

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC HEARING IN RESPECT OF M/S AMBE IRON PRIVATE LIMITED, PLOT NO. E-1, MIDC CHINCHOLI, DIST – SOLAPUR, MAHARASHTRA FOR PROPOSED EXPANSION OF EXISTING STEEL PLANT BY SETTING UP OF INDUCTION FURNACE (1 x 40 T); ROLLING MILL (1x25 TPH) AND CPP (8 MW) WITH REVIVAL OF EXISTING DRI Units (1x50 TPD + 2 x 100 TPD) TO PRODUCE SPONGE IRON (82500 TPA), HOT METAL (1,59,000 TPA) AND ROLLED PRODUCT (1,50,000 TPA)**

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The Environment Public Hearing in respect of M/s Ambe Iron Private Limited, Plot No.E-1, MIDC Chincholi, District – Solapur, Maharashtra for proposed expansion of existing steel plant by setting up of Induction Furnace (1 x 40 T); Rolling Mill (1 x 25 TPH) and CPP (8 MW) with Revival of existing DRI Units (1 x 50 TPD + 2 x 100 TPD) to produce Sponge Iron (82,500 TPA), Hot Metal (1,59,000 TPA) and Rolled Product (1,50,000 TPA) was conducted on Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 at the site of the said industry at 11.30 noon.

After approval of District Collector, Solapur to conduct the Physical Environment Public Hearing on Thursday, the 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 at 11.30 morning, and as per the Notification dated 14-09-2006 issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (MoEF & CC, GoI), New Delhi and subsequent amendment on 01-12-2019, Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai has constituted Public Hearing Panel vide Board's Office Order No. E- 52 of 2022 under letter no. BO/JD (WPC)/PH/B-220712-FTS-016 dated 12-07- 2022 :-

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| 1) District Magistrate-Solapur<br>or his representative not below<br>the rank of an Additional District<br>Magistrate                             | <b>Chairman</b> |
| 2) Representative of Maharashtra<br>Pollution Control Board, Mumbai -<br>Regional Officer – Pune,<br>Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,<br>Pune | <b>Member</b>   |
| 3) Sub Regional Officer-Solapur,<br>Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,<br>Solapur   | <b>Convener</b> |



The list of participants alongwith signature is enclosed herewith as ANNEXURE-“I”. The written suggestions, objections received are enclosed herewith as ANNEXURE-“II.” Public hearing panel committee formation order is enclosed herewith as Annexure III.

Shri Ajit Vasantrao Patil, Sub Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Solapur and Convener of the Environment Public Hearing Committee welcomed Mrs. Shama Pawar , Additional District Magistrate, Solapur and Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Environmentalists; NGOs, Journalists and Company Officials and local people/participants who were present and with the permission of Chairperson briefed the proceedings of the meeting.

He informed that as per the Environment Impact Assessment Notification of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (i.e. MoEF & CC, Gol) dated 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 as amended on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2009, it is mandatory to conduct prior public consultation to certain projects which are covered in the schedule of the said Notification.

Shri Ajit Vasantrao Patil, Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee informed that Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was in receipt of the application from M/s Ambe Iron Private Limited, Plot No.E-1, MIDC Chincholi, District – Solapur, Maharashtra for conducting Environment Public Hearing.

Shri Ajit Vasantrao Patil, Sub Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Solapur and Member, Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee welcomed Ms. Shama Pawar, Additional District Magistrate, Solapur and Chairperson, Environmental Public Hearing Committee, government officials, representatives of Project Proponent (PP) , journalists, organizations working in the field of environment and the local people who were present.

With the permission of the Chairperson of the Committee, he informed the proceedings of the public hearing.

Member, Convener stated that as per the <sup>24</sup> Notification of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi dated 14th September, 2006 as amended on 1st December, 2009 13, it is mandatory to obtain



Environmental Clearance (EC) for certain projects and prior to that Public hearings have been made mandatory.

Shri Ajit Patil, Member, Convener said that Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was in receipt of the application from Project Proponent M/s Ambe Iron Private Limited, Plot no. E-1, MIDC Chincholi, District-Solapur, Maharashtra for conducting Environment Public Hearing.

Member, Convener while giving information about the project said that the said project was going well from 2004-2014. Then it went into losses and later declared as Sick Unit by Maharashtra Government. The company was closed for six years. Later the new Project Proponent acquired this company as a sick unit. After its purchase, the new Project Owner noticed that most of the machinery is rotten, rusted. Similarly, it is necessary to increase the capacity of the project. The old machinery will be scrapped and new machinery will be installed

However, the capacity of the existing kilns in the company will not be increased. The iron soil will melt there, there will be no increase in pollution load. It means that the pollution will not increase. Therefore, the new project promoters are planning to produce sponge iron (82,500.0 tpa), hot metal (1,59,500.0 TPA) and rolled products (1,50,000.0 TPA), Existing D.R.I. Units (1 X 50 TPD + 2 X 100 TPD) with regeneration of Activation Kiln (1 X 40 Ton) Rolling Mill (1 X 25 TPH) and C.P.P. (8.0 MW) is planned to expand the existing steel plant.

As the said project falls under Category A 3 (A) under Environment Notification 2006 (Amendment), it is mandatory to conduct environmental public hearing in advance to obtain Environmental Clearance (EC) from Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi.

Member, Convener explained that the basic purpose of the environmental public hearing is to know the public in the project area about the project and the effects of the project and the feelings of the public about it, to inform the general public about the



mandatory pollution control facilities in the project and to consider the suggestions given by them.

The Project Proponent sought permission from the Department of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi to prepare the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and the same was approved by the said department on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

As per said Notification, 30 days' advance public notice was published by Sub Regional Office, MPCB, Solapur in the Local Newspaper in Daily Sakal for Marathi and in National Newspaper daily The Indian Express for English on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2022. The public were appealed to send their suggestions, views, doubts or objections regarding the proposed project.

Also copy of EIA report and executive summery were made available at various notified offices of Government as under:-

- 1) Hon. District Collector Office, Solapur;
- 2) Hon. Additional District Collector Office, Solapur;
- 3) Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Solapur;
- 4) General Manager, District Industries Center, Solapur;
- 5) Environment & Climate Change Department, Maharashtra Government, New Administrative Building, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mantralaya, Mumbai – 400 032
- 6) Dy. Director (WPC), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Kalpataru Point 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Opp. PVR Cinema Hall, Near Sion Circle, Sion (East), Mumbai – 400 022
- 7) Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Jog Centre, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Wakadewadi, Old Pune Mumbai Road, Pune - 411 003
- 8) Sub Regional Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, B/4, Bali Building, Civil Lines, Opp. Govt. Milk Scheme, Saat Rasta, Solapur,
- 9) Tahsildar, Tahsil Office – Mohol, Tal-Mohol, Dist – Solapur;



- 10) Block Development Officer, Panchayat Samiti-Mohol, Tal – Mohol, Dist – Solapur;
- 11) Gram Sevak / Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat Offices – Mouje Chincholi Kati, Kondi, Pakani, Akolekati, Darphal, Karamba, Kegaon,
- 12) Website of MPCB

Convener, informed that Sub Regional Office, Solapur is in receipt of suggestions, objections. Grampanchayat Chincholi kati has given objection letter dated 06/07/2022 along with copy of Tharav- Resolution of General body meeting held on 04/07/2022 . Gram Sabha chincolikati passed the resolution regarding objections to the expansion of the project.

Convener said that in the project where the source of pollution originates, the level of pollution does not increase. The existing furnace will be repaired. So those who wish can visit the project and see the old 50 ton furnace. They are going to put up the new beam project. Because it is an old system.

Also new power generation projects are going to be put up. Information about how much electricity will be generated in the company, how much will be used and how much will be given to the government.

Member, Convener said that this Environment Public Hearing Committee is constituted to register the environmental doubts, comments, suggestions or objections of the participants about the proposed project and the said committee has no right to approve, reject or recommend the project. The suggestions, objections, views raised during the meeting by the local people, participants are noted and it will be included in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting will be prepared in Marathi and English and it will be submitted alongwith Final EIA report, the written suggestions/objections with the approval of Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee through Head Office of MPCB to Environment, Forest & Climate Change Department, Govt. of India, New Delhi. An Expert Committee there will be take further decision accordingly.

He said that according to the provisions of the Notification, photography and video shooting of the said meeting is being done and after the presentation, the participants can raise their questions, suggestions, thoughts and objections quietly. It will



be answered by the Project Environmental Consultant or the Project Promoter. While asking a question, your full name and village should be mentioned first.

Shri Patil requested Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee to start the proceedings.

With the permission of Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee, Convener asked Environment Consultant to give presentation of Environment Management Plan of the proposed project.

Project Consultant informed regarding expansion of the project and Environment Management Plan in local language Marathi. Following points were explained in the meeting:-

**Detailed Information of the Project -**

- Project Area, Latitude-Longitude, Map, Submerged Area, Beneficiary Area, Forest Area, Project; Features, Project Significance, Consequences, Land Use, Earthquake Stability;
- Project objectives, social status, employment opportunities, development of farmers due to the project;
- Project analysis, summary, findings;
- Analysis of social and economic status
- Information about air, water, land, sound, project affected areas etc.
- Impact and management of air, water, displacement, biodiversity due to planned project
- Information on environmental management after project implementation
- Information on other environmental management

After reading the suggestions given by Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Convener appealed to the participants to raise their environmental suggestions or objections about the proposed project. While raising questions, inform the full name, village. He also informed Project Environment Consultant and Project Proponent to give appropriate answers.

**Views, questions, suggestions/objections raised during the Environment Public Hearing and the answers/promises given by the Project Proponent :-**

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**1) Shri Ajit Vasantrao Patil, SRO MPCB Solapur & Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee :-**



Shri Waghmare objected that there have been complaints from people and farmers in the area even before this while the company was running. He said that he is a Gram Panchayat member.

Therefore, a resolution was passed in the Gram Sabha that the said company is causing loss to farmers and villagers. This company is adjacent to the village. In the past, people have seen that iron particles are lying on the fields and other ground also.

Member, Convener said that the written resolution passed by the Gram Panchayat and the suggestions and objections raised in the meeting have been recorded.

**4) Shri Chandrakant Suryabhan Nagne, Former Sarpanch, Chincholi Kati Gram Panchayat, Taluka -Mohol, Dist – Solapur:-**

He objected that the said company is located at a distance of 500 meters from our village limits in 2004. Therefore, the dust of this company falls in our fields. All the crops in the field, brinjal, tomato, spoiled due to the dust of the company. The farmers here are suffering huge losses. The company conducted a trial last month. Completely black dust spread over the surrounding fields. Eggplant, tomato crops were completely dusted.

Shri Nagne further said that if the company resumes operation, the Chincholi Kati Gram Panchayat should be benefitted from the company. People of Chincholi Kati village should be given 100% preference in jobs. Villagers should be given jobs in the company.

Member, Convener suggested that Chincholi Kati village is near from the project and the participants should comply with the instructions given by them. If the village of Chincholi Kati have skilled person, he should undergo technical test and be given a job contract in the project. But the unskilled villagers should be included in the various unskilled cadres of the project. He requested the project promoters to give assurance in the meeting. The project promoters assured in the meeting that the people of the village will be given priority in the project. At that time, some attendees demanded that priority



should be given to other villages in Akole Kathi, Bibidhadphal area along with Chincholikati villages.

Members, Convener appealed women participants to register any suggestions, objections.

5) **Shri Maruti Uddhav Bhosale alias Dada Bhosale,**

**Residence – Chincholi Kati, Tal – Mohol, Dist – Solapur:-**

This company was started in 2004. Our experience with this company is good. The dust that comes out during production and similarly the smoke that comes out after turning on the boiler is having a dangerous effect on our village.

While walking through the village, iron particles get into the eyes and the road is so dusty that it becomes difficult to walk. Cannot drive a motorcycle. This dust flies 2-3 k.m. from the project site Difficulty breathing at night. It is very annoying and harmful to health. It is necessary for the company to consider these problems and take immediate measures. People here have suffered a lot from this company. So we want to avoid such trouble in the future. Member, Convener suggested the project promoters to reply in this regard.

Project Proponent replied that the pollution control system set up by the company managers in 2004-2014 was completely corroded. Now most advanced pollution control system will be implemented soon. New chimney, ESP, bag filter have been installed in the project and online monitoring system will be implemented as mentioned in the meeting. The project is assured that there will be Zero Percent Pollution in the project.

6) **Shri Mahesh Bhosale, Residence – Chincholi Kati, Tal-Mohol, Dist – Solapur**

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We oppose having out-of-state workers on trial basis in our company. 99% people are from Madhya Pradesh, U.P., Bihar while it is mandatory to hire local workers as per government rules. This causes injustice to the local workers.

At this time, Member, Convener asked the project proponent here that they just replied that they are local and Chincholi workers and what are the external workers from Madhya Pradesh, U.P., Bihar for? Are they contracted or employed on a project?

The project promoters replied that the ongoing work in the project is Specialized Work. Working at 1600° temperature. The policy of the project is to give priority to local people. The policy will remain the same in the future

At that time, Shri Bhosale objected that the contractors here are also from outside. Here, Member, Convener suggested to the Project Proponent that even if there is a specialized work, then other works should be given priority after the implementation of the project. According to the Order of the Energy and Labor Department of the Government of Maharashtra, it is necessary to give job opportunities upto 80% to only Bhumiputras in the project.

Shri Bhosale objected that the company was causing a lot of pollution. However, until the pollution issues of the people of Chincholi Kati are not resolved, this company should not be started. Otherwise, we will have to do Mass Andolan/mass movement. He raised the further point regarding transport. Local vehicles from Chincholi Kati, Akole Kati and Bibi Dharphal should be hired for various works in the project

Shri Bhosle objected that the CSR fund in the company is shown to be Rs. Ten lakh. So before the starting of the company, all the arrangements of light, water, road, drainage, school should be made for Chincholi Kati village from CSR funds. Then only the company should be started.



At this time, Member, Convener asked the project promoters how much CSR funds they have reserved and whether it will be spent equally in all the villages? He suggested that the Project Proponent should use the CSR fund of Ten lakh in all the three villages i.e. Chincholi Kati, Bibidharphal, Akole Kati.

Here, Shri Bhosale demanded that Chincholi Kati village has shed blood for this MIDC project and our lands are gone, the company is located in Chincholi Kati village, the problem of pollution is faced more by the residents of Chincholi Kati village. Therefore, 80% of the CSR fund should be given to Chincholi Kati village. He suggested that the Pollution Control Board should keep a special watch on this company.

I am saying this as District President, Maharashtra General and Mathadi Kamgar Sena, Solapur. He further said that if the company is going to hire Mathadi workers, it should be considered. Mathadi workers should be given priority in the company. If these present questions are not answered, please do not start the company. If the company is started, there will have to be a mass movement against the company for these local issues.

7) **Shri Maruti Pandurang Pawar, Residence – Chincholi Kati, Tal-Mohol, Dist – Solapur :-**

This company was in operation with all sections of society. I hope it goes well.

8) **Shri Atish Yallappa Gavali, Residence -Akole Kati, Tal – Uttar Solapur, Dist – Solapur :-**

It is stated in the presentation that, there is no wildlife sanctuary up to 10 km. But from the 4 km from the project. There is "Maldhok Bird Sanctuary". It is notified as "Eco Sensitive Area".

He requested Chairperson that a leaflet was issued yesterday that there is only one Maldhok bird left and anyone who goes behind it to take pictures or follows him, then action is taken against him as per the law.



So was permission taken for the said project? He further objected that many companies in this area generate pollution. At this time, Environment Public Hearing Committee informed the concerned person to ask environmental questions of the company to which the public hearing is held.

When Member, Convener inquired about the distance of Maldhok Bird Sanctuary from the project, the environmental consultant replied that earlier 10 km distance was mandatory, and in MIDC, it is notified as 0.5 km. i.e. in notified industrial area.

At that time, Shri Gavali objected to the Chairperson that if we local people are not allowed to go there, then whether Maldok will not suffer due to the smoke and dust of this company?

Member, Convener read out the names of all the questioners who raised questions in the meeting. He said that video shooting of this entire meeting has been done and the expert committee from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi examines all the issues and takes a decision. Even if there is an issue here, the experts take a decision after studying it.

Here, some of the participants objected that local people are not allowed to enter in the Maldok area, then how the company can say that the Maldhok birds will not suffer due to the dust of the said project? If our cattle go, the forest department confiscates them. Villagers are not allowed to farm there. So this project should not be allowed.

Bringing outside companies will cost our lives. Villagers have given many representations regarding the pollution and no further action is being taken on it. People, animals and nature have to suffer the problem of pollution here and this company will add to it.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that among the issues raised in the meeting, one was about the Maldok Sanctuary and the other was about enforcement of pollution control laws. The environmental consultant has been instructed to exclude the report that there is no sanctuary in the periphery of 0.5 k.m. The



point you raised is true. But the said company is not alone. It is operating in the notified MIDC area. Therefore, along with this company, many other companies are working here. The Government has approved MIDC after considering all aspects. The suggestions and objections raised in the public hearing are recorded and the expert committee takes note of the suggestions and objections raised while giving approval.

It has been realized that even the proposed project will have to follow the pollution standards. At this time, some of the participants started talking about the pollution in the area, and the Chairperson asked them to give suggestions/ objections only about the concerned company.

**9) Shri Keshav Jambhale, Akole Kati, Tal – Uttar Solapur, Dist -Solapur, District President, Prahar Industrial Kamgar Sangatana, Solapur District :-**

Congratulations on starting a company that has been closed for years. Moreover, it is a notified MIDC area. So starting a company here is acceptable to everyone. But can a Committee be constituted by the company to coordinate the company management and the villagers? All these issues should be resolved there. We want the company to run well, the environment to be protected and the villagers to progress, not to suffer. Decisions taken by that committee should be accepted by all. This is my suggestion.

Project Proponent promised for the same.

Convener said that the environmental concerns, comments, suggestions or objections raised by the participants in the meeting regarding the proposed project have been recorded and its minutes will be prepared in Marathi and English and it will be submitted alongwith the final Environmental Impact Assessment Report, the written suggestions/objections received with the approval of the Chairperson, Environment




Public Hearing Committee are submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi through MPCB Head Office. An Expert Committee there takes further decision regarding it. He thanked all the participants on behalf of the Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee declared the meeting as concluded.

Meeting ended extending thanks to the Chair.



**(Ajit Patil)**  
Convener,  
Environment Public Hearing Committee  
And  
Sub Regional Officer,  
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board  
Solapur



**(Shama Pawar)**  
Chairperson,  
Environment Public Hearing Committee  
And  
Additional District Magistrate, Solapur  
District – Solapur