

Raigarh Field Visit Report

Team:

Kanchi Kohli, Vikal Samdariya from Kalpavriksh
Ramesh Agrawal, R. Tripathi member of Janchetna
Tiku, affected from Korba West mines project
Dr. H.P. Patel Janpratinidhi of Gore village
Savita, Ward Member of Naya village

Duration: 4th December 2009 to 6th December 2009

Team has visited Eastern part and Korba West Power Project site of Raigarh District, Chhatisgarh to follow up the ground realities of environment clearance conditions of old and new units of thermal power and mining projects. During this visit team has been visited Korba West Power Project, Kharvahi open mine of Sardana Energy and Alloys, Raipur, Monnet Kodekeal Mine, Jindal open Mines at Donga Mahua, Jindal thermal power at Tamnar and Jindal fly ash unit near at Raigarh Town. During the visit, team observed that these projects are violating the environment conditions deliberately and polluting the Air, water bodies and agricultural fields of the area which have serious implication on private and common property resources of the area besides common men health. According to Ramesh Agrawal, Asthama cases in this area increases significantly due to increase of pollution level of the area.

Korba West Pwer Project

Korba west is proposed 600 (2x300) MW Coal Based Thermal Power Project (TPP) by M/s Korba West Power Company Ltd. to be constructed at villages Bade Bhandar, Chote Bhandar, Sarvani & Amali Bhona, in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh. A public hearing for this project was organised on 3rd October 2009. The EAC at MoEF level for Thermal Power projects considered the Korba west project at 58th meeting held on 10-11th November 2009. They considered the facts available and did not accorded the EC to the project due to lack of proper assessment of the region as per the requirement of EIA notification including EMP. Ramesh Agrawal from *Jan Chetana* considers this a very important issue. Commenting on this, he says, In Chhattisgarh, there is a ban on transfer of tribal land to non tribals. Prior permission is required from Collector for sale and purchase. The company has purchased land at the rate of Rs. 1 lakh to 9.5 lakh per acre. In fact, during Public Hearing company promised to pay difference amount to all those land has been purchased earlier at lower rate.

Despite EAC refusal to clear the Korba project, the work is still on (Picture- Man and Machine on the ground). Some Affected people from this project, without knowing fact that EAC refuse to clear project are negotiating with project officials to get maximum compensation and project officials with knowing that EC is not accorded to project making best negotiation, it seems both side are sure for green signal from EAC of the MoEF. As usual, few affected people and activist are hoping red signal from EAC to provide some breathing space for area.



Man and Machine on the work: Despite Refusal to clear by EAC (MoEF)



View of the Area: Going to affected by proposed project- MoEF has to decide

Sardana Mines

Sardana mines M/s Sardana Energy and Alloys located at Kharvahi and other surrounding Village of Raipur. This is open cast mine, which is located on very fertile agriculture land of area. Dr H.P. Patel and affected people of the area have been fighting against the land acquisition by project proponent and government authorities. He has mentioned “ Hum sal me 1 lakh ka dhan becha dete hi aur logaa isko nahi samajhate hi ki hum jamine bech kar apnai pachan bech rahe hi aur nukari se kya hoga” (We have been selling paddy in amount of Rs.1 lakh per year and people are not understanding this that we are losing our identity by giving land to mines and employment is not enough and sufficient to protect identity). Later Dr. Patel mentioned that we are hope and help less and now i am tired but will fight for our land and environment till my life. From, Dr. Patel version on mining projects, one thing emerges that people living mining areas are victim of so called development for economic growth and sympathy of supporter. On the location of mine (Photograph-1) we found project proponent have been ignoring the environment protection and safety norms. According to Ramesh Agrawal, Project proponent has been violating the Environment Clearance Conditions as whole.



Photograph 1: Sardana Mines at Kharwahi, Raigarh – Violation of EC conditions and Air Pollution Norms



Photograph 2: Sardana Mines at Kharwahi, Raigarh – Surrounding fertile land, which going to be affected by mines.

Monnet Mines

Monnet Coal mines located at Kodkale. This unit has been discharging influent into Kaleo River and closed proximity of forest land deliberately. Discharging of influent in river and forest is violation of forest and environment clearance conditions. Team has visited four locations, Khamaria Village, Dumar Nala, Meelupara Nala at Meelupara and at point where influent has been discharged at open space and has been moving towards Kelo river and forest and agricultural land and where influent interring into river, forest and agricultural land. Team has observed, discharge is very concentrate and full of toxics and samples of discharge has been taken by Dr. Patel and Ramesh agarwal as proof to show local authorities. On 4th of December Monnet unit discharged huge amount of influent into the Kelo River. Villagers of Gare village noticed this and got angry and made complaint with authority and threatened to block the road as protest against the discharge of toxic influent by Monnet unit into the river, which water has been used for domestic and agricultural purposes by villagers. On same date Thesildar has visited the site with affected area people. According to Dr. H.P Patel, we are facing threat to our natural resources by existing mining projects in the area and villager of the area are committed to fight against the toxication of resources by mines and land acquisition for mining projects. He shared us that every Saturday villager meet and share information on recent adverse effect of projects and makes plan to expose ground realities of projects which is against the environment protection and individual right. For supporting group activities, villagers donate voluntary one rupee in every meeting.

Villagers of surrounding area of mining projects have been constantly protesting against the mining projects since long time but now feeling tired. In doctor Patel words, every one promises us to support us and will help to address our concern at higher level but after some time they forgot their promises and situation tend to grim day by day.

Photographs: Revealing the Ground Realities



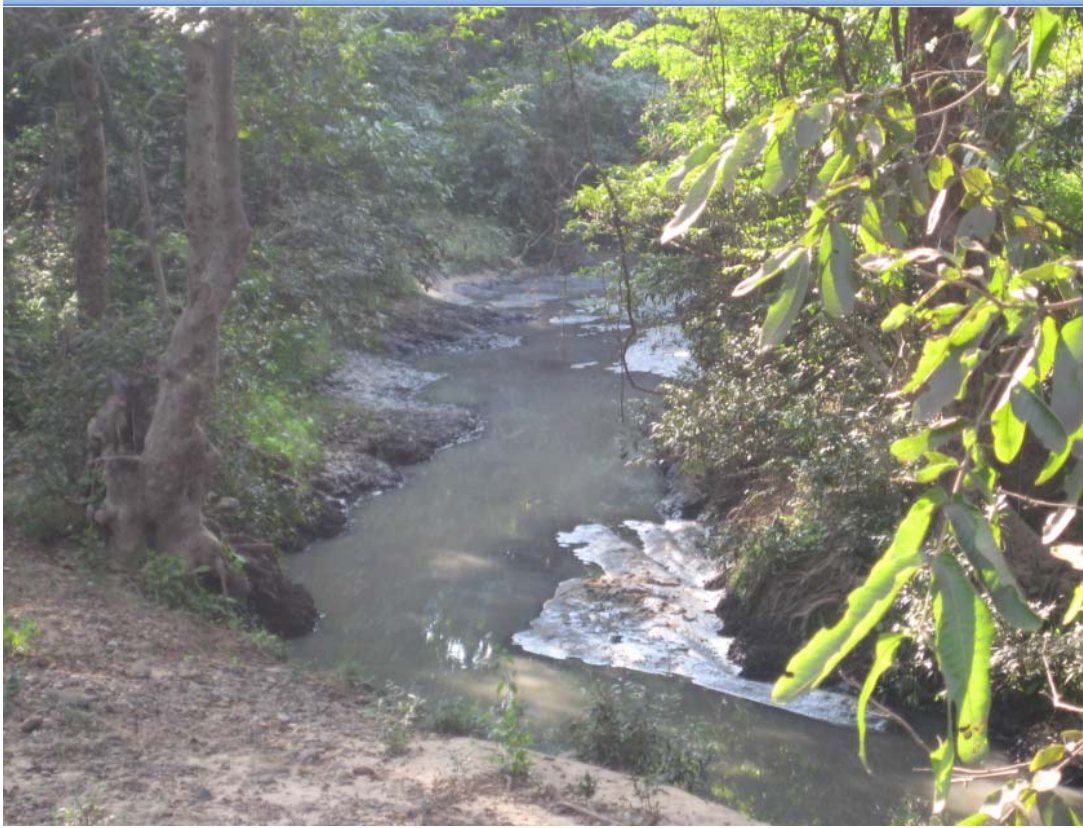
Dommar Nala at Meelu Para Village: Monnet influent interring into Kelo River via this Nala



Location : Where Doomar Nala meets with Kelo River, Influent visible with sediments of River



Kelo River' water after interring influent



Meelupara Nala at Meelu Para flowing with Monnet Mine Influent towards Kelo River



Influent came into open ground and heading towards kelo river and spreading into forest land from Monnet Ispat and Energy limited, Meenupara UG Coal Mines, Kondkel Section.



Monnet mines influent in closed proximity of forest land, Forest Moren is clearly visible in photograph.



Polluted Kelo River water at Khamaria Village, Which is 3 to 5 km. away from Monnet mines