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## Tata Steel expansion on track



TIMES NEWS NETWORK [ THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2006 12:55:50 AM ]

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MUMBAI: TATA Steel has announced that its Rs 67,400-crore greenfield steel manufacturing projects in Orissa, Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand are progressing as per the schedule. The three projects will add 23mt to its existing 5mt.

The company has planned a 6mt project in Orissa, 5mt in Chhatisgarh and a 12mt capacity in Jharkhand. Tata Steel managing director B Muthuraman on Wednesday said that the work on the 6mt per annum greenfield project in Orissa is all set to take off as per the plan.

"The construction in Dubri will start in the next two months," said Mr Muthuraman. He added that the company would also finalise and place orders for a 4,000-cubic metre blast furnace, a sinter plant, coke oven battery, slab caster and other equipment by June-July.

The company plans to commission the first phase of 3mt plant in Orissa by '09, Chhatisgarh by '10 and Jharkhnad by '11. He said that these projects would be financed through internal accruals and debt. However, the company is yet to receive any firm commitments on allotments of iron ore mines from the Orissa government.

The company is following the procedures laid down for acquisition of mines and that the leases will follow once the work on the project progresses, said Mr Muthuraman. "The MoU with the Orissa government states that as soon as 20% of the orders

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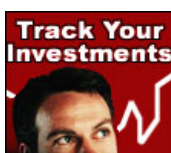
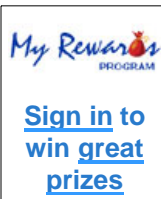
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for equipment are placed, the applications for mining leases will be processed," he said.

He, however, did not name any mining site which the company was interested in. On the issue of mines being allotted to Tata Steel in Orissa, a senior state government official told ET that new mining leases for the project was unlikely to be given to the company.

"The company already has mines in the state with reserves of around 600mt which is adequate to service the plant for more than 25 years," he said. The official added that the state government allots 1.6mt of ore for every 1mt of production capacity for 25 years.

This means that Tata Steel will require 240mt of iron ore reserves to feed the proposed Dubri plant at a peak capacity of 6mt. Tata Steel has also simultaneously begun work on its 1.8mt brown-field capacity addition at Jamshedpur. The project will cost Rs 4,500 crore, said Mr Muthuraman.

The completion of the project will take Tata Steel's capacity to 7mt by '08. On the rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) of families displaced due to these projects in Orissa, Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand, Mr Muthuraman said that the company had already implemented a programme to ensure that the displaced families would get adequately compensated for the land and livelihood lost.

He added that the R&R programme would ensure that the annual earnings of the displaced families increase every year. The company said that goal would be achieved by making the family members employable by providing vocational training as per their eligibility.

Tata Steel's projects will displace around 700 families in each of the three states. The company has already acquired 3,000 acres of land in Orissa, while the company has identified similar areas for acquisition in Chhatisgarh.

Mr Muthuraman said that the company has only earmarked the site for the plant in Jharkhand and would start the process of acquiring around 5,000 acres of land in the state. According to Mr Muthuraman, the Dhamra Port Company, a joint venture between Tata Steel and L&T, has already

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completed acquisition of land for the port.

He said that land for the corridor, linking the port from Bhadrak to Dhamra, has also been acquired. L&T, he said, has been awarded the engineering procurement and construction (EPC) contract for the port project. The port will be built to accommodate cape size vessels of 1.6 lakh tonne.

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