

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED ON 18.05.2011 AT 10.30 A.M. AT DDC HALL, DISTRICT COLLECTORATE, TIRUNELVELI FOR THE EXISTING LIMESTONE MINES OF M/S.KRISHNA MINES, RAMAYANPATTI VILLAGE, TIRUNELVELI TALUK, TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

PRESENT

THIRU. M. JAYARAMAN, I.A.S.,
DISTRICT COLLECTOR
TIRUNELVELI

THIRU. R. VIJAYA BASKARAN, M.E., MBA
DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
TNPC BOARD, TIRUNELVELI

THIRU. C.MOHANASUNDARAM., MSc
DEPUTY DIRECTOR (GEOLOGY & MINING)
TIRUNELVELI

THIRU. A.RAJARAJAN.,
GENERAL MANAGER
DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE
TIRUNELVELI

PARTICIPANTS : LIST ENCLOSED

At the outset the District Environmental Engineer welcomed the gathering and informed the objective of public hearing. The District Collector initiated the proceedings and asked the authorities of M/s. Krishna Mines to make a presentation. Thiru.R.Balasubramaniam, Chief Mines Manager of M/s. Krishna Mines Ltd., made a presentation highlighting the details of extent of mining, details of mining lease, locations of the mines, landuse pattern of the mines, number of persons employed, usage of water in the mines, mode of treatment of sewage, future rehabilitation plans of the mines, air pollution control measures, noise and vibration control measures, green belt development and financial commitment on pollution control.

The District Collector informed that opportunity will be given to all the public to offer their views and asked the public to offer their views. Their objections and views were all well heard and recorded as minutes of the public hearing. Some of the public verbally made their comments and some have submitted their objections in writing to the District Collector. The verbal statements and written petitions and reply furnished by the industry are detailed below.

Thiru S P Muthuraman, Ex Youth Congress President, Tirunelveli

informed the following:

1. The Unit is operating without Mining Lease from 2009
2. The Unit is extracting 1500 MTs of Limestone instead of 500MTs.
3. Mathikettan Channel was blocked by Mines operations. It needs to be rehabilitated.
4. The EIA Report has not been incorporated with the Five year plan of IBM.
5. Ground water is depleted due to deep mining.
6. Mines water is used for their own Agriculture purposes for which no action has been taken by Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board under Water (P&CP) Act.
7. There is a possibility of Earth quake due to mining.
8. Heavy blasting, drilling, loading and operation of about 200 lorries cause dust pollution.
9. Heavy drilling blasting and vehicle movements causes noise. As contractors are employed for transport the vehicles are not properly maintained.
10. There are more vibrations due to mining
11. No social welfare activities are done except only one Eye-camp

12. Only 95 persons are employed and hence public are not benefitted much.
13. Nearby Punjai agricultural lands are affected.
14. Cattles are not grazing in this area due to mining activities.
15. Ozone depletion is possible as per Obavan University report.
16. The Over burden is stacked like great wall of China.

He concluded that the Mines should be ordered for Closure.

He gave a written petition also on the above lines. Copy of the same is enclosed vide Annexure. 1.

Thiru. C Suresh, Sethurayanpudhur, 11th ward Councilor,

He informed the following:

1. Nanjankulam, Sethurayanpudhur, Mavadi, Tenkalam and Thalaiyuthu have become dry and agriculture is lost due to Mining
2. Excess amount of limestone is excavated in this mine.
3. People of this area are depending on agriculture. Water stored in the mines is pumped and used for their own agriculture lands. Hence other agriculturists are not benefitted.
4. Fly rocks damages the nearby area. He cited that roof of nearby industry was damaged.
5. All the councilors made representations against heavy blasting for many years. He added that even the vessels in their houses rattle due to heavy blasting.
6. Heavy blasting caused cracks in their buildings
7. No Social welfare measures are done even for any festivals. No Street lights or laying of roads are done as public welfare.

Thiru C Kattu Raja, 220, Vadakku Theru, Sethurayanpudhur, informed that-

1. No trees are grown by the Mine except the naturally grown trees
2. Houses damage due to heavy blasting
3. Instead of 500 MTs the unit is mining 1500 MTs for which no tax is paid to the local body and no financial support is done to the panchayat.
4. The compound wall of his own house is damaged.
5. The path leading to school of Kammalankulam is blocked and people who questioned about it are threatened.
6. No benefits or welfare are done to the public and the operation of the Mines is affecting the people.

He gave a written petition in which he concluded to cancel the Mining lease. Copy of the petition is enclosed vide Annexure 2.

Thiru S. Appadurai, Madhavakurichi (Small Farmer)

He informed the following:

1. Well in his farm was having adequate water before thirty years. As Mining is done more than 200-300 ft below ground level there is depletion of water in his well, and hence his agriculture is affected.
2. Madhikettan channel leading to Manur tank is blocked by mining operations. This channel should be rehabilitated. He concluded that this Mines causing damage to agriculture should be stopped.

Thiru T. Rajamanickam, All India Central Council of Trade Union,

He informed the following:

1. The Rules of EIA is not known to him. He obtained a copy of it under Right to Information Act by paying Rs.80/- which is also in English.

2. He alleged that the Government is supporting the illegal mining to a loss of Revenue of Crores of Rupees.
3. He represented to the District Collector and Pollution Control Board to stop the Public hearing.
4. Due to heavy blasting there is a threat to life
5. As per Rules Mining should be done 300 meters away from Residence whereas houses are located nearby.
6. Heavy Detonators are used for the past fifty years and hence the people cannot live peacefully.
7. Royalty to the Government is not paid properly and hence there is a revenue loss.
8. People of other States are employed. Many locally employed persons have died due to blasting.
9. Child labour is engaged.
10. No Insurance provision made for employees

He concluded that the public hearing for M/s Krishna Mines and Public hearing for South India Mines and Minerals falling on 19.05.2011 shall be cancelled. He gave a written petition also on the above lines and a copy of the same is enclosed as Annexure 3.

Thiru C. Murugesan, Sethurayanpudhur

He informed that M/s Krishna Mines is in operation for more than 40 years and it is the only Mine following all the Rules and Regulations of the Government. He added that Ground water is available at about 20 ft. from ground level within a distance of 100 mtrs from the Mines. He concluded that there is no harm to Public by the operation of the Mines.

Thiru S. Mahesh, Thalaisyuthu.

The people of Nanjankulam, Tenkalam are working in the Unit and hence, the Unit is providing employment to local public.

Thiru C. Katturaja, once again pleaded that heavy machineries are used for loading and hence employment is reduced. He has also informed that the Mines is not remitting the taxes to Panchayat.

Thiru T.Rajamanickam again intervened and informed that there is a revenue loss to the Government in Crores of rupees due to illegal mining above the lease quantity.

Thiru S. Murugan, Kammalankulam informed that their agriculture is lost due to the operation of the Mines. He also informed that there is no benefit or gain to any public and there are only damages to them by Mining operations and hence it should be closed immediately.

In addition, written petitions were filed by the public during the Public hearing and the contents are detailed below:

a) Petition of Thiru N. Rajamani, Sethurayanpudhur informs the following:

1. During earlier days of mining less amount of explosives were used. Later heavy explosives are used leading to heavy vibrations felt in the houses. Materials stored in the cup-boards are reported to fall and broke due to vibration.
2. Fly rocks cause injury to the cattle.
3. Lot of dust emission affects the environment.

He concluded that he objects the extension of Mining Lease to the Unit. A copy of the petition is enclosed as Annexure 4.

b) Petition on behalf of Public of Kammalankulam, Sethurayanpudhur: filed by Thiru Murugappandi informs the following:

1. There are about 200 wells with pump sets are operating in their villages, the ground water recharge is reduced due to deep mining
2. More than 1000 cattles are reared by the people of their villages. The unit forbids grazing of cattle near the mines.
3. Fly rocks fall upto Sankarankoil Main Road
4. For the welfare of 200 persons employed on contract, 1000's of villagers and their agriculture is damaged.

The petition concludes with a request to the District Collector to grant justice to them. A copy of the Petition is enclosed as Annexure 5.

c) Petition of Thiru M. Mariappan of Veppankulam informs the following:

1. Veppankulam village is affected very much by the heavy blasting and Vibrations are felt in the village during blasting.
2. Many diseases are caused to public
3. Environment is polluted.
4. About 25 villages surrounding the mines are affected.
5. Agriculture lands are damaged
6. fly rocks affect the road users and cattle

The petition concludes to stop the mining. A copy of the petition is enclosed as Annexure 6.

d) Petition of Thiru A M Sayeebanu Masthan, Vice-President, Ramaiyanpatti Panchayat.

The petition informs the following:

1. There are about 12 villages mainly Quarry Colony, Sethurayanpudhur, Kammalankulam, Police Colony, J.B. Nellaipatnam, Veppankulam, Mani Nagar, Selvanandhini Nagar, Simon Nagar, Arasu Colony, Sivajinagar, Ramaiyanpatti, Rajagopalapuram, Sangumuthammalpuram, Pudhukulam, Thaneerkulam, are affected by the blasting operation of the Mines.
2. Especially in JB Nellaipatnam about 100 houses are located and many more houses are springing up. An Engineering College is also located nearby. Hence there is a danger due to the operation of Blasting in the Mines.
3. These villages do not have adequate drinking water supply and Ground water is also affected by operation of the mines.
4. The unit is already gone very deep hence further mining will cause damage to the public.
5. Accidents occur during blasting.
6. Traffic blocked in the roads during blasting causes nuisance.
7. Thousands of acres of agricultural land already affected.

The petitioner concludes that the lease may not be granted. Copy of the petition is enclosed vide annexure – 7.

e) Petition of Thiru. Ramachandran, Ramesh Chemicals, Sethurayanpudhur states the following.

The roof of his industrial building was damaged due to fly rocks. The unit authorities even after representation neither took any action nor offered any compensation. Though the unit assured that alternate land will be

given no action taken so far and hence he is suffering without earnings and requested to take action against the unit. Copy of the petition is enclosed vide annexure – 8.

f) Petition of Thiru. Paulsamy, Thevendira Kula Vellalar Kootamaippu states the following.

The quarry has gone 1 Km deep from the ground level. Blasting in this quarry damages the residences and vibrations are also felt. Agriculture is damaged due to reduction of water. Hence the quarry operations should be stopped to protect agriculture. Copy of the petition is enclosed vide annexure – 9.

The objections made by the public, recorded were read by the District Environmental Engineer and the unit was asked to furnish reply.

Reply given by the Unit :

1. The Mining operation started in the year 1958. Since the mining lease expired on 21.05.2009, the company had applied for renewal of the mining lease. And the unit is operating on deemed renewal.
2. M/s. Krishna Mines have two leases to excavate 500 tons and 700 tons separately, hence the unit is eligible to mine about 1200 tons totally. The mining lease for 700 tons is valid upto the year 2013. And the lease for 500 tons only had expired hence this present public hearing is for the renewal of one of the lease of M/s. Krishna Mines to mine 500 tons of limestone only. Hence the statement of Thiru. S.P. Muthuraman that the unit is mining above 500 tons is correct. But the industry is legally permitted to mine 1200 tons.
3. The mining operations are carried out in accordance with the rules of Indian Bureau of Mines and Directorate of Mines and Safety etc.,

4. Regarding the blockage of flow of water in Mathikettan channel the unit has never received any complaints right from the inception of the mines.
5. Regarding the depletion of ground water, the unit replied that studies were conducted through an agency which reveals that ground water table is about 8 meters and 15 meters during monsoon and post monsoon respectively.
6. Regarding noise and vibrations during blasting the unit replied that a complaint was already received by Director of Mines Safety, Chennai for which investigations were made through National Institute of Rock Mechanics, Govt. of India. The report revealed that the noise and ground vibrations are within the limit.
7. The contractors used for transportation of limestone are offered with vocational training in their training centre for 15 days in a year on all safety mode of driving and maintenance of vehicles. The report on training is submitted to the Director of Mines safety through the training centre.

During the reply given by the unit, Thiru. T. Rajamanickam intervened and informed that the studies were not conducted in presence of the public. Hence the genuineness of the study is under question. Similarly Thiru. S.P. Muthuraman intervened and informed that previously the mines was running their own transport in the name of Krishna Transports and now contractors were employed and statement of the unit that contractors operating the vehicles properly is not correct. He also added that the mining is above the lease capacity. He also added that the unit has setup its own cem unit and hence none of the other cem units are benefited by the operation of the mines.

The District Collector suggested the followings:

1. Any study conducted by the unit shall be done with the representation of the public.
2. A copy of the video can be given by the unit to any person interested.
3. The EIA report shall incorporate the five year plan of IBM as well as the benefits granted to the public by way of direct and indirect employments, aiding for downstream industries etc.,
4. Separate complaints can be filed if the public feel there is loss of revenue to the Government to the concerned authorities.
5. Complaints can be filed to the Labor Department if there is a suspicion of Child Labor.
6. The unit should furnish the extent of money spent under the Corporate Social Responsibility for the welfare of the public so far.
7. Water collected in the mines shall be given to other agriculturists also, on demand, in addition to their needs.

The District Collector informed that all the particulars on the above suggestions and objections of the public shall be submitted before the Authority while requesting for Environmental Clearance. With summing up of the above, the meeting came to an end.

**District Environmental Engineer
Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board
Tirunelveli**

**District Collector
Tirunelveli**