

Bengal corporate concerned over Nandigram killings

Corporate leaders in West Bengal have reacted with concern over Wednesday's police firing that claimed 14 lives in trouble-torn Nandigram as the worst discredit to the 30-year rule of the communists in the state.

'We are extremely upset about Wednesday's incident which is very unfortunate. I think the government should have solved the matter with more collaborative steps discussing the problems with the local villagers and opposition parties,' Ravi Poddar, former chairman of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) told IANS.

Poddar said: 'We know police as the saviour of common people. I don't know what provoked them (police) to resort to firing at innocent villagers. I hope things will be resolved shortly.'

Harsh Vardhan Neotia, chairman of Ambuja Realty Development and a businessman who is known to be close to the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) government, said the Nandigram blood war was definitely not good for the business community.

'It's totally a humane issue and no businessman would want to set up industry at the cost of innocent lives of farmers,' Neotia told IANS.

He said industry can cause some displacement but the government should deal the issue through a dialogue, care and proper rehabilitation packages.

'It was true that a deadlock was continuing in Nandigram for the past two and a half months but the state government should have solved it in a peaceful manner, not by sending police contingent,' he said.

Hemant Kanoria, vice-chairman and managing director of SREI Infrastructure Finance Ltd, which is involved in developing infrastructure in the state, echoed the sentiments.

'At the cost of life, nothing is good, especially industry. This brutal firing and police's role in Nandigram is not good for the state as well as for the corporate world,' Kanoria said, reacting strongly against administrative decisions of unleashing forces to tame the villagers.

'The entire episode is very unfortunate and there was a serious miscommunication between the state government and local villagers. Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya had already announced that land would not be taken by force in Nandigram for the special economic zone (SEZ) but the information was not disseminated to the villagers, leading to the deaths Wednesday,' said Biswadip Gupta, Deputy Chairman, CII [Kolkata](#) branch.

On Wednesday, industrialist Sajjan Jindal, whose Jindal Group is going to set up a huge 10-million-tonne capacity iron and steel plant at Salboni in West Midnapore, said in case of any local agitation they were ready to relocate their plant.

'We cannot stay at a place by disturbing the peace of local people,' said Jindal, who visited state secretariat Writers' Building Wednesday to meet the chief minister and industry minister Nirupam Sen.

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