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# Posco awaits SC nod for more relief to oustees

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**P**osco, the South Korean steel major that is in the process of setting up a 12 million tonnes greenfield steel plant near Paradip in Orissa, will announce an additional package for families that will be displaced by the project after the Supreme Court clears its forest diversion proposal (FDP). The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the case on April 25.

"Posco will announce an additional package for families to be displaced after the Supreme Court clears the forest diversion proposal," Priyabrata Patnaik, the nodal officer of Posco India project and principal secretary, transport and commerce, Orissa government, told mediapersons today.

He said the government could take a decision regarding the physical construction of the project after the Supreme Court cleared the FDP. The Union ministry of environment and forest has sent the recommendation of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) to the Supreme Court.

At present, Posco has about 512 acres of non-encroached, non-forest government land in its possession and the clearance for diversion of some 2,900 acres of forest land is before the Supreme Court. Apart from that, it also requires about 438 acres of private land, for which demarcation and socio-economic survey were completed recently.

However, the price for acquiring the private land is yet to be finalised.

The construction work of the proposed steel plant has already been delayed by more than a year due to the opposition from locals and delay in getting the required land.

Patnaik said an equal amount of compensatory afforestation would be taken up in Cuttack, Jajpur and Jagatsinghpur districts. He, however, did not give the details of the additional package to be announced by Posco.

Meanwhile, Posco today said a decision to start the construction work for the steel project could be taken only after the forest clearance was obtained. "We need forest clearance for starting the construction work," G W Sung, director, Posco India project, told mediapersons.

After meeting Patnaik at the state secretariat, Sung said the Orissa government had been very supportive for the last three years.



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