

The Indian Express

Monday, March 22, 2010

Greater Noida land acquisition: Farmers hold panchayat, to block work from today

Pragya kaushika

Over 1,500 farmers from 16 villages took part in a panchayat held outside the Greater Noida Authority office on Sunday to decide the future course of action in their protest against the state government's land acquisition policies and rates.

The farmer, who have been protesting at the Authority's local office for a month, have decided to forcibly stoop work undertaken by Greater Noida authority in the district from Monday. "We will not let the authority carry out construction work anywhere till our demands are heard," the farmers said.

The farmers have been demanding a hike in the acquisition rates. "Right now we are getting Rs. 711 per sqm, but we demand Rs.2, 500 per sqm. The demands also include the implementation of the improved Land Acquisition Act," Sardaram Bhati, organizer of the panchayat, said.

The other demands include an increase of the percentage of land , allotted to those whose land have been acquired, from 5 to 25 percent, as well as 50 percent reservation of jobs in the industries that come up on the acquired land for families of the farmers.

Getting an opportunity to speak against the state government, several leaders of the BJP, Congress, RLD and Jan Shakti party flocked the protest venue.

Five companies of the Provincial Armed Constabulary and additional police force from the Meerut zone were called in by the administration to be deputed in the district. "We are prepared to control any kind of mishap," District Magistrate Deepak Aggarwal said.

Aggarwal assured farmers that their demands will be taken up by Greater Noida Authority officials soon. "The issues will be resolved in a month," he added.