

### e-Petition #3

Dear Mr. Tata,

The Tata name is today omnipresent in India, through a choice of affordable products and has today grown from a national giant into an international financial player. At the same time, you insist that the TATA group has a firm commitment to environmental justice and sustainable development. I am writing to ask you to demonstrate that the TATA Group does indeed have such a commitment and it does not put profits above environmental and social well being.

I am disappointed with the way Tata Steel has conducted itself on the Dhamra port issue in Orissa. There has for some time been clear proof of the irreversible effects that this huge port will have on the highly-endangered Olive Ridley turtles. What is even more distressing to me is that you had clearly promised to abandon the port if evidence of turtle presence was ever unearthed, yet this promise is now not being kept. Not just that, despite the simple fact that ports can be shifted while turtle nesting grounds can not, Tata Steel continues to build the Dhamra port.

I have been a follower of the Tata story and role you are looking to play in shaping modern India. Surely a decision to protect the Dhamra area and shift your port to an alternative environmentally-benign site will be more in keeping with the image that the Tatas project, and the legacy left by men such as JRD Tata, than the current position you have adopted?

I earnestly urge you to look at alternative locations for the Dhamra port. Such a decision will raise the Tata standing in my eyes and, I am sure, in the eyes of millions of Indians, not to mention an increasing global audience.

Sincerely,

Petitioner

## Reply to e-Petition # 3

Dear Petitioner,

Thanks for your letter. It's nice to know about your concerns for environment as well as for the name and reputation of our promoters. This gives us an opportunity to state facts in their right perspective.

Dhamra port in Orissa is an important economic infrastructure being built on Public Private Partnership basis with the Govt. of Orissa who had identified this location in view of its suitability for a port after studying all aspects including the environmental ones. The project has received its environment clearance which was indeed challenged on similar grounds including the issue of olive ridley turtles before the National Environment Appellate Authority. The chairman and members of the authority after visiting the site, making enquiries and consulting experts have upheld the clearance.

Your letter suggests about 'evidence of turtle presence' and 'clear proof of irreversible effects'. Those who have fed this information or perhaps drafted this letter have a clear intention to mislead people who might not have had the opportunity to know all the facts and appreciate the same. The olive ridley turtles come in hundreds of thousands to the coastal waters of Orissa during the nesting season and 'evidence of turtle presence' per se has no relevance as turtles can be found all along the Orissa coast including at and near Paradeep where a busy port already exists and has not proved to be a hindrance to turtles. Paradeep is between two nesting beaches south of Gahirmatha which is the northern most nesting beach. Dhamra port site is in fact situated north of Gahirmatha which is the only stretch of Orissa coast which turtles do not visit for nesting. The authorities considered all these aspects before giving the clearance. Those who are talking about 'proof' do not have any. Their only purpose seems to be to pursue a campaign for the sake of a campaign.

The Greenpeace India who are the main force behind this campaign had raised a number of concerns in a meeting with us and summarized them into seven points to which we had given comprehensive reply. You may like to go through this correspondence at our website [http://www.dhamraport.com/download/Greenpeace%20Reply\\_8thMar08.pdf](http://www.dhamraport.com/download/Greenpeace%20Reply_8thMar08.pdf) which will resolve most of the doubts raised on the issue.

You may like to know that we have not remained complacent and associated ourselves with IUCN, the world's premier scientific body to advice on such matters. They have studied and identified the potential areas of possible effect like dredging and lighting and have formulated measures to be taken in these areas. We have been taking these measures to their satisfaction.

Once again we thank you for your interest in the matter.

Sincerely yours,

Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

Chief Executive Officer

The Dhamra Port Company Limited