

OFFICE OF THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Gujarat Vidhansabha, Gandhinagar.

Press Note

25th April, 2011

- **Going against all rules of law, Revenue Minister gave two lakh square meter of land to a Mumbai based company Indigold Refinery.**
- **This is despite the legal opinion of all officers that the government should take possession of the land.**
- **There is no provision in law authorizing the Revenue Minister to allow such land to be sold directly to a businessman.**
- **Leader of Opposition released details of multi billion rupee scandal with the facts he obtained through RTI.**
- **Government should appoint a high level inquiry into the scandal if it is really committed to fight corruption as it claims.**

Leader of Opposition Shaktisinh Gohil today brought out a multi billion rupee land scandal of Modi government. In this Revenue Minister, a close confidant of Chief Minister, allowed a businessman to sell two lakh square of precious land in Kutch instead of government taking possession of the land.

Giving the details of a case of utter violation of law and total disregard to the objections of all concerned officers of the Revenue Department, Gohil challenged the government to set up inquiry by a High Court or Supreme Court judge into the land scam. He said that under the law the government should have taken possession of the land of businessman. But, Modi government showed soft corner for the businessman and allowed him to sell two lakh square meter of land to another businessman.

In this case, he said, Mumbai based Indigold Refinery, was given two lakh square meter of land in Kutch. It was agricultural land and under law the businessman had to start production from the proposed unit within a stipulated period failing which the government had to take possession of the land. In this case, the Indigold Refinery did not start the project and decided to sell the land to Allumina Refinery. And taking side of Indigold, Revenue Minister threw all rules to winds and allowed it to sell the land to Allumina Refinery.

Gohil released to the newsmen the papers of the illegal deal in which all government officers had objected to the deal but Revenue Minister okayed it overruling objections. This is about the land in the jurisdiction of Kukma and Moti Reldi village. This agricultural land was given to Indigold. This company did not start the project within the time limit of three years as per law. In such a case the government should have taken possession of land.

However, Indigold came out with a proposal to sell the land to Allumina Refinery. All officers right upto Principal Secretary Revenue opposed it. This is clear from the noting on the proposal file from July 2009 to October 2009. Overruling this, the Revenue Minister said that the company should be allowed the deal as a special case.

In the meantime an officer suggested that there should be amendment in policy and the government should collect 50 percent of the unearned income. However, this was also rejected by the principal secretary who said that as per law the government should take possession of land and then it can sell it to the other party at market price. Even this was overruled by the Revenue Minister who, on November 4, 2009, further remarked that as per earlier instructions the company should be allowed to sell the land directly as an exceptional case.

Indigold had bought land in 2003 and as per the law it had to start production within three years by any means. The company did not start production. What is more interesting is the fact that the company which was given land initially with six month certificate even did not applied for extension. The government should have taken possession by 2004, Gohil pointed out.

After six years, Indigold came out with a request to sell the government land which the Revenue Minister happily allowed despite objections by all concerned officers. Gohil described it as a glaring example of corruption by Modi government and said that Government should appoint a high level inquiry into the scandal if it is really committed to fight corruption as it claims.

To,
The Editor,

Hon'ble Leader of Opposition has requested to kindly publish this press note in your esteemed newspaper.

(J. J. Rasanía)
Personal Assistant