

Acquisition of land: PM's intervention sought

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The Rajya Sabha member from Punjab, Dr Manohar Singh Gill, today sought the intervention of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in restraining the state government from compulsorily acquiring the land of farmers.

Reacting to news reports published in The Tribune as part of the investigation "Govt as landgrabber", Dr Gill, who is a Congress MP, said the acquisition of the land of poor farmers for handing it over to industrialists was irregular and should be stopped immediately. He also urged the Prime Minister to immediately order a review of the special economic zone scheme, adding that it would turn out to be

just another means to become richer at the cost of farmers.

He also said he would write to the Prime Minister in this regard to urge him to take corrective steps.

"Taking the land of small and marginal farmers under the Land Acquisition Act, which was prepared by the British in 1885, must be done away with. Nowhere in the world except India is this Act still enforceable. However, even the British used this Act for acquiring land for public purposes only. How can compulsorily acquiring the land of small and marginal farmers and giving the same to rich industrialists, whose only motive is profit, be termed public purpose?" Dr Gill asked.