

Note containing justification for locating the Project in forest land

Sonebhadra is the 2nd largest district of Uttar Pradesh and is the only district in India which borders four states namely Madhya Pradesh, Chhattishgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar. With a population density of 270 persons per km² it has borders with some of the poorest districts of the country. In 2006 the Ministry of Panchayati Raj named Sonbhadra one of the country's 250 most backward districts (out of a total of 640). It is one of the 34 districts in Uttar Pradesh currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

While inaugurating the Rihand Dam in 1964, the first Prime Minister of the country, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru dreamt that, "This region will become Switzerland of India." It was left to his daughter Mrs Indira Gandhi to invite NEC of UK for partnering with NTPC to set up a power station In this area to meet the growing power needs as well as utilise the opportunity for the development of this backward area.

Ministry of Power, GOI accepted a proposal of NTPC Ltd., to set up a Power Station of 3000 MW capacity at Rihand Nagar to cater to the Electricity Requirements of Northern part of India. The Project was initiated with plan of installing 2x500MW in phase-I, in collaboration with NEC of UK. Later 4x500 MW BHEL units were added and Rihand reached final capacity of 3000 MW.

The construction of the project started on 9th Feb 1983. The land identified for this purpose is combination of Private, Govt Land and Forest Land. The Govt of UP acquired private lands under LA act, Govt land under Govt grant / UP ZA Act etc and handed over to NTPC for the construction of super thermal power station. As regards forest land, NTPC approached DFO in 1989 for diversion of 555 ha of forest land / section 4 land and obtained St - I clearance for the same.

The project installed is of National Importance envisaged for the bigger benefits of society like meeting Electricity Needs of Country, providing direct and Indirect employment to people, livelihood to surrounding people. Also it cannot be completed without diversion of Forest land that is there in bits and pieces/patches in Private and Govt Lands. Hence diversion of forest lands to the extent of 555 Ha for this purpose was requested and NTPC Ltd Rihand received St I Clearance for the same.




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Banwasi seva ashram, a leading NGO from Myorpur nearby, had filed a PIL in Hon'ble Supreme Court during 1982 on the issue of eviction of forest dwellers by officers of forest department.. The case is well known as Banwasi seva ashrams Vs Govt of UP WP 1061 of 1982. Later NTPC impleaded itself as an interested party, as lands for NTPC Rihand were identified in the areas under dispute in the said case. During the hearing, appreciating the urgency and importance of national level power station in the area, Honble Supreme court appointed a board of revenue commissioners for supervising the comprehensive directions issued to NTPC Rihand for rehabilitation of Adivasis/landholders affected by the Rihand Super Thermal power station. Honble Supreme court gave detailed instructions to the Board of commissioners for quickly completing the un-surveyed lands in the area, identifying the occupants of the lands and quickly handing over the section 4 lands to NTPC. This exercise of handing over lands by Supreme Court appointed commissioner to NTPC Rihand could be completed around 1992.

As the section 4 notified lands were settled in favour of occupants and further, handed over to NTPC by board of commissioners appointed by Supreme court, and the compensation was also paid by NTPC through District court Sonbhadra, these lands were removed from section 4 notification by the FSO Bijpur and confirmed as such by ADJ Babhni. Consequently ARO Obra classified them in Govt records as private lands. Thus, NTPC considering these lands as private lands did not proceed with stage II clearances needed for forest land.

The FAC meeting of 16th November 2017 has decisively advised NTPC Rihand to obtain clearances under section 2 of the forest conservation act 1980. Thus we are moving forward with the protocols now, for obtaining forest clearances.


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