

The process of 'Development' instrumental towards the acquisition of Land to build 'Megaprojects viz Irrigation, Power generation, Heavy industries, Port and Harbour etc. The 'Acquisition of Land' is the prime requirement for the establishment of those projects. The Government acquired the land by invoking the doctrine of 'Eminent Domain'² for Greater Good which resulted in a huge scale displacement of masses. This process of development gives rise to a serious issue i.e. 'Development induced Displacement'. In this process of 'Development,' the communities and individuals were forced to out of their homelands and hearth etc. for economic development. This 'Forced Displacement' (Involuntary) of people gives rise to a series of socio-economic, political, psychological and environmental problems. The

displaced people are subject to potential risks of 'Landlessness', Homelessness, joblessness, marginalization, increased morbidity and mortality, food security, etc. The Rehabilitation and Resettlement is the proper medicine³ to heal up, the wound which is created by the process of 'Development induced Displacement'. The process of 'Development' is a common phenomena in the 'contemporary world' and India has no exception from it.

India after independence had witnessed wider spread poverty, unemployment, inequality, poor per capita income, and regional imbalance etc. To bring the Indian economy to developmental orbit, the country experimented with the Nehruvian vision of big dams and mega-development projects which he acclaimed as 'Temples of Development'⁴. The country started its journey in the path of development through 'Planned Economy' for steady economic growth of the nation by launching of five years plan in the year 1950. The states of independent India were imbibing this spirit of development and tried to bring some developments in their states by introducing this planned economy.

Although Orissa got its separate identity in the year 1936,⁵ but no important and substantial development could be attempted due to World War I and greater national struggle for Independence. However, after its independence, a large number of mega projects were established in the state from 1947-1987 under the able Chief Ministership of Odisha which yielded growth and development in the successive years. In spite of those Developments State of Odisha was trailing behind other states of the country in Industrial development. From the year 1990, with the advent of the New Economic Policy the rapid

industrialization started in Odisha to mitigate its desperate poverty.⁶ The road map to this neo-liberal industrialization is primarily geared towards development. The pace of liberalization and privatization took its fresh vigor in Odisha under progressive, popular and stable Government, who adopted a policy for rapid Industrialization in public and private sectors.

Industrial advantages of Kalinganagar

Kalinganagar is located in Sukinda and Danagadi blocks of Jajpur district of Odisha. It is at a distance of about 100 k.ms from the state capital, Bhubaneswar and 40 k.ms from the district headquarters. It is situated near the Chromite mines of Kalipani, Kalarangi, Sarualia and iron ore mines of Tamaka. Apart from being a mineral belt two national highways pass through Kalinganagar which connects it to Kolkata and Chennai with good railway communications. In addition to the aforesaid advantages, the river *Bramhani* flows nearby around 5-6 k.ms away from the Kalinganagar Industrial complex. The main source of living of the people in the area is agriculture and the farmers depend chiefly on annual rain due to lack of irrigation facility. These natural resources and locational advantages of Kalinganagar attracted big Industrial giants like TISCO, VISA, Jindal stainless, Maharashtra Seamless and Amal steels, etc. to the area.

The area has a higher concentration of a significant tribal and *Dalit*⁷ population. The scheduled tribe population in the acquired area is much higher than the block average. The tribals belong to Ho, Munda and Santhal communities who migrated from Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Ranchi and Singhbhum districts in different phases.

The table below shows the different communities in Kalinganagar area.

Table No.1.2.: Demography of Kalinganagar area

Name of the village/ Panchayat	No of Households	% of ST population	% of SC population	Literacy rate	% of cultivator labour	% of agricultural labour
Chandia	331	85.9	2	37.6	41	36.2
Gobaraghathi	558	88.8	2.1	53.5	16	37.7
Gadaput	140	97.8	0	46.7	43	13.5

Source : District Census Report, Jajpur, 2001

Background of Kalinganagar event:

With the advent of liberalization and economic reforms in Odisha, the idea of the Kalinganagar Industrial complex was conceived. In the last three years, the state Government of Odisha had signed more than 40 MoUs with various private companies to set up steel plants in the state. The Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation of Orissa (IDCO) was entrusted with the task of developing infrastructural facility to attract foreign investors for setting up industries in the area. The root of agitation date back to the early 1990s, when the government started to acquire land in response to the promise of a London-based non-resident Indian millionaire Swaraj Paul for setting up a giant steel plant in the state.⁸ The table indicates the land acquisition undertaken for the establishment of different plants in the area.

Table No.1.1:List of Plants and lands (in acre) allotted to them in Kalinganagar

Mideast (MESCO)	530 Acres
Orion	150 Acres
Maithan Ispat	100 Acres

Uttam Gala	370 Acres
NINL	2500 Acres
Maharashtra Seamless	500 Acres
TISCO	2400 Acres
Rohit Ferrotech	50 Acres
JINDAL	678 Acres
VISA Industries	390 Acres
Dinbandhu	100 Acres
K.J. Ispat	50 Acres

Source: Additional District Magistrate Office, Kalinganagar, Jajpur, 2006

Land acquisition and Compensation

In the year 1990 IDCO started to acquire land and a small portion of the land was transferred to different industries. The rest acquired land continued in actual possession of the owner of the land. Till now about 13000 acres of land government land. Most of the local people had been cultivating the land for generations without a 'Record of Rights' (RoR).The land

survey and settlement in the area had not been conducted since 1928. The Estate of Sukinda was vested with the Government after the passage of the 'The Estate Abolition Act, 1951' but the tenancy rights were not conferred upon the people, who were in possession of the land.⁹ Hence, the land records have not been corrected since 1928.

Further, the IDCO has purchased the land from the people at the rate of Rs.15000/- to Rs.300000/- per acre in the initial phase of acquisition. But later as a measure of benevolence, an ex-gratia amount of Rs.25000/- per acre had been granted in different phases, which encouraged the people to demand higher compensation from time to time. The land compensation was determined as per highest market transaction in the village or adjoining villages. The valuation was obtained from the local Sub-registrar's office where the lesser value was registered in the sale transaction to avoid/minimize stamp duty and registration charges by the people. The valuation was not accepted by the people as it happened to be lesser than the actual transaction.

Displacement and Rehabilitation

The Displacement and Rehabilitation activities of the area as such were carried as per the 'National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy' and other circulars issued by the Government of Odisha from time to time, which were project-specific to regulate the rehabilitation and resettlement policy and act as guidelines. It highlighted three aspects.¹⁰

- Financial compensation for the loss of land.
- Provision of homestead land and assistance for house building.

- Compensation for the loss of livelihood.

Despite of all the compensations as above, the affected people demanded the provision of jobs to the displaced families and land for land, a form of rehabilitation measure for the affected families.

Run up to the main event 2nd January 2006

When the land was physically acquired in 1997 and the displaced families were waiting to be rehabilitated at two resettlement colonies: Trianga and Gobargati, the trouble started, at the time of shifting the families to the Gobargati colony. They demanded jobs before they left their homestead lands.¹¹ The local administration tried to settle the matter and used to the police force for eviction.

In the year 2004, the affected people through political parties' support formed an organization called 'Sukinda Upatyaka Adivasi Harijan Ekata O Suraksha Parishad' which was later renamed 'Visthapan Birodhi Jan Mancha, Sukinda'. The organization demanded five charters of demands to be fulfilled for the displaced people as below :

- Stop further construction in agricultural land.
- Give Patta to the people settled before 1980.
- Land acquired but unused to be returned to the original owners.
- Stop deliberate target of tribal or *Dalit* villages for land acquisition.
- The homestead land to be raised to one acre per displaced family.
- One job for each family etc.

During 2005, the Visthapan Virodhi Jana Mancha (VVJM) resisted all kinds of activities like land survey, leveling of land, boundary wall construction, etc. in the Kalinganagar complex. On the 9 May 2005 the conflict between local administration and people took place on the eve of 'Bhumipuja' held by Maharashtra Seamless Company. On 23 July, 2005 Tata Company came to perform their *bhumipuja* in the help of local administration, about 3000 people protested and held demonstrations at the site. The local administration lodged cases against some people and their leaders. On 25 October, 2005, Rabindra Jarika, one of the leaders of Jana Mancha was arrested by Jajpur police which was seriously protested by the people by making 'Gheraos' at Kalinganagar on 27 November 2005. People stopped the construction work begun by the Maharashtra Seamless Steel Company and a movement was slowly gaining momentum.¹²

On 2 January 2006 with the help of the administration, the Tata undertook the programme of leveling the land for construction work of the boundary wall. Top district officials including S.P and ADM, Jajpur was present. The people of the area assembled from several villages whose number increased to the tune of 300-400 number. Some of them were carrying bows and arrows, along with traditional weapons. They were assembled on the adjacent field near to the site, close to Champakoila village. The Superintendent also deployed 10 platoon reserve forces along with local police. When the leveling machine was doing its work, the protestors wanted to enter the rope cordon and stop the machine. The police tried to stop them, which gave rise to pushing and pulling from both side. Some of the policemen were seriously injured admitted to the hospital¹³ and one police personnel was killed by the crowd

of tribal assembled there. The police used tear gas and rubber bullets to check the crowd and finally under the circumstance was forced to fire which resulted in the killing of 13 tribal, injuring many.

Seven- points demands of VVJM

With four dead bodies the tribal under the banner of VVJM, Sukinda sat on a 'dharana' at Madhuban 'chhak,' on the NH 200. The road blockade continued for unlimited period. After the remaining bodies were handed over to their families on 4 January 2006 mass cremation was held at Ambagadia village. The agitators became more furious when they discovered that out of the bodies handed over by the police five had their palms chopped off. The VVJM raised 7 points of demands which should be fulfilled to stop the blockade of NH200 as follow:

1. Put an end to all displacement. Five acres of land be given to families who have already been displaced.
2. The Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, Minister of Mines, Industry, and Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe Welfare Minister be removed from Ministry, and the Minister of Finance and Chief Minister to be booked on murder charges.
3. The Home Secretary and DGP be suspended.
4. SP and Collector of Jajpur District and ADM, Kalinganagar (who were in office then and directly responsible for the police firing) be suspended and booked under Section 302 Cr. P.C.
5. Rs.20 lakh as compensation be given to the family of each dead and Rs.10 lakh to the family of injured.

6. MNCs and Monopoly companies be driven out from the soil of Odisha.
7. 'Adivasis' be given the rights over mineral resources, land, water, forests and industry in tribal areas.
8. Unconditional release of leaders and activists of the movement and withdrawal of all cases pending against them.

The issue soon attracted national and international attention and different political parties visited the spot and tried to sympathize the local people. Protests, demonstrations were held by the project affected people in several parts of the state by raising the issue of displaced lot and demanded rehabilitation.¹⁴

In the wake of the Kalinganagar killing, the state government declared a compensation of Rs.5 lakh for each victim's families, and the centre also agreed to offer Rs.5 lakh to each family. The agitators were unlikely to accept any relief as long as the government did not fulfill their seven point demands. They were drawing their strength from the support that was extended to them by some civil society members and political parties. They demanded an immediate cessation of land acquisition and also proper rehabilitation of those displaced of earlier development projects in the state.¹⁵

Meanwhile, the state government constituted a one-member inquiry commission under a sitting High court judge Justice A.S Naidu on 21 February 2006, which was supposed to submit its report on 9 August 2006. The Commission was entrusted with the task to analyze the sequence of events and circumstances that leading to police firing, the measures undertaken for handling the situation, fixing responsibility for acts of commission and omission on the part of

the administration, the role, conduct and responsibility of the organizations, group of individuals or persons influencing, precipitating or escalating the incident. The Commission received 128 affidavits by the concerned parties including Tata.

Significant Fallouts:

A significant fallout of the tragic incident was that the state government promptly came out with an R&R policy which is called 'Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy 2006'.¹⁶ The Policy has certain very progressive features such as, to avoid displacement whenever possible or minimize the displacement, if that is not possible then the displaced persons should be suitably resettled and rehabilitated. The voice of the people should be recognized and they should be encouraged to participate in the process. Special care should be undertaken to fulfill the needs of the indigenous communities and vulnerable sections. The policy also commits that no physical displacement shall be made before completion of resettlement works. It also took care of some additional provisions for the displaced people especially the indigenous families and primitive tribal groups that they should be resettled in a compact area close to their natural habitats.

Another fallout of the tragic incident was that Tata's venture hanged in uncertainty till the Judicial Commission of Inquiry submitted its report. The investors think of an alternate strategy which is friendly to the displaced people.

Concluding remarks

Odisha is rich in mineral resources. The present government endeavors to utilize the mineral resources through the policy of rapid Industrialization taking advantage of the twin concepts of liberalization and privatization. No

doubt it is the right approach to bring the State in the developmental orbit. The new industrial policy has given rise to the concept of 'Development-induced Displacement (DID)'. The rich mineral resources of Kalinganagar attracted investors to invest in the steel sector, which required the acquisition of private land on a large scale and displaced many people in the area. In the process, the native communities opposed the land acquisition on different grounds i.e less payment of land compensation, improper resettlement and rehabilitation works and defective land records system etc, which should be properly addressed by the company through the government. However, the tragic event was occurred due to certain miscalculation on the part of the big players like the companies and local communities' indifferent attitude towards development which acts as an eye-opener for future industrialization in country. The framing of 'Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy 2006' by Government of Odisha is the biggest outcome of the Kalinganagar event.

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