

CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

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LEAVES
OF
IMPORTANT
SURVIVAL
TREES
IN
INDIA —
MAHUA,
KHEJDI,
ALDER,
PALMYRA
AND
OAK

Ref no: LF/L.51.6/EIA/1

Date: 13/05/2010

Shri J.M.Mauskar,
Additional Secretary
Government of India, Ministry of Environment & Forests
Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road
New Delhi - 110 003

Subject: Illegal construction of proposed project (Asbestos Fibre Cement Roofing Sheet of 3,00,00 TPA) prior to Environmental clearance.

Dear Mr. Mauskar,

I am writing this letter in connection with the illegal construction of proposed Asbestos Fibre Cement Roofing Sheet plant owned by M/s Balmukund Cement & Roofing Ltd. at Village Chainpur Block Katni, District Muzaffarpur, Bihar. The project falls under category A and was accorded TOR on 15 February 2010 (*Meeting held on Feb 02, 2010, Industrial project*).

On the request of the local community, CSE team had visited the project site, met local community and also interacted with Member Secretary (MS) of Bihar State pollution Control Board (BSPCB). Based on stakeholder's feedback and interaction with the regulatory agency, we have come out with following observations;

- **Violation of EIA notification** - without environmental clearance, project proponent has started the construction at the project site, which is illegal and is in violation of the EIA notification 2006.
- **In spite of adequate infrastructure to hold public hearing at the project site, BSPCB has notified the venue of public hearing at a distance of 27 km from the project site** (*Public hearing is scheduled on 29th May 2010 at Rani Sati Mandir in Muzaffarpur town*). The project-affected people are therefore demanding to change the venue to the project site. The proposed venue is also not appropriate because there is sizeable Muslim population living around the project site.
- Draft EIA report is fraudulent and concealed some sensitive issues, for example;
 - a) Draft EIA report claimed that land is barren; however project area and adjoining areas are fertile and extensively used for cultivation of mango, litchi, wheat, rice, seasonal vegetable, mustard, etc.

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- b) **Project site is sensitive as it is surrounded by eight schools and a number of villages** - Project site is located in a densely populated area and close to eight schools, among them **six are government and two are private schools**, which are within a distance of 50 meters to less than 1 km.
- c) Adjoining villages are densely populated; among them are Chainpur (located at a distance of 0 to 50 meter, approx population 10,000), Parari (0 to 50 meter from the project site, approx population 9000), Aima Bisunpur (0 to 50 meter from the project, approx population 8000), Gian village (200 meter from the project, approx population 15000), Mahmmadpur (0 to 150 to 200 meter from the project, approx population 5000).
- d) According to villagers, no monitoring was done at the project site and adjoining areas for generating the baseline data, however draft EIA claimed that they had monitored in December and January, 2009.
- e) The project-affected population is also agitated because the project proponent concealed information from them. They purchased the land for constructing farm house and nursery and later disclosed that they will construct a Asbestos Fibre Cement Roofing Sheet at the site

CSE team also met MS BSPCB and briefed him about the illegal construction and requested to change the venue of public hearing but the member secretary showed his unwillingness to cooperate.

I would like to bring to your notice that the local community has written a number of letters to MOEF, CPCB, BSPCB, district collector etc but no action has been taken. Considering the above said circumstances; for the interest of local community, we request you to intervene in the matter and arrange a new venue for the public hearing at the project site so that maximum people can get an opportunity to participate. We would send you a detailed critique on the draft EIA report for your perusal soon.

Yours sincerely,

Chandra Bhushan
Associate Director
CSE

Founder Director
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