DIRECTION

WHEREAS, Asansol Division, Eastern Railway (hereinafter referred to as the unit) operates its railway goods shed and siding near Apcar Garden, Asansol, Burdwan where loading and unloading activities are carried out.

AND WHEREAS, West Bengal Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board) received public complaint for causing environmental pollution by the said railway siding. Inspection was carried out by the official of the Board on 12/04/2013. Coal unloading activity was observed during inspection. Water sprinklers were found to be installed along the source of the fugitive emission. Although unloading of coal was in progress, but none of the sprinklers was found in operation. As a result, high fugitive emission was observed due to the unloading activities. Guard wall has been provided up to some extent at the side where local residences are situated. Although the length of the wall is inadequate. Condition of the approach road was found to be improved.

AND WHEREAS, the Railway authority was earlier directed by the Board vide order dated 20/06/2012 to stop the clinker unloading activity at the siding and also to take action for phasing out of unloading of coal in a time bound manner. The railway authority was directed to submit an action plan in this regard within fifteen days. They were directed to install water sprinkling arrangement with reuse and recycling system at the siding area and to undertake extensive plantation program.

AND WHEREAS, a hearing was arranged at the Head Office of the Board on 16/05/2013 involving the Railway Authority and the complainants.

AND WHEREAS, the representatives of the unit appearing in the hearing agreed with the above mentioned observations of the Board. They submitted that the installation of permanent water sprinkler has been completed and fitting of motor for permanent availability of water for sprinklers would be completed within one month. They also submitted that presently water sprinkling through large tankers is done regularly at approach road, surrounding area and Goods wharf, construction work for increasing the height of the existing boundary wall at North side has been completed, approach road and North side road of Goods shed have been concretized and 1200 new saplings have already been planted in the periphery of Goods shed. Apart from these, they have also stopped the booking of clinker for Asansol Goods Shed. They stated that the railway authority is trying to complete the construction work of Barachak Goods shed to offload Asansol Goods shed within this year.

AND WHEREAS, the Complainants appeared in the hearing and submitted that they are suffering from various diseases especially children and old persons due to generation and spreading of dust from the loading and unloading of coal, iron ore and other materials at Asansol Goods Shed. They claimed that water sprinklers installed by the unit are not working due to scarcity of water in that area. They also mentioned that the Railway Authority can use the water from the Loco tank which is adjacent to the siding for sprinkling. They also demanded discontinuation of the coal unloading activity at the siding.
NOW THEREFORE, considering the above facts, Asansol Division, Eastern Railway, P.O. & P.S. Asansol, Dist. Burdwan is hereby directed by the Board to comply with the following :-

1. The Railway Authority shall ensure continuous water supply for the sprinklers within one month to minimize the pollution generated from materials unloading activity at the siding area and till such time the sprinklers to be operated using water tankers.

2. The Railway Authority shall take necessary steps to complete the construction work of Barachak Goods shed to offload Asansol Goods shed as early as possible preferably by December 2013.

3. The Railway Authority shall obtain Consent to Operate for Asansol Goods Shed from the Board.

The Environmental Engineer, Asansol Sub-Regional Office of the Board will conduct further inspection after one month to verify the status of compliance.

This direction is issued in exercise of the powers conferred under the provision of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rules made there under after being approved by the Competent Authority.

By Order,

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (O&E Cell)
West Bengal Pollution Control Board