

• **PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON 26-06-2025 AT 12:00 NOON AT THE BARJORA BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICE MEETING HALL, P.S. BARJORA, DIST. BANKURA, WEST BENGAL FOR THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF MINE LEASE AREA FROM 260.14 HA TO 683.04 HA OF BARJORA(NORTH) OPEN-CAST COAL MINING PROJECT (BARJORA COALFIELD) KEEPING THE PRODUCTION CAPACITY SAME AS EARLIER OF 3 MTPA BY M/S. THE WEST BENGAL POWER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED(WBPDCL)**

M/s. THE WEST BENGAL POWER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED (henceforth termed as Project Proponent) submitted an application to the West Bengal Pollution Control Board (herein after referred to as the State Board) for conducting a Public Hearing for proposed Expansion of Mine Lease Area from 260.14 ha to 683.04 ha of Barjora (North) Opencast Coal Mining Project (Barjora Coalfield) keeping the Production Capacity same as earlier of 3 MTPA at Village & Tehsil-Barjora, P.S.- Barjora, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal. As per the notification S.O. 1533 dated 14th September, 2006 of the MoEF& CC, Govt. of India and amendments made thereafter, Environmental Clearance (EC) for the said project is required to be obtained after conducting Public Hearing.

Accordingly, the State Board conducted the Public Hearing on 26.06.2025 at 12:00 noon at the Barjora Block Development Office Meeting Hall, P.S. Barjora, Dist. Bankura, West Bengal. A considerable gathering of people was present during the hearing. List of the panel members and others present during the public hearing is enclosed as *Annexure-I*

Dr. Vivek Dattatraya Bhasme, IAS, Additional District Magistrate (LR) & DL & LRO, Bankura, presided over the hearing.

Shri Alok Mukherjee, MLA, Barjora, Shri Chanchal Goswami, Director (Mining), WBPDCL, Shri Ayan Datta Gupta, SDO, Bankura (Sadar), Mrs. Archita Bid, Purta Karmadhakshya, Bankura Zilla Parishad, Mrs. Kajal Porel, Sabhapati, Barjora Block, Shri Kartik Chandra Roy, BDO, Barjora, Ms. Tinki Mondal, Zilla Parishad Member, Shri Avijit Singh, Zilla Parishad Member, Shri Atanu Mondal, BL & LRO, Barjora, Shri Arnab Guha IC, Barjora Police Station, Shri Ganesh Mondal, Pradhan, Ghutgoria GP and various other dignitaries also remained present in the Public Hearing.

The Public Hearing started with a welcome address by Sri Arup Kumar Dey, Environmental Engineer & Incharge, Durgapur Regional Office, W. B. Pollution Control Board. He briefed the audience about the modalities and significance of Public Hearing, which is part of Public Consultation process under EIA Notification, 2006 and its subsequent amendments. He also gave an overview of the proposed project to the attending public and requested the gathering present at the hearing to come up with relevant questions and suggestions regarding the proposed project after listening carefully the presentation to be given by the project proponent. Sri Arup Kumar Dey informed that proceedings of the Public Hearing along with videography will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for their consideration for setting up of the proposed expansion project of **M/s. THE WEST BENGAL POWER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED(WBPDCL)**

With due permission of Dr. Bhasme, ADM (LR) and Chairman of the public hearing, Sri Arup Kumar Dey requested the project proponent, to describe the details of the proposed project in local language.

On behalf of **M/s. THE WEST BENGAL POWER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED (WBPDCL)**, Shri Chanchal Goswami Director-Mining (WBPDCL), narrated briefly the locational details and briefed the audience about the proposed expansion project.

Then, Sri Partha Sarathi Das, Geologist from M/s. Montecarlo Limited (MDO), narrated the details of the proposed project. Sri Das explained the locational details of the proposed expansion project and basic

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requirements like land, water, manpower, etc. for the proposed expansion project. He informed that the pollution potential involved in the project expansion activities will be well taken care of by the project proponent and elaborated on the steps to be taken for environmental pollution control, afforestation program/green-belt development, etc. through a Power Point Presentation.

Sri Sudipto Banerjee, Assistant Environmental Engineer, Durgapur Regional Office then requested the gathering to come up with relevant questions to fulfill the objectives of the public hearing.

During the discussion, the panel members and the others present in the public hearing came up with queries / suggestions with respect to the proposed project, which are noted below:

Sri Gunamoy Ghosh of Vill-Barjora at first greeted the people and welcomed the proposed project. He highlighted that due to this Barjora (North) Coal Mining Project local villagers have already benefitted directly and indirectly since the last 7 years and due to this expansion, they are hoping that in future also local villagers will be benefitted. He stated that due to the ongoing project nearly 1000 people have been recruited from local villages, transportation facilities have directly helped around 6000-7000 people in the locality. He requested the Project Proponent that various facilities through CSR activities should be extended to people residing in all nearby villages.

Sri Tapas Maji of Vill-Ghutgoria, greeted the people and welcomed the proposed project. He stated that due to the ongoing project all the nearby villagers have benefitted a lot and various developmental projects have been commissioned in the locality. He welcomed the proposed project again and stated that the local people will surely cooperate with the project proponent and the Govt. authorities.

Sri Rajesh Chand of Vill-Barjora, stated that earlier the mine was operating under DVC-Emta and subsequently has been taken over by the WBPDC. He stated that the huge gathering in this public hearing suggests that the local people are all supporting the overall development and economic growth of the locality. He welcomed the proposed project and stated that the proposed project will generate employment opportunities for the local people. He requested the PP for financial support to meritorious and needy students in the locality. He further requested the project proponent to develop health facilities in nearby villages.

Sri Subol Ghosh of Vill-Ghutgoria, welcomed the proposed project and stated that in future local villagers will be benefitted a lot due to the upcoming project. He suggested that the CSR Budget as mentioned in EIA Report may be utilized for the local people of Ghutgoria Area which may include renovation of nearby school buildings and promote tree plantation in the adjoining villages.

Sri Surajit Banerjee of Vill-Maliara, greeted the people and welcomed the proposed project. He stated that the area is rich in china clay, silica sand etc., but out of all coal is most important as coal is the main fuel for generation of electricity. He reiterated that coal mine is very important and in absence of which there will be a great setback in the economy and overall development of the area. He stated that the proposed coal mine project will generate employment and promote livelihood for local people and requested the project proponent to implement CSR funds as mentioned in different CSR schemes for the development of the local villages.

Sri Baren Ghosh of Vill-Raharabani, welcomed the proposed project. He requested project proponent to carry on CSR activities in local villages as described in the presentation.

Sri Goutam Mondal of Vill-Saharjora, welcomed the proposed project. He mentioned that Saharjora village is situated very close to Forest area, therefore during mining activities trees will be cut and forest areas will be excavated which may affect elephant movement. Therefore, he requested the project proponent to recruit local people from Vill. Saharjora and establish one hospital/school at Saharjora village, so that the entire village can be benefitted.

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Sri Mahadeb Dawn of Vill-Baguli, welcomed the proposed expansion project. He requested Project Proponent to look into the environmental impact upon local people due to mining and deforestation.

Sri Gobinda Ghosh of Vill. Barjora stated that the hearing has been taking place on 26.06.2025 for the proposed expansion activity of the coal mine, but the existing coal mine has been operating since the last 22 years and no significant development has taken place in the nearby villages.

Sri Sumanta Mondal of Vill. Barjora requested the Project Proponent to:

- 1) take initiative of tree plantation on the Over Burden dump site to prevent soil erosion and water logging in the adjoining area.
- 2) take steps for prevention of depletion of ground water table,
- 3) give employment preference to local people of nearby villages.

Lastly, he stated that he is in favour of the proposed project with a request to consider the issues raised by him.

Sri Somnath Kar, of Vill-Barjora, welcomed the proposed project. He asked the project proponent to clarify the area to be allocated for proposed plantation of 3 lakh trees. He requested the Project Proponent to take adequate steps for maintenance of such green belt.

Sri Aditya Dey of Vill-Saharjora, welcomed the proposed project. He stated that a major portion of the proposed coal mine falls within Saharjora area and due to proposed deforestation of the forest area, the livelihood of many people who earn their living by collecting woods shall be affected in future. So, the Project Proponent was requested to look after the livelihood of such people by generating employment for local villagers. He further requested that all commitments made in the public hearing should actually be implemented in reality, once the project starts operating.

A person who didn't disclose his identity but belongs to Vill. Saharjora welcomed the proposed project and requested for replenishment of forest area and greenery and requested the Project Proponent to engage local people for employment and supply good quality drinking water and electricity as well as repairing of schools/college buildings as a part of CSR activity.

Sri Sourav Ghorui of Vill-Saharjora, greeted the people and welcomed the proposed project. He stated that a major portion of the proposed project falls under Mouza-Saharjora, as such, priority should be given for future afforestation programme within Saharjora Mouza only. He further stated that first priority should be given for employment to local people of Saharjora area.

Sri Arup Kumar Dey, then requested Shri Chanchal Goswami Director-Mining (WBPDC) to clarify the queries / suggestions which came up in the discussion with respect to the proposed project.

Shri Chanchal Goswami Director-Mining (WBPDC) at first thanked the people because all people welcomed the proposed expansion project. It was stated that:

- 1) Entire 338.74 ha forest land shall be returned back to the Forest Department once the mining process is completed.
- 2) Within an area of 119 ha (other than forest land), 2500 nos. of trees shall be planted per hectare of land. Such plantation shall be carried out in accordance with the direction of the Forest Department. Further, it was stated that they have also informed the Forest Department that they are willing to translocate the trees (subject to approval).
- 3) Within 338.74ha of land, out of which some portion falls within Saharjora area, the mining shall not disturb the areas which are temporarily inhabited by elephants. It was stated that out of Rs 918 crores of Project Cost, 2% should be allocated for wild life conservation. So, for Rs 918 crores, this amount comes

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to approx. Rs 20 crores. But, in this case approximately Rs 90 crores has been allocated for wildlife conservation. In Barjora area, around 2800-2900 ha of forest land is available, out of which only 338 ha has been allocated for mining expansion.

- 4) For tree plantation, development of green belt and it's maintenance, nearly 22 crores has been allotted.
- 5) Soil-moisture conservation plan has been approved.
- 6) For 338.74 ha of allocated forest land, a total of Rs.176 crores has been allotted for various projects related to the Forest Department.
- 7) CSR activity shall be carried out in consultation with the CSR Committee which shall comprise of DM, ADM, Local Panchayet Authorities. Accordingly, various CSR activities related to education, health camps, etc. shall be carried out as shall be decided by the CSR Committee. Apart from that, if there be any requirement of local villagers, that shall also be considered and fulfilled subject to approval from the District Authority.
- 8) Regarding coal transportation, when mining will start commissioning, more and more vehicles shall be engaged by transporters, which shall generate more local employment.
- 9) Regarding supply of potable water, that shall also be considered and fulfilled subject to approval from the District Authority.
- 10) Adequate measures shall be taken to control sound pollution and vibration during blasting operations.
- 11) Apart from that, if there be any specific problem, the same shall be taken into consideration and redressed by WBPDCCL.

Finally, he once again thanked the general public for unanimously accepting the project.

The MLA, Barjora greeted the people and stated that all people present in the Public Hearing have accepted the Project. He stated that the colliery has grown with the cooperation of all local people. He stated that everyone expects that in the long run Kutchha (mud) houses of local villagers shall be converted to permanent cement buildings, moorum roads shall be converted to bituminous/concrete roads, crematoriums shall be upgraded, new football stadium will be developed. He further stated that the teams of BDO Barjora Block and Barjora Police Station shall extend all cooperation for successful implementation of the Project.

In conclusion the ADM and Chairman of the Public Hearing stated that he was happy to see a huge attendance of local people in the Public Hearing. He greeted the people and said that after the power-point technical presentation, the various issues raised in the Public Hearing by the general public have been mostly redressed by the Director-Mining of WBPDCCL. Maximum number of public present have given their consent in favour of the proposed project. It was stated that the District Administration is also in favour of the proposed expansion project because it will promote power generation and generate employment.



Sri Arup Kumar Dey,
Environmental Engineer & Incharge
Durgapur R. O.
West Bengal Pollution Control Board



Dr. Vivek Dattatraya Bhasme, IAS
Additional District Magistrate & DLLRO,
Bankura
&
Chairman of the Public Hearing