

Land Acquisition for Industrialization in West Bengal: The Tata Nano Case

Study Questions

1. What is the proper balance between the rights of rural landholders and agricultural laborers, and the goal of bringing economic growth through industrial development?
2. Are large packages of incentives offered by governments a good way to attract industrial investment into a region? What other tools can policymakers use to bring investment?
3. Should the government use legal tools like eminent domain to acquire land on behalf of a private enterprise? What about when that private investment is strategically important for the economy of the region?
4. Which stakeholders stand to gain from the Tata Nano factory in Singur? Who may lose? How can the government most equitably distribute the gains and mitigate the losses in the land acquisition process?
5. How can Debasish Som better balance the need to update small landholder and sharecropper registries in West Bengal against Tata Motors' demand for speed in setting up their production facility?
6. Given the landslide victory of the Left Front government in 2006 based on a platform of industrial development, why did the execution of their first major industrial development project face so many problems?