

The minutes of Public Hearing in respect of proposed Damkodwadvi Iron Ore Mine of M/s JSW Ispat Ltd. at Gatta Forest Range, Village Damkodwadvi, Tal. Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli conducted on 08/05/2013, 02.00 pm at Krida Sankul Hall, Aheri Road, Alapalli, Tal. Aheri, Dist. Gadchiroli

The Environmental Public Hearing in respect of proposed Damkodwadvi Iron Ore Mine of M/s JSW Ispat Ltd. at Gatta Forest Range, Village Damkodwadvi, Tal. Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli for iron ore production of 5.5 MTPA in 751.04 Ha mine lease area was held on 08/05/2013, 02.00 pm at Krida Sankul Hall, Aheri Road, Tal. Aheri, Dist. Gadchiroli. The public hearing was conducted under the Chairmanship of Shri Sanjay Dhiware, Additional Collector, Aheri.

Considering the prevailing sensitive situation in Etapalli tehsil and the security aspect of participating of public in general who would remain present at the time of public hearing was of paramount importance and thus to avoid any untoward event or a law and order situation Alapalli was the best suitable for this public hearing and so Alappali was considered to be safe location and so it was decided as the place for the public hearing.

Shri S. D. Patil, Sub-Regional Officer, MPCB Chandrapur was the Convener of the Public Hearing. Shri N. G. Nihul, Regional Officer, M.P.C. Board, Chandrapur was the Member of Public Hearing Panel. Shri N. K. Kumre, Tahsildar, Etapalli, Shri. M. D. Kale, District Mining Officer, Gadchiroli and Shri. Uday Choudhary, Assistant Collector, Gadchiroli were also present during the public hearing. The Public Hearing started on 02.00 pm with the permission of the Chairman of the Public Hearing Panel.

First of all, the Convener welcomed to all of present for the Public Hearing. He told that, the Public Hearing is being conducted as per the provisions of EIA Notification dtd. 14/09/2006 and amended Notification dtd. 01/12/2009 of Ministry of Environment and Forest, New Delhi. He told that the project proponent received TOR (Terms of Reference) for this project from Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi on 26/06/2009. Project Proponent submitted their application to the Board on 14/03/2013 requesting for conducting the public hearing. The public notice for the said public hearing was published on 05/04/2013 in Daily Lokmat (Marathi) and Daily Hitwada (English) stating date, venue and time of public hearing. On the instructions of the chairman of the public hearing committee, Shri. N. G. Nihul, Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur and Member of Public Hearing Committee give the following information about the procedure followed for conducting public hearing.

The copies of draft EIA/EMP and Executive Summaries in English and Marathi were made available vide letter no. 696/2013 dated 05/04/2013 to the offices of District Collector, Gadchiroli, District Industries Centre, Gadchiroli, Zilha Parishad, Gadchiroli, M. P. C. Board (HQ), Mumbai, Regional Office & Sub-Regional Office, M. P. C. Board, Chandrapur, Environment Department, Mantralaya, Mumbai, Tahsil Office, Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli and concerned Grampanchayat Gardewada and Gatta, Tal. Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli for the knowledge of concerned. In the public notice, it was requested to above offices for making available the documents submitted by project proponent for the concerned to study till the date of Public Hearing. Also, through this notice it was requested to file the objections /

suggestions within 30 days from the date of public notice to the Sub-Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur. The Assistant Secretary, M. P. C. Board, Mumbai has issued the panel order no. E-47 of 2013, dated 23/04/2013 for this Public Hearing.

Member of the Public Hearing further informed to the participants that, **one written representation were received regarding public hearing** and the same was made available to the Project Proponent. He further appealed to the participants that, they can file their written objections/representations during Public Hearing and they could express their views orally after the power point presentation that will be given by the project proponent. He further clarified to the participants that the Public Hearing panel is not here to accord/recommend Environmental Clearance to the project, but for recording the objections/suggestions of the participants, which will be video graphed and will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi through Head Office, of M. P. C. Board along with minutes of public hearing for further necessary action. **During public hearing dated 08/05/2013, 90 written representations were submitted by the people.** Total 91 written representations, one received earlier and 90 received during public hearing are enclosed herewith. The details are given below.

- 1) Shri Sudhir Paliwal, Convener, Vidarbha Environmental Action Group, Nagpur.
- 2) Shri Bhauji Ikaru Nikode, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 3) Shri Kishor Nikode, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 4) Shri Maroti Chaudhari, Ankhoda, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 5) Mrs. Sanika Nikode, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 6) Shri Balkrushna Nanaji Dhote, Somanpalli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 7) Shri Balaji Dhongre, Ashti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 8) Ms. Kundatai N. Bawne, Pokardi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 9) Shri Nilkanth Bawne, Pokardi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 10) Shri Pandurangji Kashiram Mudalkar, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 11) Mrs. Wanita Pandurang Mudalkar, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 12) Shri Sunil Yadavrao Pogulwar, Bhendara, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 13) Shri Anil Y. Pogulwar, Bhendara, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 14) Shri Dilip Vasant Vasekar, Ghot, Gadchiroli.
- 15) Ms. Sandhya Dilip Vasekar, Ghot, Gadchiroli.
- 16) Shri Gautam Namdeo Bambole, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 17) Shri Sanjay Vilas Khobragade, Karkapelli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 18) Shri Rupesh Prabhakar Chalkh, Kungada, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 19) Ms. Nagubai Mala Marmotiwari, Mudholi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 20) Shri Mahesh Pulappaji Kadwalwar, Amboli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 21) Mrs. Sunita Banduji Vasake, Yenpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 22) Ms. Pushpatai Shinde, Gadchiroli.
- 23) Shri Pramod Atoji Sherki, Petatala, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 24) Shri Shrihari Dasru Gohane, Barbakid, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 25) Mrs. Shashikala Shrihari Gohane, Barbakid, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 26) Mrs. Vijayabai Shankar Thakur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 27) Ms. Anajnatai Rupaji Gujalwar, Chouपालपalli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 28) Ms. Vachchalabai Pagu Borkade, Jairampur, Dist. Gadchiroli.

- 29) Ms. Ushatai Banduji Akare, Ashti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 30) Ms. Kantabai Arun Madavi, Haladi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 31) Shri Arun Maroti Madavi, Haladi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 32) Ms. Kantabai Mahadev Madavi, Ghot, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 33) Shri Mahdev Madavi, Ghot, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 34) Shri Lavashan Jayaram Wadhavi, Bori, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 35) Mrs. Tarabai Lavashan Wadhavi, Bori, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 36) Shri Vinod Manohar Audalwar, Ghot, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 37) Mrs. Sanika Vinod Audalwar, Ghot, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 38) Mrs. Suvarna Sudhakar Meshram, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 39) Shri Sudhakar Donu Meshram, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 40) Shri Madhukar Keshav Gedam, Komsari, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 41) Ms. Shweta Sukhadev Mandalwar, Yenapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 42) Shri Shrikant Yadav Devgade, Vitthalpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 43) Shri Prakash Pandhare, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 44) Shri Bhaurao Kawadu Kambade, Mudholi Rit, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 45) Shri Pundalik Maroti Bhandare, Adyaal, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 46) Shri Rohit G. Kumbhare, Adyaal, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 47) Shri Santosh Rajeshwar Putthawar, Jamgiri, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 48) Kailash Rajeshwar Putthawar, Jamgiri, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 49) Shri Nanaji N. Dhote, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 50) Shri Nanaji N. Dhote, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 51) Ms. Prabhabai Nanaji Dhote, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 52) Shri Nanaji N. Dhote, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 53) Mrs. Jijabai S. Ghoger, Janganapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 54) Shri Shamrao Jagannath Ghoger, Janganapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 55) Ms. Laxmibai Pulappaji Kadwalwar, Amboli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 56) Ms. Pratima Sanjay Khobragade, Karakapelli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 57) Ms. Bhavana Rakesh Dayalwar, Ashti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 58) Shri Rakesh Ghansham Dayalwar, Ashti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 59) Ms. Manisha Gautam Bambode, Waygaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 60) Mrs. Aarti Pandurang Mashakhetri, Ashti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 61) Shri Sukhadeo Madalkar, Ghot, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 62) Shri Banduji Nanaji Vasake, Yenapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 63) Shri Narendra Bhauji Shende, Amgaon (Mal), Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 64) Mrs. Shubhangi Narendra Shende, Amgaon (Mal), Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 65) Shri Anil Namdeo Vasake, Ganpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 66) Ms. Soni Anil Vasake, Ganpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 67) Mrs. Bebibai Vitthal Talamotiwari, Jamagiri, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 68) Mrs. Vimala Waman Sontakke, Mahagaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 69) Shri Waman Gopal Sontakke, Mahagaon, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 70) Mrs. Shital Chandrashekhar Gohane, Jairampur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 71) Shri Chandrashekhar Gohane, Jairampur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 72) Mrs. Sangita Ashok Bavane, Fokurti, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 73) Shri Ashok Nilakanth Bavane, Fokurti, Dist. Gadchiroli.

- 74) Shri Sudarshan Divakar Chaudhari, Yenapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 75) Shri Diwakar Chaudhari, Yenapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 76) Mrs. Vandana Divakar Chaudhari, Yenapur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 77) Mrs. Malanbai Ramdas Ghongare, Chakhalpet, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 78) Shri Ramdas Manohar Ghongare, Chakhalpet, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 79) Shri Ajay Yadav Bhasarkar, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 80) Mrs. Yashodhara Ajay Bhasarkar, Chamorshi, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 81) Mrs. Bebi Maroti Zodage, Vitthalpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 82) Shri Maroti Zunga Zodage, Vitthalpur, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 83) Shri Anand Dahagaonkar, Gadchiroli.
- 84) Shri Suresh Barsagade & Others, Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli.
- 85) Dr. Mahesh Kopulwar, Bhartiya Communist Party, Dist. Gadchiroli
- 86) Shri Anand Dahagawakar, Gadchiroli.
- 87) Shri Hirachnd Borkute, Paryavaran Sanwardhan Samiti, Chandrapur.
- 88) Paryawaran Sanrakshan & Visthapan Virodhi Samiti, Chandrapur
- 89) Ms. Sandhya Edalabadkar, Convener, Paryavaran Sanrakshan & Visthapan Virodhi Samiti, Chandrapur
- 90) Shri Kishor Potanwar, Maharashtra Rajya Gramin Patrakar Sangha, Dist. Chandrapur.
- 91) Shri Suresh Barsagade, Gadchiroli Khanij Utkhanan Virodhi Janmanch, Etapalli & Shri Rahul Kumare, Janahitwadi Yuva Samiti, Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli.

The member, with the permission of Chairman, then requested the project proponent to give information about their project through power point presentation in local language.

Before the project proponent could start the presentation some of the participants in the public hearing started agitating and shouting slogans against the project. Few of them also came close to the dais and demanded for cancellation of public hearing. Chairman Shri. Sanjay Dhiware appealed participants to maintain silence. However, the participants were constantly shouting, agitating against the project and in response to their agitation, Chairman called police officials to control the participants. Afterwards participants observed silence and Chairman instructed project proponent to start the presentation.

Shri. Parag Khajnure of M/s Bhagwati Ana Labs Ltd. Hyderabad on behalf of Project Proponent gave the information about the project in local language (Marathi) through presentation on the proposed project of Damkodwadvi iron ore mine of M/s JSW Ispat Ltd.

Thereafter, **Shri A. N. Katole** (Sub Regional Officer, Regional Office, MPCB, Chandrapur) appealed people to express their queries, objections, suggestions or comments regarding the proposed project.

The details of the questions raised by the people during the public hearing and the replies given by project proponent are given below.

1] Shri Gajanan Pawar (Sironcha) stated that livelihood of villagers residing at villages where project is located will be affected due to the project. Adivasi people resides at these villages and they will suffer a lot. He objected that public hearing is scheduled in Alapalli Tahsil whereas project is located in Etapalli Tahsil and demanded for cancellation of public hearing and to conduct the public hearing in Etapalli Tahsil.

2] **Shri Irfan Khan (Alapalli)** deprecated the administration for conducting the public hearing in Alapalli Tahsil which is about 80 km away from the proposed project site. He stated that this step is violation of Indian Constitution. He further said that Adivasis are residing in forest since thousands of years and conserving the forest resources. He claimed that project proponent will earn Crores of rupees from the mine and employment will be provided to only 30-40 people from the nearby villages.

He added that Government has provided education and health facilities in the region and people don't need such facilities from the project proponent. He alleged that false information is given in the presentation. He further alleged that there are several demands of people but administration is not looking after it and demands of industrialists are fulfilled by Government. He said that people of Alapalli will not allow project proponent to transport minerals from Alapalli.

He further said that if project proponent agrees to give employment to local people only and to start the factory to process the raw minerals in this region then only he will support the project. He added that people will not allow project proponent to transport minerals out of this local region. He demanded explanation regarding status of earlier projects which have been proposed in this region. He alleged that police force is deployed for creating pressure on people.

He added that people of Etapalli Tahsil demand that public hearing should be conducted at Etapalli Tahsil. He said that many people who came to public hearing doesn't know about the project details and claimed that no one is present from Etapalli region since they don't know about the public hearing. The people are brought here by project proponent. He demanded for cancellation of public hearing and to conduct the public hearing at Etapalli.

3] **Shri Anand Dahagaonkar** alleged that public hearing is being conducted at Alapalli which is about 80 km away from the proposed project site. He demanded for documentary proof regarding legal provision of this act. He asked that whether Sarpanch of Garda and Gattewada villages and local residents are present for this public hearing as this public hearing is being conducted in order to ascertain the views of the public in this local region as regards the project.

4] **Shri Vijay Diwakar Kharwade** alleged that public hearing is being conducted without giving proper idea to villagers and without taking them into confidence, and further alleged for conducting the public hearing at Alapalli.

5] **Ms. Harshali Potdar (Virar, Tal. Wasai, Dist. Thane, Maharashtra)** showed the copies of photographs of notice boards of Garda & Gattewada grampanchayats and said that it can be seen in the photos that notices of public hearing were not displayed at both the grampanchayats. These photographs are against State Pollution Control Board's rules and regulations regarding display of public notices at public places. She added that legal provisions in this regard have been violated and therefore the public hearing should be cancelled. She demanded explanation in this respect from Additional District Magistrate and State Pollution Control Board. She asked that whether Sarpanch and Gramsevak of affected villages are present for this public hearing.

Continuing further she said that it is mentioned in EIA notification 2006 that public hearing notice should reach to maximum people of the region where the project is located and it is the responsibility of State Pollution Control Board to verify the same. She alleged that representatives of concerned Grampanchayats in the area where this project proposed to be erected are not present for the public hearing.

She further pointed anomaly in terms of Reference issued by Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi to project proponent that mining lease area comprises of total 995 Ha. While, mining lease area is shown as 751.04 Ha in EIA Report and that environmental study was carried out for 751.04 Ha only. She added that it was mandatory for project proponent to carry out the study for total land of 995 Ha as mentioned in ToR and asked that who will carry out the study of remaining 243 Ha land. She alleged that information given by M/s JSW Ispat Ltd. and Project Consultant M/s Bhagwati Ana Labs in EIA report and presentation is false. In continuation she added that Ministry of Mining in its letter dated 18/05/2012 to Secretary, Industries informed that mining lease area is 751.04 Ha. However, Ministry of Environment & Forest had mentioned the mining lease area of 995 Ha. She claimed that there is anomaly about the mining lease area given to the project proponent and Governments documents regarding mining lease area are not enclosed as Annexure with the EIA Report. This indicates that public hearing is illegal and should be cancelled.

She further alleged that State Pollution Control Board has violated the standard procedure for conducting the public hearing as prescribed by Ministry of Environment & Forest in its letter dated 19/4/2010. State Pollution Control Board has not verified that Marathi Daily Lokmat and English Daily Hitvada, in which public notice for public hearing was published, is circulated in Gattewada & Garda villages or not? She added that Project Report in local language was not given to Garda Grampanchayat and thus statement made by State Pollution Control Board's Officials that reports were made available to the concerned Grampanchayats is untrue.

She further said that EIA report was prepared in English and executive summary in English and Marathi. But, local people of this region use Madia language and hence one copy should have been provided in Madia language too. She said that according to condition no. 4 of the ToR, project proponent had to carry out primary survey of flora and fauna of the region. In EIA report the results of the survey is given but other details viz. methodology used for this survey, time period of survey, name of experts who carried out this survey etc. are not given. She demanded that these details should be provided by project proponent before the public hearing concludes.

She said that according to condition no. 7 of ToR, project proponent had to formulate an action plan for identification of local employable youths for training in skills relevant to project for eventual employment in the project. But, any such action plan is not given in EIA report and it is mentioned that employment in this region is dependent on mining, which is not true.

She said that more than 50 % employments in the project are based on qualification and maximum people residing in the region are illiterate. In such situation how the employments will be given to locals in this project? She further said as per ToR condition, photographs during the study of this region should be enclosed in the EIA report. However, only three photographs are enclosed with the EIA report. She asked as to how one should

know about ground realities of this project area of 751 Ha from just three photographs which cannot be the representative sample to present ground realities of large area.

She demanded for details regarding study of the region viz. methodology used for the survey, time period of survey, name of experts who carried out this survey, where they stayed during study period etc. She said that these details should be provided by project proponent before the public hearing concludes. She expressed her oppose to the project and demanded for cancellation of the public hearing.

Some participants stand up and said that these issues are not of much importance and asked her to express her views when public hearing be held at Etapalli.

6] Shri Suresh Barsagade said that Government provides education and health facilities to the villagers and they don't need any company for this purpose. He further said that people of this region are illiterate and can't read the public notice and project report. He alleged that project proponent and Government are cheating the villagers.

He demanded to clarify the definition of environmental public hearing by Government Officers present on the dais as the participants don't know about it. He said that participants have many issues and the Government Officers should give the answers for these issues. He said that if the participants didn't get satisfactory answers to their questions then they will boycott the public hearing. He demanded to clarify the actual mining lease area of the project and effect on forest land and wild animals due to the project

7] Shri Gangaram (Dhanora) said that Gramsabha is capable and apt for conservation of forest. He alleged that project was not discussed in the Gramsabha and asked that whether Gramsabha had given the permission for project or what and whether Section 4, which is related with Adivasi Land, is implemented or what.

8] A participant demanded that public hearing should be conducted at Etapalli and said that forest will be affected due to the project. He alleged that Government has cheated people by conducting public hearing in Alapalli.

9] Dr. Mahesh Bokulwar said that the public hearing should be conducted at project site. The people of area where project is located is Adivasi. Gondi language is used in this region and people are unaware about the project or this public hearing as they don't know Marathi language. He further said that project site is about 80 km away from Tahsil Alapalli, where the public hearing is being conducted at a place where local tribble population is not able to reach this place. He added that total land given for the project is forest land and asked that instead of conserving this forest how the permission is given for the project? He said that pollution will be increased due to the project. He further said that Gramsabha has passed resolution for not giving permission due to this project, which is also submitted to Chairman and in view of this the public hearing should be cancelled.

10] Shri Shrikant said that maximum population of Gadchiroli district is Adivasi dominated and projects are not required in this district. There are several other ways of employment avenues like agriculture etc. should be resorted to for employment purpose. He demanded that injustice should not be done with Adivasi.

- 11] **Shri Suresh Barsagde** demanded for cancellation of public hearing as permission from Gramsabha is not obtained. He said that public hearing should be conducted at Etapalli. He added that adequate quantity of steel is available and there is no need of new steel projects. He said that public hearing is illegal and again demanded for cancellation of public hearing.
- 12] **Shri Riyaz Mohammad Shaikh** demanded for cancellation of public hearing and to conduct the public hearing at Etapalli Tahsil where the project is located. He added that Etapalli is far away and hence people from there couldn't come for public hearing.
- 13] **Shri Vishwanath** said that Laws made for Adivasi should be implemented and strictly followed. If the land can be given to M/s JSW Ispat Ltd. then why can't it be given to Adivasi. He added that if forest land is given for project then Adivasi will be displaced and they will suffer a lot.
- 14] **Shri Hiran Varkhade (Ex MLA, Gadchiroli)** said that findings from different studies shows that if 1 Ha forest is destroyed then the environmental loss will be equal to Rs. 1.24 Crores and it will take 60 years to grow similar kind of forest. If we consider this time period then the environmental loss will be approximately equal to Rs. 37,800 Crores. He said that it is the Judgment of Supreme Court that Adivasi could be the owner of natural resources present in the land under scheduled region. Adivasi gets employment from forest. By the implementation of Forest Right Act (Vanadhikar) Adivasi can sale Bamboo and can be self sufficient. He claimed that tribals can conserve the forest better on their own.
- 15] **A Participant** said that Adivasi and Gramsabhas are earning income by the implementation of Forest Right Act (Vanadhikar) and hence projects are not required in this region. He demanded for strict implementation of Forest Right Act and to do justice with Adivasis.
- 16] **Adv. R. M. Meganwar (Aheri)** alleged that mining lease is granted by Government without taking concern of Gramsabha and villagers. Project Proponent will become rich due to this project but Adivasi will suffer a lot and they can't survive if this project is erected as it will cause water and air pollution in the region. He alleged that public hearing is just a formality and public opinion is not considered. He said that people will not allow the project to start and demanded for cancellation of public hearing.
- 17] **Shri Hirachand Borkute (Paryavaran Sanrakshan Samiti, Chandrapur)** said that it is the responsibility of State Pollution Control Board to inform Government about the possible environmental degradation due to proposed project. He asked that whether such information is given by SPCB or what. He further said that Laws made for Adivasi should be implemented for this project land. He alleged that by conducting public hearing in Alapalli Tahsil, administrative officers violated the Law and hence public hearing should be cancelled.
- 18] **Shri Irfan Khan** asked for the identity of the officers of State Pollution Control Board as people are unaware about it. Owing to his request Shri. N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) introduced himself with the participants.

19] Shri Kishor Potanwar (President, Reporter's Association) said that police force was not deployed for the earlier public hearings. However, it is seen in this public hearing which is objectionable. He said that the public hearing is illegal and demanded for cancellation of public hearing. He further said that there is no plan given about rehabilitation of Adivasis of this region. He asked that people of this region are illiterate then how the employment will be given to them. He demanded for implementation of Forest Right Act and cancellation of public hearing as all participants are opposing.

20] Shri Sunanda Reddy (Dharitri NGO, Hyderabad) said that project proponent should make a reservoir for storage of water so that groundwater level will be maintained. Seventeen villages are located in the project vicinity and health parameters used for the study are not given in the EIA report. Mine site is located at a distance of 160 km from nearest railway station i. e. Ballarpur and therefore mineral should be transported by trucks to the railway station. In view of this avenue plantation of trees should be carried out by project proponent to control dust generation during transportation. CSR funds are less and should be increased.

21] Shri Devrao Talve (Gadchiroli) asked that why the public hearing is conducted in Alapalli whereas project is located in Etapalli Tahsil. He further asked that the venue for public hearing is decided by Central Government or State Pollution Control Board. He said that if mine can be operated at Etapalli then why the public hearing can't be conducted. He said that Gramsabha has the right to refuse the proposal of project proponent. He asked that whether SPCB has informed the villages which are located in the vicinity of the proposed project and if yes, why people from these villages did not come for the public hearing. He alleged that project proponent brought people to participate in the public hearing and even those people are not talking in favour of project.

He said that Government spends Crores of rupees for protection of environment and conservation of forests and the same Government gives permission to projects to destroy the forests. He asked to explain the meaning of public hearing and demanded for cancellation of public hearing.

Chairman Shri Sanjay Dhiware stated that purpose of public hearing is to convey peoples' views / opinions regarding the project to the Ministry.

Shri Devrao Talve further said that people expressed their views but satisfactory answers are not given yet. He demanded for cancellation of public hearing.

Ms. Harshali Potdar (Virar, Tal. Vasai, Dist. Thane Maharashtra) was disturbing the officials who were writing minutes of public hearing and showing her disbelief and distrust towards the writing of minutes. She was also seen moving around close to the persons who were expressing their views in the public hearing and disturbing the peace and tranquility. **Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur)** called her and told that the C.D. of public hearing will be made available if she demands. However Ms. Harshali Potdar alleged that C.D. can be manipulated. **Shri N. G. Nihul** and **Shri Sanjay Dhiware** assured her that such tampering does not take place and the very purpose of public hearing is to know, submit the views of public at large who participate in public hearing so that Government knows what is the public feeling regarding the project, pollution. When observed that some participants

were trying to speak repeatedly again and again, Chairman Shri Sanjay Dhiware and Shri N. G. Nihul, Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur asked such participants to let other people to express their views regarding the upcoming project. However, these instruction were overlooked and continued their agitation against the project.

22] A Participant said that all participants boycott the public hearing and objected that public hearing is conducted at Alapalli whereas project is located at Etapalli. He demanded for cancellation of public hearing.

23] Smt. Sandhya Edlabadkar (Ballarpur) said that all participants are demanding to conduct the public hearing at Etapalli. She alleged that only names of trees are given in the EIA report whereas all other details like total value of forest resources should be given in the report. She gave reference of Mendha-lekha village and said that forest resources are equally important as mineral resources because income of Rs. 1 Crore per year can be earned as in case of Mendha-lekha village. She further said that details of degradation of forest resources due to the project, impact of mining on groundwater quality, impact on wild animals, status of employment depending on forest etc. are not given in EIA report. She alleged that total EIA report is false and showed amazement that Ministry of Environment & Forest accepted the report. She added that Ministry itself doesn't follow the rules and regulations and registered her oppose to the project.

24] Shri Gajanan Thapne (Etapalli) asked to explain that how much percent local people should remain present for the public hearing.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) stated that there is no such data available as some of the people have refused to sign the attendance register. Public notice was issued to the concerned offices regarding public hearing. He said that all participants know that why public hearing is being conducted at Alapalli and still everyone is asking this again and again.

Shri Gajanan Thapne said that if local peoples' presence is not important for public hearing then hearing can be conducted at Mumbai also. The purpose of public hearing is to record local peoples' views about the project and hence this public hearing should be conducted in Etapalli where the project is located. He alleged that Government has misguided Adivasi by conducting public hearing in Alapalli.

He further asked about the alternative tree plantation by project proponent against 751 Ha mining lease area. He said that project proponent should explain the details for this alternative tree plantation. He added that project proponent should make arrangement for this before the public hearing.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) said that project proponent will reply to all issues raised by people at the end. If people are not satisfactory to their answers then they can file their representation to the Ministry of Environment & Forest after circulation of the minutes of public hearing.

25] A Participant asked about the alternative tree plantation by project proponent against 751 Ha mining lease area. He asked that whether the land for this tree plantation is purchased by project proponent or what.

26] **Shri Khan** said that Government had given thousands of hectares of forest for the irrigation projects and public hearing was not conducted at that time. Forest resources are present on large scale in this region and people of this region are poor. He alleged that Government's policy is against the people of this region. He demanded to start the factory for production of *Bidi* as there is huge production of *tendupatta* in the forests of this region. He demanded to give the true report to the Government and said that people will agitate against the project.

27] **A Participant** said that all participants opposed the project and hence public hearing should be stopped and views of participants should reach to the Government.

28] **Shri Vijay Kusnake (Ex Sarpanch, Alapalli)** said that MLA of Etapalli Hon'ble Shri Dipak Aatram is observing hunger strike against the venue of public hearing at the premises of Tahsil Office at Etapalli. He demanded that public hearing should be conducted at Etapalli and employments should be given to youths of Etapalli.

29] **Shri Vinod Dhorge (Wadsa-Desaiganj)** said that total 17 villages will be affected due to the project. He alleged that even Tahsildar, Etapalli came to know a day before about the public hearing and said that Government is cheating with the villagers. He demanded to stop the public hearing.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) enquired as to whether anybody has to express his/her views about the project. But, no one came forward. Then he instructed representative of project proponent to reply on the issues raised by participant so far, with the permission of Chairman of public hearing committee.

Shri Arun Shikre on behalf of Project Proponent said that figures regarding employment generation are given in the EIA report. However, after actual commissioning of the project more employments will be generated. He said that it is open commitment by the industry that all stakeholders will be taken into confidence before starting the project.

Some of the participants started agitating against the project proponent and few of them come close to Shri Shikre and stopped him from speaking. Chairman Shri Sanjay Dhiware appealed people to maintain silence.

Then Shri Arun Shikre continued. He said that all Government rules and regulations will be strictly followed and forest resources will be conserved. He added that tree plantation will be carried out. About 50,000 trees will be planted per year.

He said that health facilities will be provided for the villagers and health camps will be organized regularly in the villages. Government Directions in respect of alternative tree plantation will be strictly followed. Water management will be done and care will be taken that nearby villages should not face water shortage.

He said that all suggestions and views expressed during the public hearing will be incorporated for the project and appealed participants to cooperate for the early start of project.

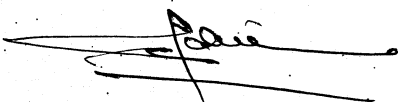
Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) enquired as to whether anybody has to express his/her views about the project. But, no one came forward. Thus, he requested Hon'ble Chairman to have his concluding remarks.

Chairman Shri Sanjay Dhiware (Additional District Magistrate, Aheri) said that video-graphy and minutes of the public hearing along with written representations submitted by participants will be sent to Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi. He then declared that the public hearing is completed.

Some observations at the time of public hearing are as-

1. Some group of people repeatedly shouted slogans against the project and venue of public hearing and shouted that they were boycotting the public hearing however did not leave the venue of public hearing.
2. Local M.L.A. Shri. Dipak Atram also went on a hunger strike by resorting to a day's fasting at S.D.O. and Tahsil Office campus, Etapalli for the demand that public hearing should have been conducted in Etapalli.
3. It is also noteworthy that not a single villager or elected Gram Panchayat Member from the villages where the project is proposed to be erected did not remain present for this public hearing.
4. Gram Panchayat Gatta, Panchayat Sammittee, Etapalli, Dist. Gadchiroli has submitted its minutes of the meeting dated 01.05.2013, within the jurisdiction of which JSW/ Ispat Steel Dumkondwahi project is coming up, the Gram Sabha has raised its objection to the project on the following grounds-
 - i) The JSW Ispat Company, Ministry of mining, Forest Dept., Environment dept. etc. have not informed the villagers of Gram Panchayats about the project in their local Madiya language.
 - ii) The study carried out of this project is based on the Census data of 2001.
 - iii) As the Gatta Gram Panchayat is regulated by PESA Act, 1996, therefore it was mandatory for the company to obtain the permission of Gram Panchayat for the project.
 - iv) There is violation of FRA Act, 2006 and rules 2008.
 - v) The tribals who will be project affected shall not have any means of livelihood as the project is going to destroy the precious forest cover which is the main source of livelihood of tribals and to the flora & fauna of the region.
 - vi) Due to noise pollution (explosion) the people and animals and forest cover would get affected adversely and there would be animal-human conflict.
 - vii) It further adds that as the skilled employees are not available in local area and that the company would get its work done by Machines, thereby least chances of employment are available for the tribals and whether the company and Govt. would keep their promises as assured is unpredictable.

As such the Gram Sabha resolved that local people are protesting against the public hearing in respect of the proposed project, therefore Govt. should reject the lease of this project.


(S. D. Patil)

Convener of Public Hearing
& Sub Regional Officer,
MPCB, Chandrapur


(N. G. Nihul)

Member of Public Hearing
Panel & Regional Officer,
MPCB, Chandrapur


(Sanjay Dhiware)

Chairman of
Public Hearing Panel &
Additional Collector, Aheri