

'Gram sabha's role in LARR Bill is diluted'

TNN | Apr 21, 2013, 04.54 AM IST

VISAKHAPATNAM: The Congress-led UPA government must relook at the Land Acquisition Relief and Rehabilitation (LARR) Bill and ensure a select committee of Parliament to review the proposed legislation, especially in light of the Vedanta judgment, said CPM politburo member Brinda Karat.

The CPM leader said that the 'governor can't be a postman' for failing to act on the recommendations of the Union minister for tribal affairs, Kishore Chandra Deo, against bauxite mining in Anantagiri and Araku mandals.

The central government had diluted the role of gram sabha in the LARR Bill, Karat alleged at a press meet on Saturday. She said that the bill is against the directions issued by the SC as either the gram sabha or panchayat or zilla parishad can give consent to land acquisition.

"The role of the gram sabha is totally eliminated. The word traditional rights has been replaced by forest rights. If government is acquiring the land then there is no need for any consent," she said, adding that the move will lead to government acquiring land and then leasing it out to private companies.

The greatest loophole in the Bill is the term 'public purpose', which has such a wide meaning that everything in the world comes under public purpose and the government is trying to push the LARR Bill by totally exempting important Acts such as Mining Act, Coal Bearing Act and Railways Act.

"The Vedanta judgement is a big relief for the tribals. The SC has said that the traditional rights of tribals must be protected. The LARR Bill totally dilutes the provisions of Forest Rights Act. What is the importance of Forest Rights Act, if you want to give all land to big industrialists?" she questioned.

CPM district secretary Ch Narsinga Rao was present at the media conference.