

## **Jairam faults State on poor development in Naxal-hit area**

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**The Maoists are on the prowl where the Congress is weak,” said Union Rural Development Minister Jairam Ramesh, while addressing the elected representatives of Nuapada district at a meeting here on Saturday.**

During his second visit to the district, Ramesh reviewed various ongoing programmes — including MGNREGS, PMGSY, Indira Awas Yojana and watershed project.

“The State Government is in deep slumber most of the time and whenever I go to a place it gets up from the Kumbhakarn’s sleeping,” said Ramesh, criticising the State Government’s inactiveness to speed up the developmental works in the Maoist-hit areas.

“Sunabeda will be Maoist-free and baton (police) free in the coming years. At least Rs100 crore will be spent for the development of Sunabeda in next two to three years,” said Ramesh at the meeting. Ramesh also conducted a meeting with the members of district youth Congress immediately after arriving here.

The Union Minister said the Central Government is going to spend Rs 2,500 crore for rural development in next few years, including Rs 10 crore for development of Self Help Groups, Rs 22 crore for Indira Awas Yojana and Rs 48 crore for watershed development in the district.

The Minister visited some villages to see development works under MGNREGS before conducting a meeting with the elected representatives of several panchayats. The sarpanchs and samiti members of the Maoist affected panchayats attended the meeting in large numbers.

About the implementation of the Forest Right Act, the Central Minister said that more than 10,000 eligible people have applied for getting land under the FRA, but it is unfortunate that only 5,000 ‘pattas’ have been distributed. Answering the questions of the journalists about the community forest rights, Ramesh said that the district administration should expedite the process to give community forest rights to various communities.