

**The minutes of Public Hearing in respect of proposed
Junad Opencast Expansion Project of M/s Western Coalfield Ltd., Wani North
Area at Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal conducted on 05/02/2013, 11.00 am at Kamgar
Manoranjan Kendra, Bhalar Township, At Post Bhalar, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal**

The Environmental Public Hearing in respect of proposed Junad opencast expansion project of M/s Western Coalfield Ltd., Wani North Area at Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal for expansion in coal production capacity from 0.6 MTPA to 1.5 MTPA and increase in mine lease area from 174.28 Ha to 449.63 Ha was held on 05/02/2013, 11.00 am at Kamgar Manoranjan Kendra, Bhalar Township, At Post Bhalar, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal. The public hearing was conducted under the Chairmanship of **Shri Rajendra Deshmukh**, Additional District Magistrate, Yavatmal.

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 M. P. Barhanpurkar**, District Mining Officer, Yavatmal, **Shri. L. S. Varhade**, SDO, Wani and **Shri. Misal**, Tahsildar, Wani were also present during the public hearing. The Public Hearing started on 11.00 am 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 11/07/2008. Project Proponent submitted their application to the Board on 15/02/2010 requesting for conducting the public hearing. The public hearing for this project was earlier scheduled on 31/08/2010 and 21/12/2010 but during hearing it was cancelled at both the times due to some reasons. Thereafter the public hearing was scheduled on 10/10/2012. The public notice for the said public hearing was published on 05/09/2012 in Daily Lokmat (Marathi) and Daily Hitwada (English) stating date, venue and time of public hearing. The said public hearing was postponed due to some unavoidable reason at that time as per District Collector, Yavatmal letter no. 937/2012 dated 06/10/2012. The notice about postponement of public hearing was published in Marathi Daily Lokmat and English Daily Hitwada on 08/10/2012. Afterwards the public hearing is scheduled on 05/02/2013 and the public notice in this behalf was published on 02/01/2013 in Daily Lokmat (Marathi) and Daily Hitwada (English) stating date, venue and time of public hearing.

The copies of draft EIA/EMP and Executive Summaries in English and Marathi were made available vide letter no. 1288/2010 dated 28/07/2010 to the offices of District Collector, Yavatmal, District Industries Centre, Yavatmal, Zilha Parishad, Yavatmal, M. P. C. Board (HQ), Mumbai, Regional Office & Sub-Regional Office, M. P. C. Board, Chandrapur, Environment Department, Mantralaya, Mumbai, Tahsil Office, Wani and concerned Gat-Grampanchayat Pimpalgaon, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal for the knowledge of concerned. While issuing notice of postponement, 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 their objections/suggestions within 30 days from the date of public notice to the Sub-Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur. The Member Secretary, M. P. C. Board, Mumbai has issued the panel order no. E-15 of 2013, dated 29/01/2013 for this Public Hearing.

Convener of the Public Hearing further informed to the participants that, **five written representation were received regarding public hearing** from the date of public notice dated 29/07/2010 till 21/12/2010 and **two written representations were received** during 05/09/2012 to 02/01/2013 and the same were 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 05/02/2013 four written representations were submitted by the people.** The Details are given below. Total eleven written representations, seven received earlier and four received during public hearing dated 05/02/2013, are enclosed herewith.

- 1) Shri Vinod Mohitkar, General Secretary, Yavatmal District Indian National Congress, Tagore Chowk, Wani, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal
- 2) Shri Om Thakur, President Wani Town Congress Committee, Tagore Chowk, Wani, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal
- 3) Villagers & Project Affected People of Junad Village, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 4) M/s Nagpur Energy & Infrastructure Ltd., Nagpur
- 5) Sarpanch, Pimpalgaon Gat-Grampanchayat and Secretary, Project Affected Junad Block Extension Committee, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 6) Sarpanch, Pimpalgaon Gat-Grampanchayat Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 7) Shri Rakesh H. Bonde, Vill. Pimpri (Ko), Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 8) Shri Suryabhan Awari, Wani Taluka President, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, MNS operated Health Service Centre, In front of Rural Hospital, Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 9) Sarpanch & Deputy Sarpanch, Aheri Grampanchayat, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 10) Sarpanch & Deputy Sarpanch, Aheri Grampanchayat, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.
- 11) Sarpanch & Deputy Sarpanch, Aheri Grampanchayat, Tal. Wani, Dist. Yavatmal.

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

Shri. Rajendra Harde on behalf of Project Proponent gave the information about the project in local language (Marathi) through presentation on the proposed project of Junad Opencast Expansion Project of M/s Western Coalfield 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 Prakash Khokle (Borgaon)** stated that previous employment cases under the project are still pending. The mine authorities have not provided proper arrangement for water sprinkling on road due to which respiratory diseases are increased amongst the people. Poor people are suffering from adverse effects of mine.
- 2] **Shri Suryabhan Awari (Wani Taluka President, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena)** asked about the measures taken for controlling the pollution from mines. Affected people are committing suicides because they didn't get employment in the project. He demanded for cancellation of the public hearing.
- 3] **Shri Shrikant Dethe (Kolarpimpri)** said that roads are getting damaged due to heavy coal transportation and even after submitting written representations twice to the WCL authority, there is no action initiated in this regard. The roadside crops are damaged due to uncontrolled coal transportation. He demanded for compensation for such crop damage and said that if compensation is not given then the people will not allow for coal transportation.
- 4] **Shri Mohan Khiratkar (Borgaon)** said that Borgaon and Junad villages are most affected by existing Junad opencast mine. 32 Ha land is remaining which should be acquired. He alleged that there is no road provided for the villagers as shown in presentation. He demanded for employment to project affected people, acquisition of remaining land and rehabilitation of Borgaon Village.
- 5] **Shri Mahendra Thombre (Deputy Sarpanch, Pimpalgaon Gat-Grampanchayat)** demanded for point-wise clarification by project proponent on written representations submitted by people first.
- 6] **Shri Prakash Khokle** demanded for acquisition of remaining land, employment to affected farmers and rehabilitation of affected villages.
- 7] **Shri Shrikant Dethe (Kolarpimpri)** said that land of 134 farmers was acquired in the year 2006 and compensation is offered at old rates. He demanded for new market rate to said land otherwise return the land to the owner.
- 8] **Shri Sanjay Khade (Deputy Sarpanch, Aheri Grampanchayat)** said that blasting is carried out from all sides of village which causes pollution and vibrations. There is no use of written representations submitted to WCL authorities because no action is initiated in this regard. Medical camps were not organized by WCL in the villages and also roads are not provided. He complained that blasting activity of Telwasa opencast mine causes vibration in the village and walls of houses are cracked due to it.
- 9] **Shri Rakesh Sadashiv Kubde (Junad)** demanded for clarification on pending issues from WCL authorities.
- 10] **Shri Prabhakar Bode (Brahmni)** said that 10 to 15 public hearings of WCL were conducted till now. The public hearing for this proposed project was cancelled twice earlier. Roadside crops are getting damaged due to uncontrolled coal transportation. Joint survey was conducted in this regard by agriculture and revenue department officials and compensation was sanctioned. But, the same is not yet given to the concerned farmers. He

alleged that WCL authorities repeat the same answers in each public hearing. He demanded for compensation and apprised that villagers will not allow to proceed the public hearing further.

11] Shri Vijay Pidurkar said that the compensation for crop damage is not given even after submission of report regarding damage due to pollution. Survey was carried out by National Environmental Engineering & Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur regarding pollution due to mine. WCL authorities approved to pay Rs. 16 Lakh as compensation to concerned farmers. However, the said amount was given for community development. He demanded for compensation to the villagers of five villages for crop damage and then only the public hearing should proceed further.

He further said that employment was not given after the year 1998 and 41 employment cases are still pending. The criterion of minimum 3 acres land for one employment is implemented now. Land of Borgaon village is acquired under Junad Opencast Project. He complained that the said issues were put from time to time, still the issues are unsolved. The issue of employment to minors is also pending. He demanded to file charges against responsible authorities of WCL under Section 401. He asked about the action taken by State Pollution Control Board regarding pollution at Nilapur, Brahmni and Aheri village. Out of total, 90 % coal transportation carried out in this region is of WCL. The roads are not cleaned. He further asked about the plans for the employment to minors to whom assurance certificates were issued. Farmers can't go to their farms due to overburden dumps of existing mine. Employment is given only to 10 % villagers. But, there is no provision for other people residing at affected village. He demanded to take decision by justifying all these issues.

12] Shri Ravindra Kadse said that it was told by WCL authorities that employment will be provided in the mine, but the same was not yet given. People were earning by working in the farms as farm workers but now they loose their livelihood.

13] Shri Bhaiyaji Khade (Sarpanch, Ukni) said that many times public hearing for WCL mines was carried out. Public hearing of Ukni & Pimpalgaon projects were carried out in the year 2011. Total 355 Ha land was supposed to acquire at that time. The remaining land of Junad village should be acquired. All issues should be solved at once. Ukni village is under rehabilitation and Rs. 3 Crores are provided for this purpose. But there are no plans for the rehabilitation of Ukni village yet. The commitments made during previous public hearings are not fulfilled.

He further said that Government Officers should supervise the process seriously. It's have been 18 to 20 years since land acquisition and still employment is not given to affected people. Public Hearing should be conducted only after clarification regarding all issues. Villagers can't appeal in the court regarding employment. It was mentioned in the letter of Coal India Ltd. that educated people will get employment in the project. He complained about the nuisance by wild animals which damage the crops. He demanded to give payment of land acquired.

14] Shri Vishwas Nandekar (Ex MLA) objected that the public hearing should be conducted at Junad Village because ladies and physically handicapped people couldn't come to attend the public hearing and requested Chairman of the public hearing committee to offer his comment, repeatedly.

After repeated appeal from Shri Nandekar, **Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur)** said that public hearing can be conducted at close proximity from the project site.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that project is proposed at Junad village then the public hearing should be conducted at Junad village. He alleged that public hearing is not conducted at Junad village because most of the people could come there to raise their issues and here all people particularly ladies can't come. He complained that there is very much dust accumulated on Nilapur-Brahmni road. WCL authorities didn't carry out plantation there. They have not fulfilled a single commitment made earlier. There is large increase in the number of pigs in that region due to which farmers and villagers are suffering.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh stated that this place of public hearing is within 5 to 6 km and not far away from project site. The facilities are available here for the convenience of people.

Shri N. G. Nihul said that the public hearing can be conducted at the place in the close proximity of the project site and further clarified that close proximity means the place which is nearby to the project site.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that Junad village is located at 8 km from the venue of public hearing. Actual road distance should be considered and not the aerial distance.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh said that last time the public hearing was conducted at project site, at that time the presentation was not viewable clearly due to sunlight. Hence, due to such issues this venue is decided. 5 to 7 km distance is not too long.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that he was present during the said public hearing and presentation was viewable at that time. The said public hearing was cancelled by Chairman of Public Hearing Panel. The land of 91 farmers is included in the project. 76 ha land is remaining. This land can't be cultivated in future and hence this land should also be acquired. 32 Ha land of Borgao Village should also be acquired.

He said that the rate of unused land is Rs. 6 Lakhs, dry land is Rs. 8 Lakhs and irrigated land is Rs. 10 Lakhs according to the new Government Resolution. He objected on such different rates and demanded for equal rates to unused and dry land.

He enquired about the provision of employment to old pending cases and new cases. He added that if mine does not start in 4-5 years then how the farmers will survive. Issue of rehabilitation is very important. He claimed that WCL authorities are not doing rehabilitation because it is expensive. There are few villages like Aheri and Mungoli which needs to be rehabilitated. Issues regarding pollution in this region are unattended by concerned department. There is no any strong action initiated in this regard. Rehabilitation of villages is the responsibility of Government. If Government officers instruct WCL authorities then anyhow WCL authorities have to do it.

He further said that land of Aheri village was taken in the year 2006 but still the compensation is not given. He demanded to give the compensation as per the new market rates and claimed that WCL authorities are knowingly keeping the employment cases pending. One employment should be given per 2 acre of land instead of 3 acre. Villagers are forced for making the agreement with WCL. What are the criteria of deciding barren land?

The rates offered are very low. If these rates are given then let the private companies do the mining instead of WCL.

He further said that 21.69 Ha land of Aheri village is remaining which should be acquired. Rehabilitation of Aheri village is pending. Whenever people enquired about rehabilitation WCL authorities say that it is in process. This issue of Rehabilitation of Aheri village was put forth in the Assembly.

He stated that affected farmers should be given employment in the Junad opencast mine for which the land is acquired and the employment should be given according to the qualification.

Shri Mahendra Thombre said that land of Borgaon village was acquired in the past expansion of Junad opencast project. In the said process, land of Shri Karadbhuje was acquired and his elder son was nominated for the employment, but he was declared unfit in medical examination. Thereafter, nomination of younger son of Shri Karadbhuje was submitted and the same is pending since 15 years. Every time WCL authorities reply that the said case is pending at HQ.

He demanded to conduct the public hearing at Junad village where the project is located. He added that Borgaon village is flood prone due to overburden dump of existing mines of WCL. Coal transportation causes air pollution on large scale. When complaints were submitted to WCL authorities they claim that soil become fertile due to coal dust. Transportation is causing crop damage due to which farmers are suffering. Tree plantation was not carried out by WCL authorities. Plants of *Babhu* tree is spreading fast in this region. The throne of this plant is poisonous. Also population of pigs is increasing due to these plants, which causes threat to the farmers during nighttime.

He claimed that oil & grease mixed water is discharged into Wardha River due to which fishes were killed. He demanded for allotment of contractual work to locals. In each public hearing same issues are discussed but commitments are not fulfilled. One committee was formed under the chairmanship of District Collector but afterwards nothing positive happened with it. Load shading is for 12 hours a day in the villages. Villagers will keep opposing the mine until their all demands are fulfilled. He opposed the proposed project.

15] Mrs. P. N. Waghmare (Sarpanch, Pimpalgaon Grampanchayat) said that rainwater ingresses in Pimpalgaon village due to overburden of WCL. Coal transportation causes air pollution on large scale. Labours are outsourced and locals didn't get work in the mine. She demanded for rehabilitation of villages and employment in opencast mines instead of underground mines otherwise the public hearing should be cancelled.

Shri Prakash Khokle said that during previous public hearing, it was requested by people that responsible officer from HQ, WCL Nagpur should remain present for the public hearing. In this regard, he asked that which officers from HQ, WCL are present for the public hearing.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that WCL officers having authority to take decision regarding employment & land rate should remain present for the public hearing.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh enquired whether Officers from Establishment Department, HQ WCL are present or what.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that Officers only from Environment Division of WCL are present for the public hearing. They don't have authority to talk about employment issues.

Eighteen years are completed since the land acquisition. He demanded that responsible authority of WCL should remain present for the public hearing.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh stated that issue of employment is important and asked about the reasons for pendency of employment cases.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) replied that total 1000 employment is given in Wani North Area of WCL. Few cases of employment are pending due to different reasons. He said that employment was given according to provisions of Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy of Coal India Ltd. at that time. The said policy includes the guidelines for employment provisions to affected people like the age of nominee should be less than 35 years and nominee should be male only. Monetary compensation in lieu of employment was not included in the said policy. Some nominations were submitted late by affected farmers. The process of employment was shifted to HQ in the year 1999 and strict implementation of rules was practiced then. Employment to 11 people was sanctioned during the year 2010. However, out of these 11, one person does not submit the proposal, in one case consent of all family members for nomination was not available, in two cases bifurcation of land was done after implementation of Section 9, in one case land owner made nominee to his son but the son was not born at the time of land acquisition. In this way these cases were not considered and remaining 6 cases were finalized at that time. Compensation of Rs. 5 Lakhs per acre was given to affected people. All proposals regarding employment received at area office are scrutinized and submitted to HQ for further consideration.

He explained the rules and guidelines regarding employment provision to the affected persons. He said that nominee should be direct dependent on the land owner i. e. son, grandson (son of son) or unmarried daughter can be nominated for employment. Bifurcation of land should not be there after implementation of Section 9. He informed that proposal of Shri Santosh Mane was not considered due to bifurcation of land after Section 9. Thereafter General Manager, WCL sanctioned it by considering it as a special case. He further said that all family members including married daughters also should give consent to the nominee. The proposal should be submitted with stipulated time. If one gat no. of land is located in Junad village and another is located in Borgaon village then also one employment will be given. If first nominee is unfit in medical examination then second nomination can be submitted. He informed that few such cases was submitted to HQ and expecting the decision within coming 4-5 days.

He further said that earlier Area Manager had the authority regarding employment and employments were created in groups. If nominee is minor then assurance certificate was issued in such cases. Now the assurance certificate can be issued if son's age is at least 15 years.

Shri Vijay Pidurkar said that as per package deal total 111 employments were sanctioned. If employments are not given then monetary compensation should be given to affected farmers. According to new R & R policy of Coal India Ltd. District Collector is the Chairman of committee regarding employment issues. He demanded to give employment to Shri Santosh Pundlik Bhokre.

He further said that few people didn't get employment even after medical examination because the authority regarding employment was transferred to HQ. WCL authorities

cooperated with the people and 11 cases were finalized. He demanded for early decision regarding pending cases.

He further demanded for employment to all sons of farmer because there is no other source of income to whole family once land is acquired. One employment should be given per 2 acre of land. Under Coal Bearing Act, land can be sold till the last date of Section 9. He demanded to give employment on all gat nos. even if all nos. are owned by a single farmer.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh instructed WCL authorities to prepare list of all pending employment cases. He further said that meeting can be conducted under the chairmanship of District Magistrate and final decision could be taken in the said meeting. He also asked Shri Vijay Pidurkar to provide list of all pending employment proposals.

Shri Vijay Pidurkar said that revenue department has whole authority according to new R & R policy of Coal India Ltd. and no decision can be taken without approval of revenue department. He demanded that specific time limit should be decided for the whole process. He added that in new projects there is no any mess but in old projects few cases are pending.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) replied that old pending cases will also be solved at earliest.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar again objected that the venue for this public hearing is not according to the rules and alleged that this venue is selected to avoid inconvenience of Government Officers. He further said that clarification should be given regarding employment issue and if proper tree plantation is carried out then villagers will support the mine.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) replied that pending cases of employment will be finalized soon. Every possible effort is made for controlling the pollution. Water tankers are deployed for water spraying on roads and fixed rain-guns are provided at major points.

Shri Mahendra Thombre said that many times water tanker is not operated and if enquired about this WCL authority reply that the tender regarding operation of water tanker is not passed.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) replied that Section 9 is completed in respect of land of Junad, Pimpalgaon and Borgaon villages and it is acquired. Soon the project report will be sent to Ministry. He added that land is required in future and remaining land will be acquired at that time. The proposals for the acquisition of remaining land are sent to HQ.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that Junad opencast mine is in operation since year 1994. Whether the pollution control norms during coal transportation are being followed by mine authorities or what.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) said that Regional Transport Office should take action regarding overloading and concerned department should take action regarding road construction/repairing etc. The load bearing capacity of road should be increased.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar asked that whether rules regarding tree plantation is followed by WCL or what. Mine authorities are responsible for pollution as well as concerned department is also responsible. Whether State Pollution Control Board monitored air quality and taken any action against the mine?

Shri Sujit Sen (WCL Wani North Area) replied that total 17 Lakhs 20 Thousand trees have been planted in Wani North Area and 60 thousands trees have been planted in Junad Project since 1994 to 2013.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh asked that whether tree plantation is carried out at Junad mine to railway station road?

Shri Sujit Sen (WCL Wani North Area) replied that the contract for the said work is given to Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra (FDCM) and the work will start soon.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh said that there is no role of FDCM for avenue plantation. Tree plantation can be carried out departmentally; there is no need of skilled manpower for this. He asked WCL authorities to clarify the time period for carrying out tree plantation.

Shri Maji (Sub Area Manager, Junad Opencast Mine) said that tree plantation will be carried out at earliest by using manpower in the existing project.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said concerned department should take action against WCL for not carrying out tree plantation. There is no pollution control arrangement at Nilapur-Brahmni road.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) said that Bank Guarantee of Rs. 5 Lakh is obtained from Junad opencast mine and it is valid up to March 2013.

Shri Murthy (WCL Wani North Area) replied that Nilapur-Brahmni road is not owned by WCL and hence fixed rain-guns couldn't be provided there. Water tanker will be deployed on this road.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) said that WCL authorities should consider the issues positively regarding acquisition of remaining land from affected villages as the farmers may not cultivate the same and it should be included in the detailed project report prepared for the project.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) replied that it will take at least 3 years to complete the whole process and to start the project.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that there is 32 Ha land of Borgaon village is remaining and farmers are ready to give this land. This land can't be cultivated due to overburden dumps of WCL. He added that commitments made during previous public hearings are not fulfilled. WCL authorities should give clarification regarding this. Otherwise this public hearing should be cancelled.

Shri Misal (Tahsildar, Wani) said that 32 Ha land of Borgaon village is barren land and it can't be cultivated.

Shri Patil (Area Planning Officer, WCL Wani North Area) said that the rehabilitation of Kolera, Pimpri and Aheri villages is proposed. Socio-economic survey was carried out in these villages with the help of an NGO.

Shri. N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) asked that how the fund provided for compensation for crop damage was diverted for community development?

Shri Maji (Sub Area Manager, Junad Opencast Mine) said that Rs. 16 Lakhs were sanctioned by WCL Board and it was decided by the Board that the fund should be utilized for community development through SDO. The same will be changed soon and compensation will be given to individual farmers within 3 months.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that fund aimed for individual compensation to farmers can't be used for community development. He further said that commitments made during previous public hearing of proposed project are not fulfilled by WCL authorities and concerned department should instruct them for the same.

16] Shri Palasram Kashinath Aasekar said that cotton crops get damaged due to coal dust. Farmers suffer from nuisance of pigs due to uncontrolled growth of *Babul* trees. He complained that compensation of Rs. 8600/- was sanctioned against crop damage, but only Rs. 8000/- was given to him.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that the public hearing is related with environmental issues and the participants are not satisfied on the environmental issues. He further said that WCL authorities didn't carry out enough tree plantation, employment cases are pending and the amount spent for environment protection and for CSR activities should be explained. He demanded for cancellation of Public Hearing.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh said that written representation of Aheri Grampanchayat is received. It is mentioned in the representation that water from Wardha River ingresses into Aheri village due to overburden dumping, Aheri village should be rehabilitated, blasting causes nuisance to the villagers, wall compound should be provided to the temple, street lights should be provided on the road from Pimpalgaon to Coal Handling Plant and medical camp should be organized in the villages.

He instructed WCL authorities to carry out controlled blasting and initiate necessary actions regarding rehabilitation of village.

Shri Maji (Sub Area Manager, Junad Opencast Mine) said that streetlights will be provided under CSR funds.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh said that written representation of Pimpalgaon Gat Grampanchayat is received. It is written in the representation that remaining land should be acquired, Rs. 15 to 20 Lakhs should be given per acre of land and employment should be given in opencast mines.

He instructed WCL authorities to finalize the pending employment proposals. He said that every time these issues are discussed but employment cases are still pending.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that the participants are not satisfied regarding environmental issues. The public hearing for said project was conducted twice earlier still the commitments are not fulfilled by WCL. There should be strict action against WCL authorities. He requested Chairman to cancel the public hearing.

Chairman Shri Rajendra Deshmukh said that several issues raised by participants were discussed. Issues of employment, rehabilitation of remaining villages, acquisition of remaining land, proper rate for the land were discussed. Environmental issues were also

discussed. There are complaints from Grampanchayats regarding increase in air pollution. He instructed WCL authorities to make arrangements for regular cleaning and water sprinkling on road.

He said that plantation is carried out on overburden dumps and instructed WCL authorities to carry out avenue plantation also. Mine water should be treated first and then can be discharged into River. Medical camp should be conducted regularly in the villages. The Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi should know about the environmental issues raised during public hearing. WCL authorities have agreed to fulfill the commitments. All issues raised by participants will be incorporated in the minutes of Public Hearing.

Shri Vishwas Nandekar said that participants are not satisfactory regarding environmental issues. Previous public hearings were cancelled due to non-fulfillment of same issues.

Shri Mahendra Thombre demanded that employment should be given to the affected people in opencast mine.

Shri Maji (Sub Area Manager, Junad Opencast Mine) said that this is a policy decision matter and decision will be taken in HQ Board meeting.

Shri N. G. Nihul (Regional Officer, MPCB, Chandrapur) said that the purpose of Public Hearing is to convey views of people regarding proejct to the Ministry of Environment & Forest, New Delhi. The Public Hearing Committee does not have any authority to accord approval to proposed project or recommend for grant of Environmental Clearance to the project or otherwise.

He further 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 Rajendra Deshmukh said that it is necessary to put the views of participants in front of Ministry and the Ministry will take the further decision. It is noted that people are not satisfied with the environmental aspects of the existing Junad opencast mine of WCL and instructed WCL authorities to take necessary steps to protect the environment and to resolve pending issues of employment, rehabilitation, land compensation issues, remaining land acquisition, compensation against crop damage etc. as to have people's support for the project. He then declared that the public hearing is concluded.




(S. D. Patil)

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



(N. G. Nihul)

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



(Rajendra Deshmukh)

Chairman of
Public Hearing Panel &
Additional District
Magistrate, Yavatmal