News paper reports on public hearing held on 19th November 2010
ಪ್ರಾಜಾವಣಿ - ನವೆಂಬರ್ 20, 2011

ರಾಜ್ಮಾರ್ಗ ವ್ಯವಹಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂಲ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರದಿಂದ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

'ಖಾರ್ಮಾರ್ಗ ವ್ಯವಹಾರವು ಬೆಳೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು ಭುವನೇ ಕೇಂದ್ರದ ಸೇವೆಯ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಸಂಭಾವನೆಗಳು ಬೆಳೆಯುವ ಹೊಯ್ಸಳ.'

'ಮಹಾಬೋದ್ಧ ಸ್ಮೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಬಂಧಿತ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವೆಗಳು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಮಾರ್ಗಾರ್ಥವಾಗಿದೆ.'

'ಮಾರ್ಗಾರ್ಥ ಸೇವೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸೇವೆಗಳು ಬೆಳೆಯುವ ಹೊಯ್ಸಳ.'

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Complaints pour in at UPCL meet

“They need to remain true to the spirit of the project,” said an official of one of the developer companies.

An aged woman airing her grievance at the expert committee meet on UPCL on Saturday.

An expert panel recommendation be submitted within 45 days

The decommissioning of the plant will be the subject of a hearing on 145.

There are many issues to be taken care of by both the governments. The issues in the environment, public hearing, technical agreements, and the conditionalities need to be worked out by the committee.

The committee received 35 written applications from the victims. The expert panel will analyze each application in detail.

Though human rights violations take place in the plant area, no official has visited the site to date. The power plant licence from the Panchayat.

The expert panel has also pointed out the problems.

The panel did not visit the plant site.

The third recommendation was to the management of the plant. The project was not to continue.

The committee did not address the issues of pollution, and the panel did not visit the plant site.

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Report highlights 'adverse effects' of UPCL plant

Staff Correspondent

A Technical Report on the problems caused by pollution allegedly from the coal-based 1,200 MW thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Ltd. (UPCL) at Yellur and its surrounding villages by two experts T.V. Ramachandra and Y.B. Ramakrishna was released by Visvesha Tirtha Swami of Pejawar Math at a press conference here on Wednesday.

While Dr. Ramachandra is from the Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Centre of Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, Mr. Ramakrishna is the Executive Chairman, Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board. Visvesha Tirtha Swami had asked these two experts in January this year to submit an independent report after they were dropped from the government-appointed expert committee to look into the pollution caused allegedly by UPCL.

This technical report is based on detailed field investigation (water, soil, biotic elements) and interaction with the local people. A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, conducted a detailed scientific assessment of the environmental conditions of the region from August to November 2011, which is deliberated in the report. The other members of the team were Gautham Krishnadas, Sudarshan P. Bhat, Durga Madhab Mahapatra and Bharath H. Aithal from IISc, Bangalore.

In its executive summary, the report gives a graphic picture of problems caused by pollution from the thermal power plant in Yellur (including Kolachur), Nandikur, Nadsal (including Tenka Yermal), Bada, Padabettu, Santhur, Palimar, Karnire and Hejmadye villages.

The report states that there was contamination of water (surface and ground), soil and air apart from the impaired functional aspects of biotic elements. This was evident from reduced productivity (grains, jasmine flowers, coconut, arecanut and livestock — milk), reproductive ability (livestock, poultry animals).

Deposition of dust with toxicants in floral parts of the vegetation had reduced phyto-toxicity leading to poor pollination and hence reduced productivity. Reduced population of pollinators (bees) had been reported in these villages due to degradation of environment.

Field investigation had revealed stunted growth of saplings (evident in the power plant’s green belt), drying up of leaves, corrosion of metals and resultant damage to tin roofs, dish antennas, transmission lines, railway tracks, fencing of the power plant boundary, enhanced respiratory diseases, non-palatable grass (livestock refrain from feeding on grass). This was due to deposition of supersaturated saline mist on soil and foliage.

Along with field observations with causal factors, the report gives mitigation measures.

Keywords: thermal power plant
Udupi: Damage Caused by UPCL Should Not be Paid by Gov’t: Pejawar Swamiji

Report and pics by Michael Rodrigues
Team Mangalorcan Udupi

Udupi: Shri Vishvesha Tirtha Swamiji of Pejawar had named a team of scientists for study of damage caused by the coal-fired thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation and they have submitted report. The Swamiji has handed over the report to chief minister Sadasivendra Gowda and directed him to pass the order as in the report.

The Swamiji released the report at a media meet in the Math on Wednesday and said that this report had given him enormous strength to his fight against the UPCL.

Under the guidance of chairman of Bio-Fuel Task Force Y B Ramakrishna, the Swamiji had appointed a team of 6 scientists and they have studied all the reports with precision and technical support. The report says that there is severe damage to surrounding villages’ environment. He has also urged the UPCL to follow the rules without any conditions and also threatened to protest with the public.

Until now the affected public and environmentalists had opposed this but the UPCL had rejected it for reason that it was unscientific. Now that this report has been submitted by the experts, the Swamiji has exerted pressure on the state government and the UPCL.

The report details the financial, social and health-related problems, hence the UPCL must take responsibility of cleaning up the pollution, compensating the affected etc. The government need not pay all this amount from the tax-payers' money. Only the UPCL must be made to pay it, he said.

When the UPCL started functioning with the support of the BJP government in spite of opposition, the Swamiji began opposing it. To pacify the Swamiji, the late Dr V S Acharya recommended a team of 6 scientists, four of them from the government and two of Swamiji's choice. Annoyed over this, the Swamiji requested the two scientists of his choice to prepare a report separately.
UPCL affected lives of people, says Report

May 4, 2012

Udupi: Water has been contaminated, the yielding capacity of crops has gone down, and reproduction of livestock too has been affected.

These are some of the points mentioned in the findings of the expert committee that inspected the areas affected by Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL).

The report states that the lives of people living in villages like Yellur, Nandikur, Nadalla, Thanke Vemalu, Bada Padebetta, Sanchoor, Palimar, Karmine and Hejamudy has been greatly affected. Along with air pollution, even the fertility of soil has gone down, thereby leading to depletion in crop yield.

The report also states about a startling fact that most of the animals domesticated in the area are not being able to reproduce.

“The growth of plants around the region is not like before. The dust settlements on the leaves of the plants are burning down the leaves. There is sudden discolouring of plants. People are facing breathing problems due to the air pollution. The salt emanating from cooling tower of the unit has been Depositing on the fodder, making it unfit for consumption by the cattle,” the report reads.

The report says that the iron content in water available around two kms radius of the unit has increased drastically. The water in the region does not meet the ENSO prescribed standards.

The coal waste is released to water bodies in Yellur, Padebetta, Thanke and south Kolachur, which has massively polluted the water bodies. The report speaks of the unscientific management of flying ash. It is said that the water from the ash pit is released into river Shamhavari due to which the underground water at Sanchoor village is getting affected.

“The salt mixed water is getting leaked due to which the fertility of the soil is at stake. This is having direct impact on the yield,” the report says and adds that the number of birds in the region too has decreased.

The report recommends steps to stop pollution in the region, restore the natural surroundings, all works related to pollution control and conservation of nature should be taken up by the management and Government should not fund these projects and the unit should abide by all rules and norms applicable to them.

Dr Y V Ramachandra, Y B Ramakrishna, Gurumum Krishnasdas, Sudarshana P Bhat, Durga Madab Mahapathra and Bhavith Aithal were the members of the team.
Pejawar seer submits report on Udupi Power Corporation Limited to govt

TNN  May 4, 2012, 05.53AM IST

Tags: Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami | Pejawar seer | Karnataka State Biofuel | chief minister DV Sadananda Gowda

MANGALORE: Pejawar seer Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami has submitted a report prepared by the parallel expert committee, formed to study environmental impacts of the thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL), to chief minister DV Sadananda Gowda.

Earlier, the parallel expert committee consisting YB Ramakrishna, executive chairman of Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board and TV Ramachandra of Energy and Wetlands Research Group had submitted the report on the pollution caused by the plant to the seer.

The panel observed in the report that the open type box transportation method used by the unit is causing spillage of coal and coal dust in the vicinity. "Railway tracks, fencing of the green belt of the plant, tin sheets, transmission lines, iron pillar and silver-plated door frame and door of the main entrance of Subramanya temple in Padabetu and Durgaparameshwari temple in Nandikur, all located within two km of the plant, were found corroded. Higher salinity was observed in water samples collected from wells within the two km radius of the plant. It was also observed that water in nearby wells and streams had saltiness, difference in colour and oily layers. People in the zone had skin rashes, lesions, nail deformation (onychodystrophy) and skin itching due to water contamination. A change was observed in the groundwater table also," the report stated.

Respiratory ailments like asthma, alveolar infections, and bronchitis were reported from the area. Eye irritation and skin diseases were found in the south-eastern side closer to silos, where fly ash is stored, added the report.

It further said that livestock in the region too had skin and respiratory ailments, miscarriages and other health problems including decline in milk yield. The report pointed out that there was a reduction in paddy yield in the core zone by 57 to 66 per cent. Premature falling and reduced yield of areca, coconut and banana, and reduction in the population of peafowl, foxes and wild boar are other major concerns.
‘Udupi thermal plant has impacted health, livelihood of village residents’

Divya Gandhi

BANGALORE: Air and water pollution from the contentious 600 MW thermal power plant in Udupi’s Yellur village has not only corroded infrastructure and caused leaf burn in crops, it has also had a devastating impact on human health, finds a report of an expert team.

The report was submitted earlier this week to the State government.

A range of contaminants, including heavy metals from fly ash dumps, saline mist emissions from cooling towers and coal mix effluents have led to respiratory, skin and digestive disorders in residents around a six-km radius around the power plant, says the report.

Asthma, alveolar infection, bronchitis, skin rashes, lesions, eye infections and onychodystrophy (nail deformation) were among the commonly recorded ailments by the team that included T.V. Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

Water samples collected within a two-km radius ‘core zone’ around the plant and soil samples from buffer regions (six-km radius) were found to have heavy metals such as cadmium, lead, cobalt, nickel, copper, chromium and manganese.

“The irresponsible act of releasing untreated effluents (rich in salinity, heavy metals, hydrocarbons) is primarily responsible for contamination of ground and surface waters and land resources,” says the report.

In three villages within the core zone well water had turned saline, red and oily. Salt and soot depositions cloaked plants, clothes and household items. Farmers said that paddy yield had declined by 35 to 66 per cent, besides reporting leaf burn in crops that included coconut, banana and jasmine. Likewise livestock owners reported there was a decline in milk yield.

Fly-ash, a toxic byproduct of coal combustion has been mismanaged, the report says: “The inadequate or absence of impervious layer in the ash pond has led to seepage of contaminated water to the surrounding water sources. Ash pond effluents were discharged to a nearby perennial stream (which is being used for domestic activities by the residents of Santur village).”

The report also refers to the unhygienic conditions in the workers’ colony including unsafe drinking water, unhygienic toilet facilities and inadequate sewage treatment. A high incidence of malaria and chikungunya were reported among the residents of the colony. The study area included ten villages around the thermal power plant – Yellur, Padebetu, Nadas, Nandikur, Santur, Karmire, Bada, Palimar, Padebetu and Hejamadi in Udupi taluk.
The State Government will give priority to resolve issues that were delaying in commissioning the second unit of the Udupi Power Corporation's coal-based power plant. The Cabinet will be taking up the matter shortly and resolve the issues in the next two weeks, said Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda.

Mr. Gowda told presspersons here on Sunday that there had been several reasons for the delay. There was delay on the part of the company at the time of construction of power plants because of failure of Chinese engineers to attend the work following earthquake in China. There had been delay because of the change in the stand of Indonesia over supply of coal, he said.

On the other hand, getting clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forest was delayed for the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation's work of setting up the 400 kV transmission line for evacuating power from the project. "There are other problems too. There is also environment problem," he said.

Mr. Gowda said the State Government had taken a serious view of the project. In the coming Cabinet meeting, discussions would be held about memorandum of understanding to be signed by the UPCL, the Government, and the Electricity Supply Companies.

"We will take steps to resolve all issues in the next two weeks," he said.

The 1200 MW coal-based power plant of the UPCL was located in the Nanikur village near Udupi. While the first unit of the plant of 600 MW capacity started commercial operations in November 2010, the second unit, also with a capacity of 600 MW, was yet to begin its operations.

A few days ago, T.V. Ramachandra from Energy and Wetlands Research Group of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and Y.B. Ramakrishna, Executive Chairman of Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board, submitted to Vishweshwara Tirtha Swami of Pejawar Mathi, a detailed report about the problems caused because of UPCL. The swamiji demanded the State Government take steps to stop pollution or shut down the plant's operation.

- There are problems relating to workers, coal supply
- Escoms may be asked to sign power purchase pact
Pejawar seer serves ultimatum on UPCL

May 28, 2012

By Amit S. Upadhye

The expert committee appointed to assess the environmental impact on villagers living around the thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL), in Yellur village in Udupi district has given the thumbs down for the company to operate.

The committee had submitted the report to the Pejawar seer, Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami. Based on the report, the seer told the government that the company should either decontaminate the region or shut its doors.

The final report made available to Deccan Chronicle lists a series of irregularities and environmental degradations caused by the power plant, which is damaging people’s health and livestock.

There are serious lapses in the way in which the company is running the power plant, the report says. Streams in the vicinity of the power plant have been contaminated with coal mixed effluents, resulting in the increase of ionic concentrations of surface water in nearby water bodies.

This has resulted in declining crop yield and has affected the health of the human and cattle populations in the vicinity (see box).

High levels of salinity, fly ash dust and vaporised heavy metals have been found in the soil. The dust deposited on the flowering parts of crops reduces the population of pollinators such as bees, and this reduced pollination has contributed to the decline in crop yield.

The report is based on a study conducted in Yellur (including Kolachur) and surrounding villages of Nandikur, Nadsal (including Tenka Yermal), Bada, Padebetu, Santhur, Palimar, Karnire and Hejamadi, subsequent to the commissioning of the coal-based thermal power station.

“Since 2010 the region has been experiencing large scale environmental contamination (land, water, air and biotic elements) affecting the livelihood of the local people. The company has thrown all environmental norms to the winds and caused heavy contamination and environmental degradation in the region,” said Dr T. V. Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science, who on the committee.

Dr M. K. Ramakrishna, chairman of Bio Diesel Task Force is on the six-member expert committee constituted by the government to assess the impact the thermal power plant.

Differences in the committee led to the dropping of two of the members, but they continued with the report and submitted it to the Pejawar seer recently.