

Villagers form human chain to save forest

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HUNDREDS of people under the banner of Anchalika Jindal Khyatigrastha Prajasanha formed a human chain today to protect the 400 acre Jamuda forest, 25 km from here, from being acquired by the Jindal Steel and Power Limited.

The chain was formed by the villagers of Sankerejenge, Badakerejenge, Sadanandpur, Duhidabeda and Jamuda.

Women and children of these villages were seen holding placards and raising slogans to save the forest. Seeking fulfillment of their three-point charter of demands, they vowed not to allow destruction of the forest.

Convener Rabi Prasad Pattanaik said henceforth they would oppose land acquisition by JSPL. The common properties are grazing fields for cattle, village graveyards and forest. He also demanded Rs.25 lakh per acre compensation and regular jobs to all the oustees above 18 years of age.

They demanded stop to all forms of land acquisition till jobs were guaranteed to the oustees

Later, the agitators went in a procession to nearby Shiva Temple where a public meeting was held. Speakers demanded a stop to all forms of land acquisition till jobs and proper implementation of Forest Rights Act were guaranteed.

They criticized the local administrative machinery and political leaders of being agent of the company neglecting peoples' cause.