

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PROPOSED PILOT CUM PRODUCTION WELLS (FOR ALL 90 NO. WELLS WHICH ARE OUTSIDE DMC AREA) AT RANIGANJ EAST COAL BED METHANE (CBM) BLOCK – RG (E)-CBM-2001/1, LOCATED IN RANIGANJ EAST BLOCK, DIST: BURDWAN, WEST BENGAL, PROPOSED BY M/S ESSAR OIL LTD (E&P DIVISION) HELD ON 26.03.2010 AT 12:00 NOON IN THE MEETING HALL OF DURGAPUR-FARIDPUR PANCHAYAT SAMITY, DIST-BURDWAN, WEST BENGAL.

M/s Essar Oil Ltd. (E&P Division) submitted an application to West Bengal Pollution Control Board for conducting Public Hearing for the proposed Pilot Cum Production Wells (for all 90 no. wells which are outside DMC area) at Raniganj East Coal Bed Methane (CBM) block – RG (E)-CBM-2001/1, located in Raniganj East Block, Dist: Burdwan. As per the EIA notification S.O. 1533 dated 14th September 2006 of the MoEF, Govt. of India, Environmental Clearance of the said project is required to be obtained after conducting Public Hearing.

Accordingly, West Bengal Pollution Control Board conducted the Public Hearing on 26.03.2010 at 12:00 noon in the meeting hall of Durgapur-Faridpur Panchayat Samity, Dist: Burdwan, West Bengal, after observing all formalities. Panel members were present in the hearing. A considerable gathering was also present in the hearing. List of the panel members and the others present in the public hearing are enclosed.

The hearing started with a welcome note from Sri Biswajit Dutta, Additional District Magistrate, Asansol. He explained about the public consultation procedure for Environmental Clearance attracting units under EIA notification, 2006. & presided over the hearing. He requested the audience to share their views on the proposals submitted by the project proponent for this project.

The technical representative of the project proponent welcomed the audience on behalf of the project proponent. A power point presentation was screened explaining the activity of the proposed unit. During this presentation, the project details, land & site details, process flow chart, ambient air qualities, occupational health services, corporate social responsibility, etc was covered.

Then Mr. Somnath Narayan, Senior Environmental Engineer, WBPCB requested the project proponent to address the following issues:

1. The water abstraction, which might occur during operation of CBM extraction, is envisaged as real concern in the context of water scarcity prevailing in this particular area .
2. The mode of final disposal of the hazardous waste has not been described specifically in the presentation.
3. Adequate sanitation facility should be provided at the gas gathering station.
4. Considering the chance of accidents the risk management and the on-site emergency plan should be included in the EIA/EMP report.

He also requested the audience to raise their queries regarding the project proposal.

The project representative Mr. S.S Aswal, GM (Geology) clarified that the water will be abstracted from coal seam below 600-1000m from Ground level therefore they expect that aquifer which exists much above 600 m and is usually tapped for domestic and irrigation purpose shall not be affected due to CBM well operation.

Sri Biswajit Dutta, ADM requested to provide a study report mentioning volume of water which is expected to be obtained from each well and also relevant information about the quality of water so that water can be considered for use in irrigation purpose. The tentative time period of the proposed water supply should also be projected because if the water is found to be suitable for irrigation purpose then to ensure regular supply even in dry period intermediate storage can be arranged.

The project representatives stated that their past experience suggests that water quality parameter would be within satisfactory range but before providing the same to the people they would take necessary concurrences from the concerned authorities and local bodies. They proposed to set up regular water quality monitoring system. They also assured that sanitation and all other basic amenities shall be provided for all gas gathering station. The safety arrangements shall be in place. They proposed to install SCADA for this project. The drill mud will be disposed off as per the provisions of Environmental regulations.

Sri U.Mondal, Sirsa; Sri Sukumar Khetrapal, Manikara; Sri Chanchal Mondal, Loudoha; Mansaram Tudu, Pradhan, Pratappur expressed their concern about depleting natural ground water level, consequences of abstraction of ground water from a strata lower than the existing aquifer, quality of water produced. Sh. Kalu, Kalinagar informed that his experience suggests that this water is not suitable for use.

Sri Amiya Saha, Gourbazar; Sri Dulal das, Tetikhola; Sri P Mishra, Sankarpur; Sri Srimanta Roy, Jambon village; Sri Bipadatan Pan, Kanherpur welcomed the upcoming project and requested the project proponent to initiate developmental work through corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects so that the whole area as a whole can be benefited from the same; They further requested the project proponent to generate maximum local employment for the upcoming project .

Sri Radhakanta Roy, Maheshpur, Sri Bipadatan Pan, Kanherpur, Sri Mansaram Tudu, Pratappur also requested to ensure safety measures to avoid gas leak or explosion due to methane emission . Sri Chanchal Mondal, Loudoha suggested that considering the nature of project activity fire fighting stations should be established in this particular zone for immediate action. They also requested the project proponent to specify the CSR with time bound action program.

Sri Sanyasi Das, Borgoria also requested to make specific commitments about the CSR and request the Project proponent whether there is scope of environmental pollution in future due to long term activities under the CBM projects.

Smt. Shika Karmakar, Sahakari Savadhipati, Burdwan Zilla Parishad, welcomed the proposed project in anticipation that it will generate employment in the locality. However she requested the project proponent to come up with details of Budget committed for proposed CSR

activity. She further emphasized on development of surface water resources to ensure that ground water depletion is minimized. She also requested the project proponent to initiate joint endeavor with local authorities for providing support to the development projects for local backward classes including development of communication network.

The representatives of the unit mentioned that they will engage local youth in unskilled support services and technical resources available in the locality shall be considered for skilled jobs. They assured that adequate check valves, gate valves and SCADA shall be provided for the proposed pipelines. Emergency response team shall be constituted. They also mentioned that before laying of pipeline, the local Panchayet shall be consulted. Also no long term pollution impact is envisaged. They once again assured that the quality of produced water shall be monitored regularly and water, if found suitable for agricultural use, shall be supplied to the public only after due approval from appropriate authority.

Sri Biswajit Dutta, Additional District Magistrate, Asansol requested the project proponent to inform the Panchayet about the gas pipe line network system in details so that the pipelines are not disturbed during any other infrastructure development activities by the local authority. He further mentioned that in case of any road development project crossing over CBM pipeline, the project proponent should be ready to provide adequate protection to their pipelines viz. construction of culverts etc. as part of their CSR activity.

The project proponent appreciated the issues raised during hearing mentioned above and assured that they would take all possible measures for maintaining the Environmental Norms. They have also assured that they would address all the issues mentioned above and incorporate the same while finalizing the EIA and EMP.

Sri Biswajit Dutta, Additional District Magistrate, Asansol appreciated the proposal taken by M/s Essar Oil Ltd. (E&P Division) during the public hearing and expressed his hope that the project would be implemented as per the commitment made by the proponent and would be maintained in such a manner that the unit would comply with the environmental norms.

In general, the public present in the hearing welcomed the project. Finally, Sri Biswajit Dutta, Additional District Magistrate, Asansol concluded the session with vote of thanks.

Sd/-

Mr. Somnath Narayan
Senior Environmental Engineer
West Bengal Pollution Control Board

Sd/-

Sri Biswajit Datta
Additional District Magistrate, Asansol
Government of West Bengal