

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED PROJECT OF SETTING UP NEW 1,200 MTPD (DAP BASIS) NPK/DAP COMPLEX FERTILIZER PLANT AT EXISTING RCF FACILITY PROPOSED BY M/S RASHTRIYA CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS LTD., (RCF) THAL, TALUKA - ALIBAG, DISTRICT- RAIGAD, MAHARASHTRA

The Environment Public Hearing for proposed project of setting up New 1,200 MTPD (DAP Basis) NPK/DAP Complex Fertilizer Plant at existing RCF Facility proposed by M/s Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd., (RCF) Thal, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad, Maharashtra was conducted on Tuesday, the 28th February, 2023 at 01.00 noon at Sai-In Hotel, Revas Road, Chondhi- Kihim, Taluka-Alibag, District - Raigad (402 201).

Shri R.S. Kamat, Sub Regional Officer, Raigad-2, MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai and Convener of the Environment Public Hearing Committee welcomed to Dr. Padamshree Bainade, Additional District Magistrate, Raigad and Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Shri Vidyasagar Killedar, Incharge Regional Officer - Raigad, MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai and Member of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Environmentalists, NGOs, Journalists and Company Officials and local people / participants who were present and informed that as per the Environment Impact Assessment Notification of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (i.e. MoEF & CC, GoI) dated 14th September, 2006 as amended on 1st December, 2009, it is mandatory to conduct prior public consultation to certain projects which are covered in the schedule of the said Notification.

He informed that Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was in receipt of application from Project Proponent M/s Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd., (RCF) Thal, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad, Maharashtra for their proposed project of setting up new 1,200 MTPD (DAP Basis) NPK/DAP Complex Fertilizer Plant at existing RCF Facility, Thal, Taluka-Alibag, District-Raigad, Maharashtra.

Convener further informed that, this existing project is established outside the Industrial Zone and as per EIA Notification, 2006 the category of project falls under Category -5(a) which requires to obtain prior Environmental Clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt of India, New Delhi for which prior environmental consultation is mandatory.

Convener informed that the aim of conducting prior public consultation is to make aware about project details and Environmental aspects to local people who can be participant in the hearing, and they should know the developmental activities and Environment Management Plan of the unit.

Project Proponent had submitted online prescribed application along with pre-feasibility report to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi on 24-12-2021 for obtaining Terms of Reference (TOR) and it has been considered and given online approval on 20-01-2022.

The District Collector-Raigad, Alibag had approved the public hearing scheduled on 15.11.2022, However the hearing was postponed due to law-and-order situation.

The District Collector, Raigad further approved the date of public hearing on Tuesday, the 28th February, 2023 at 01.00 noon 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 01-12-2009.

The Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai has constituted Environment Public Hearing Panel vide Board's Office Order No. E-13 vide letter no. BO/JD (WPC)/PH/B- -230209-FTS-0145 dtd.09.02.2023.

- 1) District Magistrate-Raigad, Alibag **Chairman**
or his representative (not below
the rank of an Additional District
Magistrate)
- 2) Representative of Maharashtra **Member**
Pollution Control Board, Mumbai -
Regional Officer – Raigad,
MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, Navi Mumbai
- 3) Sub Regional Officer- Raigad-2 **Convener**
MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, Navi Mumbai

As per said Notification, 30 days advance public notice was published by Sub Regional Officer - Raigad-2, MPCB, Navi Mumbai in the Local Newspapers Daily Sakal, Daily Krushival, and Daily Raigad times for Marathi and in National Newspaper daily The Indian Express for English on 26th January, 2023 & 28th January, 2023 and also provided online link for joining through video conference. In the said notice, the public / NGO's / Organizations were appealed to send their suggestions, views, doubts or objections regarding environmental issues of the proposed project.

Also, the copy of EIA report and executive summary in Marathi and in English were made available at various notified Government offices as under-

- 1) Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Zonal Office, West Central Zone, New Secretariat Building, Ground Floor, East Wing, Civil Line, Nagpur-440 001.
- 2) District Collector Office, Raigad.
- 3) General Manager, District Industries Centre Office, Raigad.
- 4) Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad Office, Raigad;
- 5) Tahsildar, Tahsildar Office - Alibag, Tal – Alibag, District – Raigad.
- 6) Police Superintendent, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad;
- 7) Chief Officer, Alibag Nagar Parishad, Taluka-Alibag, District – Raigad.
- 8) Grampanchayat Offices - Dhup, Thal, Boris-Gunjis, Navgaon, Kihim, Kurul, Vidhi, Pandhare, Mapgaon, Manibhute, Varsoli, Kopar-Khidki, Parhur Pada, Zirad, Aawas-Sasvane, Akshi, Revdanda, Ramraj, Satirje, Nagaon.
- 9) Environment & Climate Change Department, Govt. of Maharashtra, 15th Floor, New Administrative Building, Madam Cama Road, Mantralaya, Mumbai.
- 10) Head Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai.
- 11) Regional Officer-Raigad, MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, 6th Floor, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai.
- 12) Sub Regional Officer-Raigad-2, MPCB, Raigad Bhavan, 6th Floor, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai.
- 13) Website of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.

MPCB is in receipt of 02 emails and 12 letters regarding suggestions, objections in writing and by email which have been noted.

Convener informed that participants can raise their views, suggestions/objections orally or in writing for the proposed project in environmental related issues only.

Convener informed that this Committee is constituted to know the views, opinions, suggestions or objections of the local people and it does not take any decision of sanction, recommendation or rejection of the project.

The suggestions/objections raised during the meeting will be included in the minutes of the meeting. The video shooting of the meeting as it is along with minutes of the meeting and Final minutes EIA report will be submitted with the approval of Chairperson of the Committee through MPCB Head Office to Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi for further decision.

Convener requested Chairperson to inform Project Proponent to start the presentation.

As presentation started, at that time, a discussion started among the participants. Shri. Deepak Ranawade demanded to register some of his objections. At that time, Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that after the presentation, you will be given an opportunity to raise suggestions or objections. At that time, the participants started to talk in between and started to raise slogans. The participation of women in the meeting was significant. Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee allowed Shri. Deepak Ranawade to briefly state his suggestions.

Shri. Deepak Ranawade said that the Notification regarding public hearing has been received. But we say that for the last 13 years, a question of the project affected people (PAPs) is pending. Yesterday and the day before yesterday, District Collector has promised to resolve the said issue immediately and first 13 years pending issues should be resolved and then this public hearing should be conducted. We have no opposition to this NPK - Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium project. Our district, Maharashtra state and the country need this

fertilizer. But before that, those who are sitting at home affected by the project, they do not get one- or two-times meals, it is necessary to get justice for them. The Committee on Environment may say that the issue does not come under the purview of this committee, and we are not concerned with that issue. We are not opposing the project. I have personally worked in such a project. However, first resolve the issues of the project affected people, then only public hearing should be conducted. If not, we completely oppose this public hearing.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that yesterday Representatives of People have discussed with the project management at the Collector Office to answer the questions of the project affected people. The process of giving justice to the project affected people have started. An explanation has been sought from the Project Proponent -RCF in this regard. The demand of the project affected people has not been rejected anywhere. However, everyone is requested to allow completion of the presentation first.

Later, your suggestions, thoughts, objections will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting with your name. But all those present opposed it. Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that NPK is essential for agriculture and many farmers buy it from private companies even though it is expensive. But all participants were aggressive.

Women groups were also announcing to stop the public hearing. At that time, Chairperson asserted that this project must be done, and justice must be given to the project affected people. The process has already been initiated from the Collector office. But that process cannot be done today.

At that time, Zilla Parishad Member Mrs. Manasi Mahendra Dalvi demanded that our land has already been given to the existing project, in lieu of that we have

been issued PAP certificates, give us a written assurance that they will be included in the project as employees as project affected people.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the said matter is under consideration and is in pipeline, it was in the background of this public hearing that the meeting was held by the Hon'ble Collector twice yesterday. The company has to do what is mandatory by law and regulation.

At that time, Mrs. Manasi Mahendra Dalvi, Ex. Member Zilla Parishad, Raigad said that the consideration is in pipeline since 13 years and no action has been taken. So, what will they do now? We have been struggling for the last 13 years. We have transferred that certificate in the name of the next generation. But there is no job in RCF. We must get back what is rightful to ours.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the Collector has given a copy to the company as per the directions of the Hon'ble High Court. It has sought information whether the project affected people have been given jobs as per the directives of the Hon'ble High Court. RCF will submit its report. Government, Collector's office is committed to provide jobs to those affected by the project. RCF is required by law to do so.

At that time, Mrs. Manasi Mahendra Dalvi, Ex. Member Zilla Parishad, Raigad said that the Court has approved, and the Minister has also signed it. Still nothing has happened for the last 13 years. RCF should first give jobs to the project affected people and then this public hearing should be held.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that it is mandatory for RCF to make available the information of jobs given to PAPs. As you are a project sufferer, but new people also need jobs. This does not mean that demand of the project affected people is neglected. But new people need jobs too.

At that time, some people present said that we are local people and all our lands have gone.

We have been fighting for jobs for the last 30 years but nothing has happened. So why do another recruitment without giving job to us? Outsiders came and stayed here. But the project affected people got nothing.

At that time, the Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the project affected people will get justice, similarly the young boys and girls of the area will get job opportunities.

Mrs. Manasi Mahendra Dalvi, Ex. Member Zilla Parishad, Raigad said that we have been fighting for more than 13 years. Hunger Strike has been done many times. Today, you will conduct the public hearing, but what about the project affected people, we will not start the public hearing until the decision of the project affected people is made.

At that time, Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the minute of the meeting is a document that goes to the Central Government, which includes our names and demands. However, those present should be cooperate.

With the permission of the Chairperson, the Project Proponent while giving presentation said that India is an agricultural country and the demand of DAP in 2018-19 was about 105 lakh tonnes, out of which 66 lakh tonnes of DAP has been imported.

The demand for DAP in Maharashtra was around 8.9 lakh tonnes, out of which 5.1 lakh tonnes of DAP was imported. RCF has proposed to set up a new

1,200 MTPD DAP / NPK plant in view of the national vision of a self-reliant India and to meet the growing domestic demand for DAP / NPK.

Project Proponent while presenting said that there is no danger to the environment due to the establishment of the said project, there will be no adverse effect on water, air and soil. The level of pollutants will be kept within the prescribed limits using the best available technology. The estimated cost for the pollution control equipment will be Rs. 25 crore and the annual maintenance cost will be around Rs. 2 crore. There will be social and economic upliftment of the local people due to this project.

After the Presentation, Environmental public hearing committee, appealed to all participants to present their suggestions, objections if any regarding the proposed project in environmental angle only. While raising the issues, first mention your name and village name while registering suggestions or objections.

After the Presentation, Chairperson thanked all the participants for quietly listening the presentation. She said that what has been demanded is to read Para 13 of the Bombay High Court's judgment dated 13th February 2007 in Writ Petition No.6408 / 2005.

It states that those who are resident in RCF's vicinity, as per the judgment of High Court, it is binding on RCF and RCF should take further action accordingly. It is suggested that para 13 should be read out in the meeting and it should be noted in the minutes and that it is binding.

Para 13 of the judgment is that -

13) **In the light of the above, the following Order:-**

i) The Petitioners have complied with the obligations of providing employment to the 385 project affected families and or persons named by them and are not duty bound to provide any further guaranteed employment except to give preference in case more jobs are generated by expansion of the project to families of P.A.P.'s, as set out in the letter dated 25-03-2005.

ii) The Collector of the District is directed to conduct an enquiry for the purpose of issuance of certificate to other than the 385 who were eligible. If the Collector comes to the finding, that 180 families have been issued more than one certificate, then in the certificates issued to second or third person in the same family, to record that one member has already been provided employment.

However, as per the order of the court, the families of the project affected have also been mentioned.

Chairperson said that the villagers have objections in the process which has been followed, and the Collector is re-inquiring about it. However, for PAPs who are family members, further action is mandatory.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that anyone other than the PAP's is given the opportunity to speak. If you want to ask questions about the environment related issues of RCF, ask them, before that, tell your name, village. Those who want to give written statement may also give written statement.

FOLLOWING PARTICIPANTS HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE DISCUSSIONS AND ANSWERS GIVEN BY ENVIRONMENT CONSULTANT/PROJECT PROPONENT/ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC HEARING COMMITTEE:-

1) **Shri. Ulhas Vatkare, Secretary, Maharashtra Macchimar Kruti Samiti**
Navedar Navgaon Macchimar Samiti Chairman :-

Thank you for organizing this Environment Public Hearing. The draft report for setting up RCF's 1200 MTPD (DAP Basis) NPK/DAP Complex Fertilizer Project, as shown in the presentation, covers the Environment Impact Assessment study period from 20th January, 2022 to 19th April, 2022. This period is wrong and misleading, as the pollution of soil, water and air is highest during the rainy season from June to September. The survey is not carried in that season.

Due to the pollution caused by the existing project, RCF's pipes in the sea causes financial losses of fishermen every year. Fishermen have not received compensation for the last 30 years. The references from sr.no. 1 to sr.no. 7 are given with this letter. (From 2018 till today). A meeting of fishermen has also been held with District Administration. Nothing is done further. RCF has not provided any financial assistance to the affected fishermen and farmers. Injustice is done to us.

Therefore, the local people have no trust on the Project Management. As per our known sources, presently these activities are in operation at RCF Chembur Plant at Mumbai and the said project is going to be shifted here i.e. at Thal, District - Raigad due to the complaints of the Chembur residents from time to time as health of the residents of Chembur, Mumbai is in danger. Due to this, the health of the people of Thal and surrounding villages will be in danger.

This project is hazardous to health, as dangerous diseases like cancer are likely to occur due to the said project, it is being moved from Chembur and going to be installed here. There is a plan to destroy the locality in the name of development of the country.

According to the analysis of water and the report prepared by the RCF and given to the local Gram Panchayat, the water parameters are above the prescribed limit. Similarly soil pollution, air pollution, water pollution are above the prescribed limits. Due to effluent generated from the project, the pollutants have spread upto 5.0 nautical miles and the fishing has been destroyed there. Due to this, the fishermen of Thal, Navgaon is starving.

Company has not used the CSR funds till date for the local fishermen, but the Project Proponent have violated all norms by polluting water, air and soil for the past 30 years. Due to the continuous use of such fertilizers for agriculture in the State of Punjab, those fertilizers are mixed with the soil and water, and cancer patients are found in every house. Hence, the fishermen and local farmers are opposing to this project and approval should not be given to establish this project at Thal. All these objections should be noted.

2) Shri Aalhad Vasudeo Patil, Dy. Sarpanch, Group Gram Panchayat, Khidki, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad:-

He said that he supports all the objections raised by the Secretary, Maharashtra Fishermen Kruti Samiti. He read out the objections and suggestions in the written statement to be submitted. He said that as per the Executive Summary Report prepared, this 1200 MTPD DAP/NPK Fertilizer Project is required for a Self-Reliant India and it will be commissioned in the vacant space of the RCF premises.

Also, along with the project, it is necessary to protect rights, interests and progress of the local business. Here the raw material Sulfuric Acid of 500 Tons per day will be brought from JNPT to Thal Project by tanker. Also 950 MT Phosphoric Acid will be brought from JNPT to Thal Project by tanker.

According to the Maharashtra Disaster Management Plan, this entire area - from JNPT to Thal falls under "Flood Prone Zone". Hence, there is a need of detailed study for the regular chemical transportation through this road. Especially during the rainy season, as the rate of over-turning of tankers is high, it is necessary to study in detailed considering all aspects.

The study period of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report is from 20th January 2022 to 19th April 2022. A Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report is required for the entire year. Such study is indispensable considering security of this sensitive area.

He further stated that in the report, 29 k.m. length of the railway line is mentioned and its utility for transportation of RCF Thal products is given. While the RCF is refusing to consider PAPs (Project Affected Persons) to those whose lands were taken for railway, the RCF is pointing fingers at the railways.

Chairperson asked to clarify this. Shri Patil said that while the railway line is from Wadkhal to Thal, the project affected people have not been given a certificate as a PAP or given a job. However, through this letter, we are demanding justice for the project affected people before the project execution. 275 Tons of Ammonia will be used for this project. Your report states that the use of Ammonia poses a risk to people in the surrounding area. Ammonia above 5,000 ppm in the atmosphere can cause death. Training is essential to save the life. Ammonia is produced in large quantities in the RCF plant and is stored in 20,000 Ton and 5,000 Ton ammonia tanks. No training has been given to the people in the area.

RCF must conduct meetings, training under Disaster Management Plan from time to time as directed by the Government. It doesn't happen. After complaining about it in the Janata Darbar of the Hon'ble Industry Minister, no

mechanism has been set up despite the Hon'ble Industry Minister giving written instructions to the RCF in this regard.

According to the current law, 80% jobs should go to the local people only.

Chemical transportation in this project will be done by tankers. However, 50% of the tankers should be local. However, it is a humble request that these suggestions be considered. Chairperson instructed to Project Proponent to reply on the points raised by him.

Officials of the Project Proponent said that the first question was about road transport. So, 300 Ton of excess Ammonia produced, is used in the project itself. So current Tanker traffic will be completely stopped.

In addition, the transport of Phosphoric and Sulfuric is approximately 50-55 tankers, but we intend to bring this raw material project here as well. The product generated in the project will be transported by rail. About the load on the road, there will be load of one tanker per hour on the road.

3) Shri Rajendra Madhukar Thakur, Residence-Alibag, District - Raigad :-

My father was a local MLA from Uran Alibag constituency from 2004-2009. My father made a sincere effort to resolve the issue of PAPs - (Project Affected Persons). We are 100% with PAPs. Employment / job opportunities, justice to local people is our aim. But there are many other issues as well.

Our Navgaon Koliwada brothers have problem for many years. The small boats (galbats), trolleys, are harmed, This question is important. Now the issue about RCF railway came up. When the railway passes, there is vehicle line upto 1-2 km. A serious patient cannot be taken to Alibag. For this, it is important to make over-bridge or other facility immediately.

I am thankful to the RCF Administration for providing funds from time to time. They have helped to develop the building of the college. Development should happen, do the development. But if they do injustice to our local people, we will not co-operate. Development should be inclusive. We must provide job opportunities to the local young boys and girls. If our children are educated, they should get jobs, they should be given first priority. The life of the people here must be enriched.

4) Shri Ravindra Jayram Berde, Group Gram Panchayat, Boris-Gunjis

Member:-

In the discussions, you said that you have given equipment to Civil Hospital. So, which equipment have been made available and to whom? If the CT scan machine is made available, it is not working and there is no neurologist.

Shri. Berde said that a few days ago, there was an accident at RCF, it is understood that AC in their hospital was not in working condition. It is a Central Government company and after expansion, if there is a major accident, what equipment are available? My request to this Environmental Public Hearing Committee is to demonstrate that there is no 100% pollution here.

If our plants turn black, project officials give us one fertilizer bag worth Rs.500 only. It is informed by project officials that they sprayed in our fields, then have they ever done such spraying in Gunjis-Boris? Project officials have held an agricultural exhibition at Awas. There Green beans (Ghevda) were shown, but no relevant training was ever given to us.

He said that RCF hospital needs to be well equipped with modern facilities. Here, even common people do not stay in hospital, even employees do not stay. Those who are working on contract basis also do not have access to that hospital.

If there are 25% regular employees, 75% are contract employees. So, first update the hospital.

Here, Chairperson instructed the Project Officer to give an immediate explanation about this.

Shri Ravindra Berde alleged that the officials of RCF are sent to Mumbai to modern hospital. Recently there was an accident in RCF. RCF Administration is responsible for this. Contractual workers who had accidents in the past have also not been paid by the RCF Administration. Minimum Wage Act is not implemented in the project. Workers work here for just Rs.350/-.

While replying, Medical Officer of the Project said that the project has a NABH Accredited hospital with 32 beds. The accreditation has been received as the hospital is well equipped with modern facilities. The hospital has pre-accreditation approval. At that time, Mr. Berde asked why the patients were shifted to Mumbai. Medical Officer replied that if they require further treatment than what is available in the hospital, they are shifted to that hospital.

Shri. Berde said that the burn cases in the project is high. So why are patients sent to Mumbai at that time? Medical Officer said that the decision is taken by looking at the percentage burns and condition of the patient at that time.

The chairperson asked that if there may be an accident – burns then there should not be need to shift the patient to Mumbai, it is to be considered that the burnt person can be fully treated here.

Shri. Berde objected that even though the project was being set up in RCF premises itself, it should be informed that how much there should be safe distance from neighboring villages to project site Thal, Boris.

Shri. Berde alleged that there is obnoxious smell at Thal, Boris, Gunjis, Navgaon.

Chairperson remarked that there is demand of the local people, hospital here should be completely updated with modern facilities and complete burn treatment should be given here only while project expansion and suggested to take further action in this regard. It is directed by Chairperson to take note of this point in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson further asked that if there is an Ammonia leak, further measures to be taken and the local people should be trained in this regard.

Shri. Berde alleged that ammonia has increased the incidence of heart disease here. Green agriculture is not seen here. The entire farm has been damaged. Project Proponent should make bunkers to avoid accidents while producing ammonia further.

If the tanker overturns, it takes time to complete all the processes and the arrival of the project vehicle is delayed. Their fire station should be outside.

Chairperson asked that it should be clarified that why fire station vehicles of the project could not reach intime.

Project Proponent answered that they have provided training to nearby educational institutions, villagers, students. Also, they have provided prompt service in case of emergency call i.e. - recent incident at Chondhi, Mandwa.

Shri. Berde objected that even a fire brigade van is required to take a gate pass. At that time, Chairperson expressed the opinion that the fire brigade van should not need a gate pass. Project proponent clarified that gate pass is not

required for Firefighting vans. Shri. Berde requested to implement various medical schemes in RCF Hospital through CSR funds.

Chairperson instructed Senior Officers of the Project Proponent to reply regarding the updated hospital. She suggested to provide information about health facilities along with expansion of the project.

Project's senior officer-Chief General Manager said that we have provided all possible facilities to the 324 bedded hospital. Post covid updated systems have been bought.

Answering about the facilities for the burn patients presented in the meeting, he said that a decision is taken only after looking at the situation of the patients.

Chairperson asked whether the hospital will be updated along with the expansion. She remarked that it will be noted in the minutes. Shri. Berde objected that even contract workers are not given treatment in the hospital.

Shri. Rajendra Thakur remarked that firefighting vans should reach on the fire accident spot on time.

Project Proponent said that suggestions made in the meeting will be considered by RCF very seriously.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee suggested that a RCF should positively think to upgrade the hospital and to provide health facilities to the citizens in the area. It is the responsibility of the RCF Administration to update to the Collector Office regarding above.

If retired 10th pass persons can operate the plant, then why local engineering graduates of PAPs and local people here cannot be given opportunity to work?

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee suggested that all the information regarding the cadres in which the personnels are needed should be given to the Gram Panchayats in the area along with the posts. Training facilities should be provided for the local young boys and girls and job opportunities should be given to the local young boys and girls. Local young boys and girls should be given training for specific period. If RCF is unable to conduct such training, then there is skill development department of Government of Maharashtra. In co-ordination with them, specific training program should be prepared for local young boys and girls and after training, they should be absorbed in RCF.

5) Mrs. Manasi Mahendra Dalvi, Ex. Member Zilla Parishad, Raigad:-

Company management is giving false answer. She said that she worked as Sarpanch of Thal village for 15 years. They only promise, but actually do nothing. If the project is built on our land, then why are the citizens not provided with medical facilities. Why our children are not admitted in their schools, colleges? Then the local boys are charged higher fees. Only their staff, officials can play on their ground. RCF has not repaired the road from RCF to Symon Colony and handed over it to Gram Panchayat.

She said that on days when ammonia is released, the smell brings tears to the eyes of the villagers. The leaves of the trees turn black and fall down. Whether any plan is prepared for that?

If RCF adopts a Minister's village, why they cannot develop our village. Companies were established by demolishing / destroying the houses of the local

people. When recruitment took place here, only one boy from Raigad district was appointed. As project victims, we go on hunger strike, fight, but our children do not get jobs.

He said that the issue was raised in the meeting that diseases like cancer are increasing in the area. So, for that, RCF needs to help with a generous hand. Also, many people were in trouble due to Corona. In many cases the parents have gone, but the children have survived. It is our duty to help such children. However, help should be given in such cases.

6) Shri Pravin Thakur, District - Raigad

The benefit of this public hearing was that we were able to share our problems. We agree that Alibag has developed because of RCF. But the people here have to face many difficulties. People of Navgaon, Thal have to suffer every day. Paying attention to new project and neglecting old issues is not acceptable.

Our demands are related to children, jobs, project victims and our local children should be employed. Employ at least 80% of those children in the plant. Also, another issue is modern well-equipped hospital. If other organizations can build hospitals, why can't RCF build hospitals? The fee should be taken for that. Unfortunately, schools and hospitals have not been built here. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to the educational facilities here.

He further raised the point that RCF Railway was mentioned in the meeting. There must be over-bridge. Vadkhal Pen are at few km from here, but it takes a few hours to reach. Accidents happen on the way, besides petrol has increased. So, if the railway is being built on mountains, planes, rivers and sea, we need a railway. But for passenger train, we need No Objection Certificate. If there is objection for issuance of NOC, I will not hesitate to sleep on railway track.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee asked the Project Proponent whether there is any problem in starting the passenger train or issuing of No Objection Certificate. At that time, the Project Proponent said that the RCF would seriously consider the suggestions raised.

7) Dr. Mahendra Vatkare, Residence - Navgaon, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad -

An promise was given by the RCF and its minutes are at the Collector's Office, that promise was to build a jetty at Navgaon. Inform the present status.

Project Officer said that the proposal was prepared during 2013-14 for fishermen / Koli brothers of Thal Navgaon as per their demand. In this regard, Central Government and the State Government had also prepared a policy regarding the share. RCF cannot built the Jetty in the sea on its own. At that time, it was decided that in the proposal of the Central Government, the State Government would also bear the financial burden, if the State Government does not have the money, the RCF would bear the expenses on behalf of state government.

A survey was conducted in this regard. An Expert Committee of the West Bengal Fisheries Board had come. After preparing the proposal, the Ports Department of the Government of India had initiated further proceedings. As per policy, it was decided that the Central Government would pay 75% and the State Government would pay 25%. After that Maharashtra Government directed that 25% share of Maharashtra government would be paid by RCF. Hence, a provision was made in the Board Meeting of the RCF to pay the share of Maharashtra Government.

Last year, this issue again came back for discussions in the Government meetings has promised financial support for that. However, RCF cannot build a jetty.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee suggested to keep follow up of the said proposal. She asked whether it is beneficial for you to bring the goods here at your jetty instead of from JNPT?

At that time, Project Proponent replied that this jetty site was for the fishermen of Thal, Navgaon and they should have a platform there. It was an initiative of the Government of India.

Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee suggested that if the RCF was going to benefit partially from that Jetty, they should pursue it.

Dr. Mahendra Watkare asked the formula of NPK/DAP. He asked what to do with the sulfur that will be produced.

Dr. Mahendra Watkare asked what percentage of profit is spent as CSR? At that time, it was answered that CSR is 2% of the average of the profit of previous three years. CSR fund was Rs 3.58 crores for 2020-21, Rs.6.86 crores for 2021-22. For the year 2022-2023, CSR fund was Rs.11.70 Crores, out of that Rs 6.76 crores have been spent on various schemes implemented in the vicinity area.

Dr. Mahendra Watkare asked about ESC (Environmental Social Commitment). After providing complete information by the project proponent, Dr. Watkare suggested that the funds earmarked should be used in the locality. The project promoter agreed to it.

Member, Environment Public Hearing Committee informed about ESC that while the project is new, the Project Proponent has to spend 2.5% of the project cost for the next five years for various environmental schemes, drinking water

schemes, construction of toilets in the area. It has to be spent only with the approval of the Hon'ble District Collector and it is mandatory.

Project proponent explained that, estimated project expenditure of Rs. 914.58 Crores includes 18 % GST and working capital for one months. After deducting this amount, the basic project cost is Rs. 702.24 Crores. 2.5 % of this amount i.e Rs. 17.56 Crores have been earmarked for ESC and will be spent in next five years.

At this moment, objections were raised by the participants regarding payment of collective drinking water and bad roads. They requested Chairperson to visit and inspect the 2.5 km radius of the project.

Project Proponent said that the order given by the Government regarding the revenue in Gunjis-Boris and Navgaon Village Panchayats will be followed.

At this time, Mrs. Mansi Dalvi alleged that when the flood occurred last year, the gate on the Navgaon drain, passing through the RCF was not opened, so the entire Pada/Locality was getting submerged in the flood water. RCF Administration opened the doors only after the Block Development Officer threatened to file a case of culpable homicide.

Chairperson instructed Project Proponent to take immediate action regarding the CSR funds and to spend the funds to each Gram Panchayat accordingly. At that time, the participants collectively alleged that Navgaon jetty is planned and agreed by the RCF because the pipe laid by the Project Proponent has been exposed.

Project Proponent said that the CSR fund will be spent accordingly after the proposal is received by the Gram Panchayat. At that time, the participants

demanded that Thal-Navgaon bridge is totally damaged and demanded that it be widened.

Here, Chairperson instructed all the concerned persons to meet the Collector if the work does not start within a month.

8) Shri Shirish Rajke, Former RCF Employee -

Whether the present Project Officer has authority to approve the plan, because the present officer here has no authority. They are not Competent-Authorities for that there is no transparency in recruitment process carried out by RCF.

Project Proponent informed that RCF is a Government of India Undertaking, so they have to follow all the administrative and financial rules of the Government of India, they are mandatory. A third - party company has been appointed to conduct the written test to ensure transparency in the recruitment process. Here all over India for officers and local employment exchange office for workers are contacted. It is a transparent process.

9) Shri Sunil Patre, Thal, Sarpanch, Gut Grampanchayat, Thal, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad :-

Shri Patre asked what was the number of workers in the project in 1980-82? Information should be given to the Group Gram Panchayat in writing. The employees who retired within Seven-Eight years, their land is acquired by the project. The information should be reported to the District Collector Office and Group Gram Panchayat Office. Then it will be noticed that Contempt of Court has been done regarding 141 people.

At that time, the Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee remarked that the report and letters of Collector, Raigad will be sent.

10) **Shri Kishen Kator, Residence - Navgaon, Taluka-Alibag, Dist -Raigad**

If the local boys and girls are not getting jobs in the project in the name of Rules, then we don't want the project. He objected that the project officer do not open the door after the flood.

Project Officials asked if they were talking about the Navgaon drain where the tidal water comes back, they replied that the spring tide is of 5 meters height and a self-operated non-return gate has been provided, so the village water will go out, but outside water will not come in.

At this time, Chairperson remarked that if the local people are complaining, then it is evident that there is something wrong.

Shri. Kator had become very aggressive. At that time, the Company Administration assured that a visit will be arranged along with the Gram Panchayat Office and villagers will be apprised about present situation.

Chairperson informed that within eight days, a survey to be conducted along with Gram Panchayats.

11) Shri. Chitrasen Kawale, Residence - Navgaon, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad -

Due to exposure of pipe, the Jetty will be made. If RCF gets permission for the project, then why Pollution Control Board does not give permission for jetty?

Chairperson replied that first the Project Proponent would send the proposal, then Administration would take follow up.

Project Proponent informed that the proposal was prepared by the Government of Maharashtra. For that project completion of the preliminary items i.e. survey, cost estimate was prepared. The survey was conducted by the Expert Committee of West Bengal. The expenditure of the Jetty was planned by RCF.

Shri. Chitrasen Kawle objected that the jetty is going to be built because of the pipelines. Local people have lost crores of rupees for the past several years, but not a single penny has been paid by RCF. However, compensation should be given for so many years for each boat.

12) Shri Hemant Surekar, Residence - Navgaon, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad :

Ten boats have been completely destroyed after hitting the effluent carrying pipeline of RCF. The foundation under the boat deteriorates every year. Till now, not a single rupee compensation has been paid by RCF.

Project Proponent replied that when the pipeline was laid, it was one and a half meters deep in the sea. Because of tidal water now the pipeline is coming up. That time boats were also small boats.

At that time, the Chairperson, Public Hearing Committee on Environment suggested that in accordance with the complaint of the local Koli community, the project promoter should immediately submit a revised proposal.

The points of discussion and compensation should also be mentioned in the revised proposal. It should be mentioned that the revised proposal is being presented due to the outcry raised by the citizens in the public hearing.

At this time, some of the participants informed that the Fisheries Department has also done a Panchnama for this and has asked to pay the compensation. Chairperson instructed the Project Proponent to take the opinion of their Technical Wing.

Shri Rajendra Madhukar Thakur said that now the Project Proponent have to pay compensation for the local boats. But a satisfactory alternative has to be found in this regard.

At this time, Chairperson, Environmental Public Hearing Committee told the participants that a proposal should be submitted to the Collector Office regarding the amount of damage to boats under the headings of "Natural Calamities" every year. Collector is the Chairman of the Natural Disasters Department. Further action will be taken regarding compensation from the Collector Office. It is suggested that one of the persons present bring the proposal in person.

Chairperson advised all the participants that if the company does not open the door due to flood in the future, the local people should immediately complain to the District Collector, the collector will get the work done by the concerned company under disaster management.

13) Shri. Dilesh Chitke, Chairman Thal Macchimaar Society

A written objection has been filed. Contaminated effluent from the project is discharged into the sea, so the fish, prawns and mussels are not available. They are killed. The livelihood of 100-150 people has been destroyed. Also, the new project will increase the effluent and our loss will be more.

14) Shri Hemant Surekar, Residence - Navgaon, Tal-Alibag, District-Raigad

If a critical patient comes near the railway gate, there is no place to take him at hospital. While the over bridge will take time, the road can be temporarily diverted from Palathi Road. Can there be a road for an ambulance to go from there? Project Proponent replied that the bridge was now being widened so that the ambulance could pass.

At that time, **Shri Ravindra Jairam Berde, Member of Group Gram Panchayat Boris-Gunjis** objected that if the patrolling is going on from that bridge, why not yet it is repaired?

Chairperson of the Committee said that Company Administration has promised that they will start working in one month.

At that time, Shri Berde said that if there is a breeze than even a cyclist will fall down. Because of that bridge, their project is also in danger.

At that time, Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee said that it is mandatory to keep the promises made in the public hearing.

Shri Ravindra Jairam Berde, Group Gram Panchayat Borisu-Gunjis Member demanded that what next plan will be implemented to see if the promises made by the Project Proponent in the public hearing are fulfilled or not?

Chairperson said that for this a Review Meeting will be organized after 30 days', and it will be recorded in the minutes.

When the participants asked whether they will get the copy of the minutes, the chairperson informed that they will get it after eight days at the Collector's Office, MPCB Office at Raigad Bhavan, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai. Here Mrs. Manasi Dalvi, Zilla Parishad Member demanded that each Gram Panchayat be given a copy of the minutes of this meeting.

15) **Shri Dilesh Mahadev Chitke, Chairman, Macchimar Sanghtana Thal :-**

Though this project benefits farmers, local people, but the entire water of this project goes into the lower creek. So, what we can do about the fishermen as fishing is affected? There are local fishermen, what to do with them?

Project Proponent replied that in each of their projects ETP systems have been set up to treat effluent. Also, all the ponds are kept dry throughout the year so that no water goes into the creek. Similarly, 24-hour patrolling is done to ensure that water does not leak out of the project.

Shri. Chitke alleged that three months' ago, the water was released in the creek and the fish were dead. No one came when I called for Panchnama.

At that time, Chairperson suggested to call the Pollution Control Officers. Water is released during high and low tide and fish do not stay at same place. At that time, the Chairperson suggested to call the pollution control officers. She said that the Pollution Control Officer conducts a Panchnama and registers a case.

Shri. Chitke further objected that during the month of December the wind direction is from the company to sea. This means that the polluted air of the company goes to the coast. It affects the drying of fish.

Shri. Chitke said that let the project come, but the entire Thal village should be adopted.

16) **Shri Rakesh Patil, Dy. Sarpanch, Man Jirad -**

I am of the opinion that there is no transparency in CSR allocation. Since 1982, there is Thal project. But last year, on the request of MLA, the CSR fund was allotted to the village Man tarfe Zirad, which is just 400 meters away. Information should be given on how CSR allocation has been done in 2-3 years. It will be better if the list is given to the affected Gram Panchayats.

Chairperson instructed to give copy to the concerned person.

Another point is that RCF says that they supply water. While Gram Panchayat buys water from MIDC. So why doesn't RCF give us water if we take their smoke. Our horticultural areas are going to be destroyed. Water should be given by RCF.

Project Proponent said that an agreement has been signed between Gram Panchayat and RCF. Water is supplied here through MIDC pipe lines. The terms and conditions of MIDC are that nobody should be given water. But RCF has taken the responsibility of Thal, Navgaon village panchayat in the area and agreements have been signed. 1200 M3 for Thal village, 600 M3 for Navgaon is given. Other gram panchayats have also requested but MIDC says the said water is reserved for industrial use. Zilla Parishad or Government have different schemes for water supply. However, we try to contribute some of our water savings. We had been informed that Gunjis Gram Panchayat is not getting water supply. So Zilla parishad scheme should be implemented so that everyone will get water.

Chairperson said that other water supply schemes should be prepared by Gram Panchayat. It will be supported by Project Proponent under CSR.

At that time, one of the participants objected that they are not getting drinking water, but the pipeline is broken and water is wasted.

Chairperson said that the said matter comes under the jurisdiction of the Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer, we should give a statement to him and a copy of the same should be given to the Collector office, Raigad, Alibag.

Shri Ravindra Jayram Berde, Group Gram Panchayat Boris-Gunjis Member demanded that there is no water supply to Kanakeshwar. It should be clarified.

Project Proponent said that we have our own colony. Now there is so much water connection without permission that our own colony is not getting water. Therefore, water is supplied to RCF Colony through tankers. We had suggested to prepare water supply scheme to Boris-Gunjis like Thal, Navgaon. If the tank is to be constructed, it can be proposed under CSR.

Shri Rajendra Madhukar Thakur said that there is a Gurcharan (Common grazing place) place in the village where a tank is to be constructed. Chairperson said that it can be built there.

Chairperson opined that the company's co-ordination with the local people seems to be lacking. She instructed participants to prepare a statement that should cover some of the concerned topics. She opined that if the company would have coordinated with the local people, there would not have been so much outrage. She suggested that a meeting be held at the Collector Office for the queries of the villagers.

17) Shri Makarand Janardhan Sunkale, Thal, Taluka - Alibag, District - Raigad:-

For the last 35 years, they have been demanding jobs as project victims. I am not satisfied with regard to the project victims. 617 people were given jobs on RCF 385 certificates. So, the additional people who were given, were they really project affected people?

Chairperson said that the Collector had asked the same questions to them yesterday. A copy will be provided after the reply. The High Court has written that the Collector should investigate.

Shri. Sunkle said there were two accidents last year - 23rd February and 19th October.

While concluding the meeting, Member, Environment Public Hearing Committee stated that 1200 MTPD (DAP basis) NPK/DAP Complex Fertilizer Project is to be established at existing RCF facility of Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited (RCF), Thal, Taluka-Alibag, District-Raigad, Environment Public Hearing for above project was held by Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and Collector Office, Raigad jointly.

Many suggestions, views and objections have been recorded by the local people in the meeting and it will be included in the minutes of the meeting. Similarly, many persons have submitted written suggestions/objections in the meeting, and they will be made available after getting answers from the Project Proponent.

Written suggestions, objections along with the final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report and minutes of the meeting with the approval of the Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee through Head Office,

Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and it will be submitted to the Department of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India New Delhi. An Expert Committee there will take further decision in this regard.

Member thanked all the participants, company administration and Police Administration and on behalf of the Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing was declared as concluded.

Meeting ended extending thanks to the Chair.

Enclosed herewith 14 No. written suggestions/objections received.



(R. S. Kamat)

Convener,

Environment Public Hearing
Committee

And

Sub Regional Officer, Raigad-2,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Navi Mumbai



(Vidyasagar Killedar)

Member,

Environment Public Hearing
Committee

And

I/c Regional Officer, Raigad,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Navi Mumbai



(Dr. Padamshree Bainade)

Chairperson,

Environment Public Hearing Committee

And

Additional District Magistrate, Raigad,
Dist – Raigad