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Thousands throng Kalinga Nagar on firing anniversary

Thousands from Orissa and elsewhere in the country today gathered at Kalinga Nagar steel hub in Jajpur district to observe the second anniversary of the police firing which killed 14 tribals, including three women.

Two years ago, the police had fired on tribals protesting against displacement due to industrialisation in general and the construction of a boundary wall by the Tata Steel for its 6 million tonnes steel plant.

While the anti-industry groups assembled today at Ambagadia, where the tribals killed in the police action were cremated, pro-industrialisation lobbies, led by those who have been rehabilitated by Tata Steel, held a parallel meeting at Maniapatana. About 2000 people under the banner of Visthapita Parivar Unyayan Parishad, led by its president Dhaneswar Soi and secretary Biren Jamuda, participated in

the pro-industry rally, which included Congress block president Sarat Tiu.

Earlier, about 4,000 people from Orissa, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh took out a mammoth rally from Champakoila to Ambagadia.

Other than local tribals brandishing traditional weapons, various groups from Nandigram, Singur, Jagatsingpur, Keonjhar, where the locals are opposing land acquisition, expressed their solidarity with Visthapan Virodhi Janamanch (WJ), which is spearheading the movement in the area. Leaders at the meeting vowed to fight any policy that exploits the locals.

"We don't oppose industries. We oppose the poor industrial policy. Industrial houses like Posco, Tata and Mittal are in Orissa to exploit the locals and not for developing the state," said Bhanu Mohanty, an activist from Keonjhar.

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