



The Third reason for languishing projects

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The Third reason for languishing projects is delays due to reasons not attributable to the concessionaire.

Land acquisition is a major problem when a big project is undertaken involving many acres of land for infrastructure development. The State or the Central government acquires private land for development of the country by implementing some long term projects. Generally, when a port undertakes massive expansion programme, it needs endless acres of land in and around the port. It means it has to acquire private land by paying fair compensation. More often than not, the compensation given to the private land owners is said to be insufficient for the land owners to carry on their living for which they earlier depended on the land.

Very often, litigation and appeals after appeals from the private landowners delay implementation of the project thus leading to cost overrun for the projects. Development of the country's economy must be given top most priority but not at the expense of the livelihood of the individual. Litigation implies longer duration of time, marked with uncertainty in terms of solution to the problem.

There are other aspects to the land acquisition that complicates the entire process of land acquisition. To see some of those very difficult aspects: Litigation due to inheritance. In case, there are more than one owners of the land which they came to possess by virtue of inheritance, the acquisition of such land proves extremely difficult and almost impossible to solve. Two out of four who are legal heirs of the land might be willing to part with the land but not the rest. It leads to long-drawn litigations at so many levels of procedure. Ultimately the government may win; but 'ultimately' cannot be defined in a foreseeable future. Inherited land becomes a source of sentiment that discourages vehemently separation. My father's land is to me my father himself; I cannot part with it in memory of my father.

The land has been sold many times from person to person but all the details have not been recorded properly. To regularize the land sale for some period from the past till the present, it takes time and energy particularly of the government authorities who have to spend their time on these past errors.

Another very significant matter is the role the middlemen choose to play in the sale of the land. Middlemen meddle with the issue with a view to get some benefit out of it; of course, it is their living.

There are some more reasons other than land acquisition for the delay in getting the projects completed in time. We shall see them next.