



Debadityo Sinha <debadityo@gmail.com>

Regarding recommendation of EC to 1320 MW thermal power plant of M/s Welspun Energy (U.P.) Pvt. Ltd in Mirzapur by Expert Appraisal Committee-Coal Mines and Thermal Power Projects

debadityo <debadityo@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 29, 2014 at 2:00 PM

To: vrg.iyer@nic.in

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Bcc: vindhya-bachao@googlegroups.com

To,

The Secretary,

Ministry of Environment and Forests

New Delhi

Dated: 29th April, 2014

Subject- Regarding recommendation of EC to 1320 MW thermal power plant of M/s Welspun Energy (U.P.) Pvt. Ltd in Mirzapur by Expert Appraisal Committee-Coal Mines and Thermal Power Projects.

Dear Sir,

It came to our knowledge from the minutes uploaded on the website of your Ministry that the said project is recommended Environment Clearance by your Expert Appraisal Committee in its meeting dated 25th March, 2014. We hereby condemn such clearance recommended by the committee which not only overlooked the critical issues raised by us and other affected people, but blindfoldedly believed the facts presented by the company as gospel truth. Relying so much on project proponent's information and not taking serious note of the violations and short comings in the EIA process, would gravely affect the ecological wealth of the nation leading to several health hazards. We have sent a comprehensive 'Site Visit Report' (Annexure A) of the project before EAC meeting on 18th November, 2013 and also our 'disagreement to the project proponent's reply' (Annexure B) before the EAC meeting of 25th March, 2014. EAC neither bothered to even discuss these issues nor provided reasons for recommending the project for clearance. The major issues are outlined for your quick referral as follows:

1. The EIA concealed several crucial informations like presence of River Khajuri and its interconnection with Upper Khajuri Dam and Lower Khajuri Dam. There are also two water falls on River Khajuri. The Upper Khajuri dam which is proposed to be utilized for the thermal power plant will have significant impact on downstream of River Khajuri. The Lower Khajuri dam is also source of drinking water for BHU South Campus.

2. The EIA concealed information on presence of forests and several Schedule I species like Vulture, Sloth Bear, Leopard, Bengal Monitor, Chinkara, Pea Cock and several other animals like Hyena, Jackal, Nilgai, Sambhar etc.

3. The Public Hearing of the project was held privately and without proper publicity. Local people were not allowed to even enter into the public hearing premises. Thus, grossly violating the provisions of the EIA Notification.

4. The project proponent misled the EAC by presenting a meeting held in personal capacity of some BHU faculty members as official meeting with the university. In fact, the Registrar, BHU already wrote to you requesting shifting of the site in September, 2013. There is very strong opposition by students of BHU who have protested against the project since its initiation and have already informed you about their concerns.

A formal complaint against the project proponent is also under consideration with the office of the Vice Chancellor, BHU. A copy of that complaint has already been marked to you via email dated 24th April, 2014.

5. The EIA documents were completely unavailable in public domain when the project was first considered in EAC- March, 2013 and only limited documents were available in subsequent meetings of EAC. We want to bring to your notice that even Form 1 was not available on the MoEF website while all these documents are to be mandatorily uploaded on the website before appraisal.

6. The site selection criteria is not justified, as the coal linkage is now from Indonesia and not from NCL. Also, the water requirement of the project is to be met from Ganga which involves utilization of Upper Khajuri reservoir as well. The issues related to the water availability and its impact are well described in an article published in SANDRP blog <http://sandrp.wordpress.com/2014/03/20/water-for-power-irrigation-dam-to-be-used-for-thermal-power-drinking-water-supply-of-bhu-agriculture-and-existence-of-waterfalls-at-risk/>

In view of the circumstances mentioned above, we request you to direct the EAC to provide specific reasons as to why this project was recommended for Environmental Clearance ignoring the crucial issues raised in our representations before the EAC. We expect that the Ministry of Environment and Forest would definitely look into our issues and put on hold its decision to grant final Environment Clearance to the

project.

Thanks

Regards

Debadityo Sinha


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Vindhyan Ecology and Natural History Foundation
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Copy marked to

1. Shri S.S. Garbyal, Director General of Forests, MoEF
2. Dr. Saroj, Member Secretary, MoEF
3. Shri A.S. Lamba, Chairman, Expert Appraisal Committee-Coal Mines and Thermal Power Projects, MoEF
4. Vice Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
5. Registrar, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

2 attachments

 **Annexure B (Reply to Welspun).pdf**
1436K

 **Annexure A (Site_Inspection_Report_Welspun_TPP).pdf**
4044K