

Minutes of The Environment Public Hearing held on 19th January, 2024 at 11:00 am at District Sports Complex Ground, Tembhode, District Palghar for Proposed Project of Development of Greenfield Port at Vadhvan with capacity of 298 Million Tons Per Annum with 9 (Nine) Container Terminals, 4 Multi-Purpose Berths, 4 Liquid Berths, Ro-Ro Berth, Coastal Berth, Coast Guard Berth & 10.14 km Breakwater including dredging and container and cargo storage area of 1448 hector reclaimed land etc., with road connectivity from NH-8 and Rail connectivity from Vangaon Station and port is proposed to be developed on reclaimed land in the offshore area from sea sand sourced from Daman Coast which is about 65 kms northward At Village Vadhvan, Taluka Dahanu, District Palghar.

The Environment Public Hearing in respect of proposed project of Development of Greenfield Port at Vadhvan with capacity of 298 Million Tons Per Annum with 9 (Nine) Container Terminals, 4 Multi-Purpose Berths, 4 Liquid Berths, Ro-Ro Berth, Coastal Berth, Coast Guard Berth & 10.14 km breakwater including dredging and container and cargo storage area of 1448 hector reclaimed land etc., with road connectivity from NH-8 and Rail connectivity from Vangaon Station and port is proposed to be developed on reclaimed land in the offshore area from sea sand sourced from Daman Coast which is at 65 kms northward At Village – Vadhvan, Taluka Dahanu, District Palghar, Maharashtra by Project Proponent M/s Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), Maharashtra was conducted on Friday, the 19th January, 2024 at 11:00 am at District Sports Complex Ground, Near Sonopant Dandekar College, College Road, Tembhode, Taluka and District Palghar – 401 404, Maharashtra.

Shri. Sanjay Bhuskute, Public Relations Officer, Headquarters, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board welcomed the attendees and instructed the organizers, Environment Public Hearing Committee to start the public hearing.

Shri. Virendra Singh, Sub Regional Officer, Tarapur-2, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, District Palghar and Convener of the Environment Public Hearing Committee welcomed Shri. Govind Bodke, (IAS) District Magistrate, Palghar and Chairman of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Shri. V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Shri. Kiran Hasabnis, Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Thane and Member of the Environment Public Hearing Committee, Environmentalists, NGOs, Journalists, Representative of media channels and JNPA Officials and local people/ participants who were present and with permission of Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee started the proceedings.

Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee informed that as per the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (i.e. MoEF&CC, GoI) dated 14th September, 2006 as amended on 1st December, 2009, it is mandatory to conduct prior public

consultation to certain projects which are covered in the schedule of the said Notification.

He informed that Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was in receipt of application from Project Proponent M/s. Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), Maharashtra to conduct Environmental Public Hearing for development of their proposed project of Greenfield All Weather Deep Draft Port at Vadhvan with capacity of 298 Millions Tons Per Annum till the year 2040 with 9 (Nine) Container Terminals, 4 Multi-Purpose Berths, 4 Liquid Berths, Ro-Ro Berth, Coastal Berth, Coast Guard Berth & 10.14 km breakwater including dredging and container and Bulk/Liquid cargo storage area of 1448 hector reclaimed land etc., with road connectivity from NH-8 and Rail connectivity from Vangaon Station and port is proposed to be developed on reclaimed land in the offshore area from sea sand sourced from Daman Coast which is at 65 kms Northward at Village Vadhvan, Taluka Dahanu, District Palghar, Maharashtra.

Convener further informed as per EIA Notification, 2006 the category of proposed project falls under Category A – as Cargo Handling Capacity is >5.0 MTPA – Schedule – 7 (e)- Ports, Harbours, Break Waters, Dredging, which requires to obtain prior Environmental Clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi for which prior environmental consultation is mandatory.

Convener informed that the aim of conducting prior public consultation is to make aware, local people who can be participant in the hearing, and they should know the developmental activities and Environment Management Plan of the unit.

Project Proponent had submitted online prescribed application along with pre-feasibility / DPR and other relevant scientific reports to obtain ToR to Environment Appraisal Committee, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi and it has been considered and given approval on 07.10.2020 & 02.06.2023.

After sanction from District Collector, Palghar to conduct the Physical Environment Public Hearing on Friday, the 19th January, 2024 at 11.00 am, and as per the Notification dated 14-09-2006 issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (MoEF&CC, GoI), New Delhi and subsequent amendment on 01-12-2019, Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai has constituted Environment Public Hearing Committee vide Board's Office Order No. E-93 of 2023 under letter no. BO/JD (WPC)/PH/B- 231221 FTS- 0124 dated 21st Dec, 2023 as under:-

- 1) District Magistrate-Palghar
or his representative not below
the rank of an Additional District
Magistrate

Chairman

- 2) Representative of Maharashtra **Member**
Pollution Control Board, Mumbai -
Regional Officer – Thane,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Thane
- 3) Sub Regional Officer, Tarapur-2 **Convener**
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Bosier, District Palghar

As per said Notification, 30 days advance public notice was published by Sub Regional Officer, Tarapur-2, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, District Palghar in the Local Newspaper in Daily (Lokmat) for Marathi and in National Newspaper (Free Press Journal) for English on 17th Nov, 2023. The public were appealed to send their suggestions, views, doubts or objections regarding the proposed project. It may be noted that the earlier schedule Public hearing on 22nd Dec, 2023 was postponed due to directions of Hon'ble Chief Minister (Maharashtra) in his meeting with representatives of Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangharsh Samittee held on 5th Dec, 2023 and new date to be scheduled after giving Marathi versions of EIA & scientific reports though the JNPA has provided Marathi version of Executive Summary of EIA as per MOEF&CC's notification. Further, JNPA provided EIA Report & all the scientific reports in Marathi version to all related Grampanchayats and also made available on Vadhvan Website. Subsequently, MPCB re-scheduled the date with change in venue of public hearing on 19th Jan, 2024 with publication in daily newspaper (Lokmat) dated 16th Dec, 2023 and Free Press Journal on 17th Dec, 2023. MPCB also published advertisement in various local newspapers on 17th Jan, 2024 for wide publicity and to facilitate local people to put their representations/ objections/ views to Gram panchayat offices of related villages for onward transmission to MPCB. Also, MPCB has published reminder notice regarding public hearing in the Local Newspaper in Daily (Lokmat) for Marathi and in National Newspaper (Free Press Journal) for English on 13th Jan, 2024.

Copy of EIA report and executive summary were made available in Marathi and in English at various notified Government offices as under: -

1. Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Zonal Office, Western-Central Zone, New Secretariat Building, Ground Floor, East Wing, Civil Line, Nagpur-440 001;
2. District Collector Office, Palghar;
3. General Manager, District Industries Center, Raigad, Palghar;
4. Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad Office, Raigad, Palghar;
5. Sub Divisional Magistrate, SDM Office, Taluka-Dahanu, District – Palghar;
6. Tahsildar, Tahsil Office, Dahanu/Talasari/Palghar, District – Palghar;





7. Block Development Officer, Panchayat Samiti – Dahanu/Talasari/Palghar, District – Palghar;
8. Sarpanch/Gramsevak of following Group Gram Panchayats :-
Vadhvan, Varor (Group Gram Panchayat), Chinchani, Dedale (Group Gram Panchayat), Bawade, Tanashi, (Group Gram Panchayat), Badapokhran, Gungwada, Tadiyale, Dhakti Dahanu, Pokharan, Dhumket (Group Gram Panchayat), Vasgaon, Asangaon Khurd (Group Gram Panchayat), Vangaon, Chandigaon, Tawa (Group Gram Panchayat), Kasa (Group Gram Panchayat) in Taluka Dahanu, District – Palghar; Tarapur (Group Gram Panchayat), Ghivali, Kudan, Newale, Shigaon (Group Gram Panchayat), Hanuman Nagar, Ravate (Group Gram Panchayat), Khaniwade (Group Gram Panchayat), Chinchare (Group Gram Panchayat), Naniwali, Barhanpur (Group Gram Panchayat), Boisar (Group Gram Panchayat) in Taluka Palghar, District - Palghar
9. Environment & Climate Change Department, Maharashtra Government, New Administrative Building, 15th Floor, Mantralaya, Madam Cama Road, Mumbai – 400 032;
10. Joint Director (WPC), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Kalpataru Point, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Floor, Sion-Matunga Scheme Road No.8, Opp. Cine Planet Cinema, Near Sion Circle, Sion (East), Mumbai – 400 022;
11. Regional Officer, Regional Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Thane;
12. Sub Regional Officer, Tarapur-2, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Tarapur, District-Palghar;
13. Website, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai;

Convener informed that 6,087 suggestions / objections have been received by Sub Regional Office, Tarapur-2, MPCB, Tarapur, District-Palghar up to 18th January, 2024 regarding the proposed project.

Convener informed that an opportunity is given to all participants to raise any doubts, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed project from environmental angle, which can be submitted by orally or in writing also.

Convener asserted that this Committee is only for recording public opinion, views, suggestions, objections regarding the proposed project in environmental angle only and the Committee has no right to approve, reject or recommend the project. The suggestions/objections raised by the participants in the public hearing will be noted and it will be included in the minutes of the meeting. Similarly, the revised Environmental Assessment Report of the Project Proponent and minutes of the meeting after approval of Chairperson will be submitted through MPCB Head Office to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi after taking note of the video recording of the said meeting, suggestions and

objections recorded in the meeting. An Expert Committee there takes further decision regarding the same. He requested Chairman of the Environment Public Hearing Committee to inform Project Proponent to start the presentation.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee welcomed all the participants and said that the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board has organized a Environment Public Hearing for the development of the proposed greenfield port in the village Vadhvan. However, as the Chairman of the Environment Committee and on behalf of the administration, all those present are requested to co-operate for the peaceful completion of this governmental process. All present in the meeting can register their suggestions, objections regarding the proposed project.

At that time, some of those present raised objections regarding conducting of the public hearing. Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the said public hearing is organized as per the Orders and directions passed by the Hon'ble High Court, Bombay on 18th Jan, 2024 as against the writ petition filed by Akhil Maharashtra Machimar Kruti Samittee & Others. The matter was discussed on 18th Jan, 2024 before the Bench and Hon'ble Bombay High Court directed that JNPA along with MPCB shall arrange to provide requisite transport facilities to members of the petitioners /associations. Representatives of the petitioners indicated the number of persons interested in participating in the public hearing on 19th Jan, 2024 to the representatives of MPCB & JNPA. MPCB & JNPA shall accordingly, make requisite arrangement of all transportation to enable the interested parties to attend the scheduled hearing. JNPA shall nominate its representatives in that regard who shall coordinate with MPCB and the representatives of the petitioners to enable them to attend the public hearing. The learned Counsel for JNPA submits that the necessary details in that regard would be provided to the Learned Counsel for the petitioners, immediately. The objections raised on behalf of petitioners to the translation of the EIA report as supplied is kept open for being taken in appropriate proceedings. The Hon. Court has also directed that depending upon the public hearing to be held tomorrow, it would also be open for MPCB to consider any request for holding further public hearing if the occasion arises and the Writ petition is disposed of with aforesaid directions. Accordingly, the following arrangements have been taken by JNPA immediately as per directions of Hon'ble Bombay High Court order:

1. The name of the coordinators from JNPA side have been provided to the Counsel of the petitioners.
2. Further meeting with the Collector Palghar and representatives of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation, 40 state buses have been booked for making arrangement for the transport of local people as per the Hon'ble Bombay Court Order dated 18th Jan 2024.
3. JNPA provided its own 30 to 40 officials /coordinators to buses arranged for the local villages for their smooth transport from villages to public hearing venue.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee appealed to the participants that written suggestions and objections regarding the proposed project can be recorded in the meeting, the same will be acknowledged and the project promoters will give written replies to the written suggestions and objections. In the meeting, environmental oral suggestions, objections, criticisms can be raised about the proposed project. However, participants should calmly raise their suggestions, questions, it will be part of the minutes.

He instructed the project proponent to show a presentation about the proposed project. At that time, some of the participants were collectively asking about the process of conducting the public hearing.

Chairman said that similarly, for those citizens of the project affected villages who cannot attend due to some reasons, Gramsevak, Sarpanch have been instructed to accept their written instructions today. In this way, the local people have been given full opportunity to register objections and suggestions.

When some participants requested not to start the presentation as all the buses bringing locals are coming, they were informed that many people have come early in the morning, it will be unfair to them, the presentation will be shown again to the locals who have arrived late.

With the permission of the Hon'ble Chairman, Project Environmental Consultant made a presentation about the project and the Environmental Management Plan. He said that the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority has entered into an JV with the Maharashtra Maritime Board for the development of the port and SPV M/s. Vadhvan Port Project Limited and Maharashtra Maritime Board hold 74% and 26% respectively has been incorporated.

Central Government has approved in-principle Vadhvan as a Major Port on 13/02/2020. The port will become one of the top ten container hubs in the world once fully developed. The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 76,220 crores. The water requirement and supply of the project will be met from the nearby Surya River. Dahanu Taluka Environment Protection Authority has granted approval for setting up and developing the said project as per Environmental Impact Assessment Report dated 31st July, 2023.

The budgetary capital cost for environmental management in the construction phase of the project is Rs.302 lakhs and the capital cost in the operational phase is Rs. 443 lakhs, while the project will be spent in the operational phase.

A budget of Rs.190 crores has been reserved for Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER) in the said project. Similarly, due to the said project, there will be a huge increase in indirect business in the area.

After the presentation, Project Proponent were shown a film with complete information about the proposed project. The film was all about the benefits of the project in the future, the increase in cargo handling, the expansion of the world-class port in the future.

After showing all the films, the Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment requested all the attendees to remain calm and take their place on behalf of the district administration. If people have arrived late, the presentation will be shown again, suggestions, objections are invited. While raising suggestions, objections, their full name and the name of the village should be mentioned first.

Convener, Environmental Public Hearing Committee, have stated at the outset that the committee does not take any decisions. The suggestions, objections raised by them will be included in the minutes of the meeting and submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India. An expert committee there takes the appropriate decision regarding it. This public hearing process will continue, because those who have come on time will be treated unfairly will be presented again for those who arrive.

However, all those present should co-operate with the district administration and police administration. A microphone will be provided wherever you are seated. Similarly, in the thirty Grampanchayats in the affected areas of the project, written suggestions, objections and objections have also been started to receive suggestions and objections.

After publication of public notice regarding the project in the paper, suggestions, objections have been registered at SRO, Tarapur. Similarly, objections and suggestions have also been registered on email. However, the attendees are requested to register any environmental objections and suggestions regarding the proposed project.

Views, questions, suggestions/objections raised during the Environmental Public Hearing and the answers/ promises given by the Project Proponent/ Project Environment Consultant/ Environmental Public Hearing Committee:-

Though Chairman of the Environment Public Hearing appealed all the the participants several times to inform full name and address, many participants have not informed the same. Hence while recording the names are recorded as Local person or Lady is mentioned.

- 1) Representative of "Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangharsha Samiti" and on behalf of 'Other Sangharsha Samilti' requested to allow to attend the meeting only to local people and fishermen. It is observed that Project Proponent has

brought Railway workers, people of other States Locals have demanded that people who are not associated with the project shouldn't attend the meeting.

A local alleged that the people from other States, who had already sat in the meeting, should be asked to leave, respecting the sentiments of sons of the soil.

A local demanded that DPR was provided by JNPA to those who are also from other States and why DPR was not provided to us locals, fishermen, fishermen society. If they do not know the DPR of the said project, then the views of those outsiders should not be considered.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that all your suggestions are being noted. All reports are made available on Vadhvan Website for reference in connection with Public Hearing and anybody can access the same. Since, this is a public hearing, no person can be restricted. However, the participants should raise suggestions and objections.

The present locals requested to wait for remaining locals who haven't reached the destination. Although government has provided the bus service, buses aren't reached on time in the village.

One of the locals submitted a written letter to Hon. District Collector requesting to stop the public hearing process until all the local residents reach the designated destination.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that according to the directives of the Hon. High Court, the buses went as per the list given by the locals and two round trips of the buses were made and will continue to ferry people.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that presentation will be repeated for the local people who will come afterwards and they would be given a chance to represent their opinions.

People are present here since 9 am. It is injustice towards them. The presentation will be repeated for the local people who will come afterwards and everyone will be given opportunity to ask questions, give advice and represent opinion.

Few of the local people again questioned the judgement of District Administration towards presence of people who aren't connected to the project.

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At that time, Chairman of the Committee suggested that the arrangement of chairs for sitting, compartments and microphones have been provided on the seating area.

Also before presenting the opinion, suggestions/ objections, please state your full name and the name of the village. It will be noted and included in the minutes. But please don't raise the issue repeatedly, your full name and address should be mentioned, it will be recorded in the minutes.

As per the directives of Hon'ble High Court, the directions of the High Court, Bombay and all the provisions of law shall be followed. If someone is going to get affected by the project will be given an opportunity to speak.

The PH process will start from the first compartment and volunteers are instructed to provide the mike. Chairman requested "Please do not repeat suggestions, objections and criticism. Every person and organization will be given an opportunity to present their opinion. You may present oral or written request. After you raise the issue, the project consultant will clarify your issues immediately. It will be noted in the minutes. But please share your opinion with your full name and village".

2) **Shri Vinod Patil, Chairman, Akhil Maharashtra Machimar Kruti Sangharsh Samiti, Palghar District:-**

Many people affected by the project have come here. Sangharsh Committee demands that people who have nothing to do with this project and who have supported it and are outsiders, their Aadhaar cards should be checked, if the cards are outstation, they should be arrested immediately.

Also, the expatriates/people from other State here should leave here on their own, until the public hearing process should not be instituted & holdup temporarily. Also, village buses are to come. Hence, Hon'ble Chairman is requested that the public hearing process be stopped until then.

Chairman of the Committee appealed that those sitting at back should put the questions to them. If some people come afterwards, the presentation will be repeated after they arrive. But while raising the issue, full name and address should be mentioned, it will be recorded and included in the minutes.

Those who are not relevant will not be recorded. However, those who are concerned, please be given an opportunity to register suggestions, objections. Those present who are directly/indirectly affected by the proposed project should be given an opportunity to speak here. This is a public hearing, and we should use our rights and raise questions, suggestions and objections

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fearlessly. Although women are present here in large numbers, they are also appealed to register suggestions and objections.

3) Shri Ramkrishna Jagannath Tandel, Executive Director, Maharashtra Machimar Kruti Samiti, Village Kelva, District Palghar:-

Hon. Chairman is requested that last 2-4 days, meeting of our organizations was taken by the Superintendent of Police. He had suggested that no law-and-order issue should arise at that time of public hearing and we have also supported it.

This public hearing will be conducted in a formal, democratic manner. For this from Cuff Parade, onwards all fishermen community has come from Mumbai to Zhai. Sons of the soil have come here, we will present our views, suggestions properly. But the request is that even if the buses have not come, let them come. Although it will take time to make presentations back and forth, the public hearing process should be started only after the arrival of the buses.

It is also requested that railway workers brought here who have nothing to do with this port, who are from other State, should be informed to go out from here as per earlier instructions.

Here, Chairman again requested that those who are present here can put forward their suggestions, objections, criticisms, views. It is now frequently suggested that the attendees should state their full name and village while giving suggestions/objections. If not relevant, it is assured that it will be noted.

However, the concerned persons have requested to register their suggestions and objections. Chairman of the Committee said that it is everyone's duty to maintain law and order and co-operate with the Administration. People have been here since nine o'clock in the morning and no injustice can be done to them. Project promoter will immediately respond to the suggestions and questions. However, we should present our suggestions. Volunteers are advised to arrange for the microphone to be delivered to the people to be called upon.

Chairman of the Committee said that as per the directives of Hon'ble High Court and according to the list of villages given by the locals, buses have been sent to the village in the morning. All the buses have arrived. However, the participant is requested that if you have any suggestions, objections regarding the proposed Vadhvan Port project, I request you as the Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee.

Those who want to speak, should be allowed to speak. District Administration, Police Administration is co-operating. Journalists, media representatives present

here can also share their views on the proposed project. Volunteers who have cordless mike should be given to the speakers in the compartment.

Chairman of the Committee appealed again that all the buses have arrived and those present should register their suggestions and objections.

- 4) **At that time, Shri. Vaibhav Vaze, Vadhvan Virodhi Sangharsh Samiti requested** that if all the buses have arrived, the presentation should be shown back for all. Also, the local fishermen brothers, local brothers and sisters gathered here are requested to listen to the presentation calmly and take care not to raise the issue of law and order by causing confusion. Chairman instructed Project Proponent to present again.

Environmental Consultant of the project gave the presentation again.

5) **Shri Vikram Ambire, Chinchane Village :-**

Can you hear my question? A protected wall of four to four and a half meters will be constructed on both sides of the project south and north while developing the port. So, this is the arrangement to keep the boats stable.

Shri Vaidya, a local resident requested the Environment Public Hearing Committee that the public hearing was scheduled at 11:00 AM. It is now 12:00. Locals have come here to listen to their views and their applications have been taken. So, the local people desire to know what will be decided on it.

Presentation, facilities after completion of the project is the next question. We are here to protest. Answers are expected from the government to the questions that were asked during the protest. However, it is requested to start answering those questions as soon as possible.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that the presentation has been shown again as requested and now the participants should ask questions compartment wise. It will be explained by the project promoter immediately. Also, the written suggestions, objections submitted by you will be recorded and will be a part of the record. Shri Vaibhav Vaze, Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangharsha Samittee should please start asking questions.

Shri. Vaibhav Vaze requested Superintendent of Police, Palghar that four of their activists were arrested by the police. This pressure technique should not be used. That won't work here. We are here to make your voices heard. Until they are released, this public hearing will not be allowed to continue.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee said that the Superintendent of Police will look into it and take appropriate action. This public hearing is ongoing. However, the participants should register their questions and objections. Please do not discourage anyone from giving suggestions, objections, thoughts, this is a request to all. From the compartment from which questions are to be asked, they should hold the microphone in their hand and ask the questions.

6) Shri Vinod Patil, Local Person

He said this public hearing is going on. All of us, all groups are opposed to this Vadhvan port. Also, if this public hearing is going on, there is no need to express that opposition in person. However, this public hearing should be cancelled. Some individuals made collective slogans to cancel the extension.

At that time, Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee appealed to the participants to register environmental suggestions and objections regarding the proposed project. You can present it orally or in writing, the gram panchayat office also has arrangements to accept suggestions and objections. You can also register your suggestions, objections through email. Please co-operate with the administration

7) Shri Ramkrishna Tandel

He raised the objection that many such public hearings have been held regarding highways, bullet trains. All the people protested, yet the public hearings were conducted by asking everyone to speak. Now those projects have started. The public was cheated, don't do it here. However, this public hearing should be cancelled, we are totally opposing to the installation of the port. Here, Chairman of the Committee that the name and village should be mentioned while raising suggestions and objections.

At that time, a local woman told us that the only thing we have to say is that this port should be cancelled. The announcement of cancellation by the said woman was supported by everyone by shouting slogans. At that time, Chairman suggested to continue the meeting peacefully. Chairman appealed not to protest in this way, we should present our views in written form.

8) Ms. Dikshita Davane

Will we know what kind of development the government is doing by destroying the green belt? If the country is progressing, why we are declining?

At that time, a local demanded that the four men who were forcibly taken away by the police should be released immediately, without which the public hearing would

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not take place. Local people also appealed to those present that no one should raise an opinion unless all those who have been arrested come back.

9) Shri Datta Kadbad, Adivasi Ekta Parishad -

There were many such hearings, and we were deceived. If there is rule of law, we request that no such public hearing be cheated. We have opposed highways and bullet trains. Now everyone in the meeting has opposed the port. However, this public hearing should be stopped immediately, and we are protesting this project. We will not allow it to construct a harbor under any circumstances.

10) Shri Milind Raut

He requested all Bhumiputras that till our brothers arrested by the police come, we should sit peacefully. Chairman of the Committee said that the suggestions and objections raised so far have been noted. However, the participants should raise suggestions and objections.

11) Shri Vaidya

He said that all the local fishermen's association, local people, potentially affected locals have come here to oppose the expansion of port. However, they must express their views. The government is fully prepared to implement the said project. We are invited here to register complaints regarding this project.

If complaints are not registered, the government will say no one has complaints. However, those who have acquired scholarly information about the port must present it here. They should be raised; questions are still not raised. I am totally against this project. However, we should raise our questions.

Project Proponent has distributed project brochures to everyone. Clarifying its first point, the JNPA says that the project will not require any village or additional land. But when the port is developed and completed, roads will have to be built to go from the port to the railway. So how much land has to be acquired for that?

He said that those who are the office bearers of Vadhvan Bachav Committee have been forcibly taken away by the police. We will not give a response in the meeting unless they are released. They should be brought here immediately. If the district administration is keeping the questioners on hold, then this matter is serious.

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They have not committed any crime. We will protest the coercion of the administration and we will not co-operate with the district administration in this public hearing, until all four of them are here, the public hearing will not proceed.

Chairman said that this public hearing has been going on since 11.00 am. The police administration will consider all the relevant matters and take a decision. It is a legal provision that the police will take legal action against anyone who tries to disrupt law and order. However, the members of Sangharsh Samiti should present their opinion as well.

As per notification of EIA, 2006 Public Consultation must be held in a free and fair environment. Here the District Administration is instructing us to follow the rules but deliberately arresting the office bearers of Sangharsh Samiti to put pressure on us.

District administration is also responsible for maintaining law and order. So here the police force has been set up to put pressure on us. They should stay away and maintain law and order. We will not continue the public hearing process unless all these rules are followed by the Administration.

12) Shri Brian Lobo, Kashatkari Sanghatana

The political leaders here brought in foreigners and the locals had to stay outside. Law and order problem is caused by political leaders and mercenaries. However, those who brought mercenaries are criminals and should be arrested.

13) Shri Brian Lobo, remarked that Law and Order is the responsibility of the administration, and they should be aware of it.

14) Local Lady Keni -

We are in no rush for a public hearing. We are ready to stop all night. Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that these public hearings are government process. However, environmental suggestions, objections about the proposed project should be recorded. Please register your suggestions, objections. Participants are frequently requested to register suggestions, objections.

15) Shri Brian Lobo, Kashatkari Sanghatana -

We all have repeatedly opposed this project and if the administration has taken note of it, there is no question of registering suggestions and objections. You are forcing ourselves. No need to repeat the same thing over and over again. All of us are against this project.

Chairman of the Committee said that this opinion has also been noted. All those who have given their name and address have been recorded. Similarly,

there are representatives of various fishermen, tribal organizations, they are also invited to give suggestions, objections and criticisms regarding the said project.

16) Usha Ashok Machhi, Lady from Zhai village

If our people are forcibly arrested, what will we say, they should be released first. Chairman appealed to say your name and village first while asking questions. Shri Vaidya requested Chairman that the people would calm down if he gave information about our men who were detained by force. Chairman said that the transport was delayed, and they would arrive in some time. However, the government process should not be stopped, it should be continued.

17) Shri Narendra Kashinath Marde, Residence – Dhakati Dhahanu –

I am Secretary of Shri Ram Pratishthan, Villages which are going to be affected by the proposed port, e.g. – Vadhvan, Varor, Gumale, Dhakti Dahanu, will be adversely affected. Remedy on it. The next question is about employment. So, everyone should get employment. Third question if this project commissioned, the economy will be strengthened, and India will become a superpower.

Fourth question, I am not taking the name of any party. But this country has got a good Prime Minister.

At that time all those present shouted at the concerned person.

At that time, Chairman suggested any individual to present his personal opinion. Do not pressure anyone. Everyone has a legal right to express their opinion. So, no one should be opposed to his personal opinion. He who wants to oppose, let him speak, but no one should be prevented from speaking. Also, no one should sit and make his speech, but should express his opinion about the project.

18) Shri Bharat Baida–Local Person opined that

We have come to protest against Vadhvan port and there is no issue of employment here. This should be noted. Chairman said that the note has been taken.

19) Local Person -

The three persons who were forcefully caught by the police have been brought here. Everyone should be calm. We are going to oppose the project. For that, everyone should sit quietly and express their thoughts.

20) Shri Ashok Shingada, Maharashtra Azad Party:-

Everyone here is demanding that this project should be cancelled. If this project is going to be implemented despite the opposition of 100 percent of the people, is this dictatorship or democracy? This should be answered.

Another question - also while developing the port - are you going to use the stone for reclamation, will you do it by breaking the hills here, after this reclamation the water level of the sea on the other side will increase. Therefore, there will be loss of life on the side where the water level will rise.

Here the issue regarding employment was raised.

We don't want ports and we don't want to beg for jobs. Our stomachs are filled with Ghol fish from the coast here. So, 100 percent of the people here are against the project and if the project is going to be implemented forcibly, the public will not hesitate to sleep under your car. However, people are 100 percent against the project.

21) Shri Bharat Vairale, Adivasai Ekta Parishad Worker

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee is being told that those who are speaking against, their microphones are being turned off, while those who are speaking in favor of the project are being kept on. What is the stand of the administration here? Our only demand is that this destructive project should not be here. Those people who have no connection to the sea, are sitting in front, they have nothing to do with the local fishermen goes to catch fish in the sea day and night without caring for life, know the pain of that spider (sea waves/ risks). However, outsiders here should not lie in the public hearing. The Bhoomiputra here will not sit quietly.

22) Shri Vaibhav Ashok Vaze, Vadhvan Port Virodhi Sangharsha Samiti Secretary :-

We have been fighting for the last 32 years against the expansion of port and not only street opposition but also judicial opposition. But thank you for agreeing to present our views on the environmental and social impact of the said project. But many questions have been raised here.

First question – As per the instructions in the meeting with the Hon'ble Chief Minister, JNPA made available to us the report in local language Marathi. However, reading a paragraph here, an explanation should be given. Are you going to explain that paragraph so that we can understand it?

Chairman explained that Project Proponent will clarify the same.

The representative of the project proponent informed that the report, which was made available in Marathi, has been translated by Google. Here Nature of Port is translated as the nature of the port. But common Marathi people do not understand this. There are many such errors in the report. Therefore, the EIA Marathi report does not translate convey fully environmental impact that will be caused by the proposed project. This difficulty in translation of whole reports and studies had been brought to the notice of Hon. Chief Minister and Hon. Collector, an application has been submitted to the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board. Also Hon. High Court also took note of this.

However, the said EIA should be made available in Marathi language and later this public hearing should be held again was raised before the Ho. High Court at Mumbai. But are you going to explain the analysis of this EIA report? It will take 2-3 days we are prepared to wait.

Project Proponent replied that according to the meeting with the Chief Minister Maharashtra, some scientific and technical words were being translated into Marathi for the first time as they are not available in Marathi. So, we do not deny that some errors may have crept in. However, within a very short time the report was prepared by availing of the services of expert's/ Marathi translators. The PP also informed that the information primary done by experts and any need to refer the same may be referred in English which is generally accepted by all concerned.

Shri Vaze objected that no matter who gave it, the report should be made available in a way that the common man could understand. We want to know the potential environmental and social impact of the proposed project. Although it may take some time, the report should be made available to us.

Joint Director of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (APC) directed Project Proponent to explain the possible environmental and social impact of the proposed project by Mr. Vaze.

Project Proponent said that we have duly provided the Executive summary of the EIA report in Marathi which is required to be provided to you as per the EIA notification. As per the order of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, the technical reports were translated in Marathi by an expert in a short period of time, we do not accept the error in it as the expert opinion of Marathi.

However, we have made the Executive Summary available in Marathi. Even if the EIA and Technical reports translated in Marathi, the side note instructs that the original English document should be referred to for some clarification. However, the instructions have been fulfilled by JNPA.

Mr. Vaze asked if there was any representative of NIO and CMFRI. Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee told Shri. Vaze that if we present our technical issues, environmental issues, related to fisheries, they will definitely be discussed before the expert committee of the MOEF&CC, Government of India. As per the provisions of the law, the project proponent has to disclose all the issues raised by them.

23) Shri Brian Lobo, Kashtakari Union Representative:

Shri Brian Lobo read out a Marathi paragraph and requested to translate it. Project Proponent said that this has been noted by the project promoter and also by the Collector's office.

Shri Lobo asked for clarification as per 6.4 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification 2006 to take note that no clarification was received. Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that every word is being recorded here.

Shri Vaibhav Ashok Vaze, Secretary of the Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangarsha Sammitte demanded that as per the public hearing notification, the suggestions, objections raised in the meeting are read out at the end, should we expect it to happen here? A public hearing is not complete just by reading the minutes of the meeting. Joint Director, (Air Pollution Control), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board advised Shri Lobo to raise all his points once, so that others would have an opportunity to speak.

Shri Lobo raised the point that project promoters need to study twenty-four aspects as per TOR. By letter dated January 9, I wrote to MPCB, the Board, Collector's Office has been informed that the study is incomplete. The same issue was raised during the Chief Minister's meeting.

Study incomplete means not all information have been made available to the public. Even so, a public hearing has been organized. All information is expected to be made available as per EIA Notification.

As per the ToR directives, two seasons additional baseline data covering monsoon and winter seasons with specific focus on offshore marine mammals movement and fish aggression sites with special focus on off shore and mining areas and port reclamation areas.

So, our objection is that your study is incomplete. The study had to be done in two seasons, one in monsoon and one in winter. When your report was filed in October, 2023, the winter season had not yet begun. The report mentions that the

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study will continue till March, 2025. However, the public hearing has been held in January, 2024. This is the first objection.

Another objection is where to study? So, one is Daman, which we have done. And the second - Port Reclamation Area - in the reclamation area itself, i.e., where the filling is going to be increased, study is necessary in rainy and cold seasons. So, it hasn't happened.

Third Objection – Study of mammals, their movements. Similarly, survey and information about fish aggregation site.

Project Proponent said that such a study had been done and asserted that such a study at Daman had been done by the Zoological Survey of India in August, 2023 and October 2023 and secondary data was used for study and two seasons based on secondary data and they will monitor the entire area of sand borrow pit during construction to take mitigative measures if arises. The report of ZSI is a part of EIA report and is made available to all related Gram Panchayats.

24) A local person raised an objection here that all mics should be turned on. Here are Bhumiputras, they want to raise some objections, but their mics are turned off. Then the mic should be restarted.

A local woman objected that we could not hear the sound. Similarly, many of our people are standing outside and they should be accommodated. Chairman said that there is sufficient seating arrangement for those entering the pavilion.

25) Shri Milind Raut, Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Yuva Sangharsh Samiti-

Following the question asked by Shri Brian Lobo, the question is that there is a letter from MoES – Ministry of Earth Science. Daman soil, sand are going to be brought in it, while there is a letter from MoES – Ministry of Earth Science that they are not giving any permission – Mining of Borough Pit Sand. So, if permission cannot be granted, how did the study take place?

Project Proponent replied that there was a question about the study. So the department which approved the ToR i.e. MoEF&CC asked the Zoological Survey of India to conduct the study. They have been asked to study and monitor for two seasons till 2025. This monitoring is planned till the completion of the port project. So, the study is completed, then the answer is the study is completed.

The second point is that two seasons are to be studied, while two seasons have been studied and secondary data has also been used. Because the study of the seacoast is done over the years. The Zoological Survey of India has studied all other mammals over the years.

Now the answer to Shri. Milind Gharat's questions the approval is required to be taken from Ministry of Mines and that permission is given by the Ministry of Mines, GoI and they have reserved the said area for utilization of offshore sand. We have attached those received licenses.

Shri Milind Raut asked that if the Department of Mines gives permission, it should be disclosed why the relevant document is not included in the documents provided to us. It should be noted that complete documents should be made available to us for study.

Shri Lobo informed that along with the mining sector, there is also a need to study in the filling sector. Answer about this Project Proponent said that the study was carried out by the Zoological Survey of India.

Project Proponent said that the report was done by the Zoological Survey of India with two seasons data and report is made available to Locals.

Lobo objected that additional baseline data was not available as per the TOR. They objected that the ToR passed in 2023 was not being followed. However, the public hearing has been conducted keeping the people in the dark and it should be cancelled.

Project proponent had informed that already the clarification is provided, and sufficient information is available in EIA and Annexures.

26) Shri Bhushan Bhoir :-

I am a marine biologist and I also have some questions. Tell us what the baseline survey means.

Project Proponent said that a written reply will be given. The participants were instructed to answer orally. Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that every query is being noted. However, those who are sitting behind should be given a chance to speak.

Environmental Consultant said that the baseline data is the monitoring done at the site where the project is to be set up, which is also conducted by the CSIR-NIO.

At that time, Shri Bhushan Bhoir opined that monitoring and baseline data have different meanings. It should be noted that environmental consultants are deceiving and misleading by giving incorrect answers. Baseline data refers to actual project site inspections. Here it is stated that secondary data of Zoological Survey of India has been used.

As per the instructions of ToR, the Government was supposed to conduct the survey of the project site by the Project Promoter/ Environmental Consultant, the survey was not done by the Project Promoter/Environmental Consultant. The survey was expected in winter along with monsoon.

From where the soil is going to be extracted from Daman, there is a breeding ground for Bombil fish. The project promoter/environmental consultant has not conducted survey there during winter. A winter survey was expected along with monsoons. Fish get pregnant at a certain time. We believe that surveys were not carried out in winter to avoid recording fish breeding in winter.

However, we are of the opinion that the said survey report is partial and illegal. This should be noted. An assurance that a note will be taken was given by Shri. V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.

Project proponent informed that all data acquisition and date of such acquisition and source of acquisition are available in each study report and such data is sufficient to study the environmental studies.

27) Shri Lobo -

Section 8.3 of ToR dated June 2, 2023 directs that Traffic assessment studies for increased traffic due to port related activities on NH 8 and Mumbai Vadodara Express Way. We say this has not been done. Kindly explain this.

Project Proponent Informed the desk study was conducted as it was meant for ascertaining the capacity of Vadodara Mumbai express way due to development of Vadhavan port and the study is complete and information was already submitted to DTEPA on 28th June 2023. As per study the VM expressway will have sufficient capacity to cater to Vadhavan Traffic. Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board assured that a note has been taken.

Shri Lobo objected that if the report is not given, should we demand a month's time for the study?

Shri Lobo demanded that the relevant report be made available immediately. Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that it is noted and suggested to ask further questions.

Shri Vaibhav Ashok Vaze, Vadhvan Port Virodhi Sangharsh Samiti Secretary objected that JNPA has all the reports, if so, the report should be made available.



At that time, some of the participants demanded that not only the notes should be taken, but the report should be made available, and a public hearing should be held again after a month.

Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said the Project Proponent has made submission to MPCB in accordance with MOEF&CC's notification and has taken note.

Shri Gajanan Pagdhare objected that though we have made the report available to the concerned gram panchayats. However, the said environmental impact assessment report has not been made available to the fishermen's association and society there. This project is going to destroy all fishing communities from Cuff-Parade (Mumbai) to Zhai (Palghar). There are 56 fisheries societies in Palghar and Thane. Mumbai has a central team. No EIA report has been made available to any fishermen association, society. However, the EIA report should be made available to all fishermen's associations and societies and then this public hearing should be held. This should be answered. This is the golden belt. All the fishermen of the district come here for fishing, that business will be adversely affected.

Shri Milind Raut opined that all the fishermen are going to be affected by this project, if the EIA report is not made available to them, what is the point of holding this public hearing, it is a violation of fundamental rights. If the report is not to be made available for study, this public hearing farce should be discontinued.

Shri Lobo asked whether they are promising to hold a public hearing in a month after making the information available. Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that the queries and objections raised by the locals are being recorded and they will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. In that regard, the expert committee takes the following appropriate action. Mr. Lobo objected that the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was supposed to conduct the public hearing after verifying all the reports.

28) Shri Vaibhav Ashok Vaze, Vadhvan Port Virodhi Sangharsh Samiti Secretary

He raised the objection that, we have written to the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board dated January 09, 2024 regarding these issues. We have proof of that. The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was expected to consider the matter in its entirety and proceed with the process of postponing the public hearing. Similarly, the Collector was also informed about this matter.

Similarly, as per the EIA Notification, 2006, objections were also raised regarding the location of the public hearing and requested to hold the public hearing at the

proposed project site. Project Proponent, while replying informed to whom the report should be made available that there are some guidelines in this regard under the EIA Notification, 2006 for assessment in 10.0 km of the project and influenced villages. Environmental document of the proposed project has been made available in English and Marathi to all the affected gram panchayat offices in the periphery and it is also available on the JNPA website.

At that time, some of the participants collectively objected that the cuff parade, which would destroy all the fishermen from Colaba to Zhai, was not thought of. Our livelihood is going to be a problem.

At that time, Shri Raut said that in the EIA report, the number of affected people is written only as twenty thousand eight hundred. If lakhs of fishermen are going to be affected/destroyed, then the number of affected is being deliberately concealed, then the report is false, misleading and our basic question is why the locals have to face the public hearing when there is an incomplete report and why should the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board organize a public hearing on the wrong report? At that time Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, (Air Pollution Control), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, suggested that the same issue is being raised again and again and that those in the rear should be given concessions.

29) Shri Santosh Koli, Madha Daryavardi Macchimar Sahakari Society -

We are given fishing license from Mumbai, it is allowed in "Maharashtra marine zone". Our boats from Mumbai, Colaba come for fishing in the golden belt. If the government is allowing us to fish in the "Maharashtra marine area", then we can only fish within 10 km. How do we make environmental reports available to people on the periphery, so where do we go fishing?

Should we sink our boats and go out of our country? So why not inform our Mumbai fishermen? We will not allow this project to happen.

30) The local fisherman suggested that the fisherman come with us to survey the boat, spend two nights on the boat with us and then prepare a report.

31) Local people objected that the public should have complete information at the time of the public hearing. It has been pointed out that the information is not available. With people's money, such a big tent has been erected, such a big army has been brought, we have come to the public hearing at our own expense, if the (demand for) documents should be fulfilled.

People should get all the information, the public should be given enough time to study, public hearing should be held only later, stop this public hearing immediately and announce next date.

Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, (Air Pollution Control), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that sufficient time has been given to locals for study the reports and the above point has been taken note of.

32) Shri Gajanan Moreshwar Pagdare, Mahim, Mumbai

Public Hearing Officer has a question; it is related to the existence of the people of the village. At Mahim-Bandra only 50 acres of land was filled. Due to the rise in the water level on the other side, Dadar's Chowpatty was washed away. So if five thousand acres are filled for the port expansion, that water will seep into our villages and we will be displaced. What is the plan for that? After filling five thousand hectares, the water level will rise on the other side, what are the plans of the project promoters?

At this time, a person appealed to the audience that the locals do not have complete information, the report is not complete, but Hon. The President is requested that this public hearing be postponed and a further date announced.

Here the Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment appealed that only people from one compartment are monopolising to speak and others should be allowed to speak. I have repeatedly said that everyone will be given a chance to speak. However, if there are any environmental suggestions, objections regarding the proposed project, they should be recorded. It will be noted and included in the minutes. The report will be submitted to the Government of India. The expert committee there will take the appropriate decision regarding it.

Shri V.N. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board reiterated that the queries and objections raised by the locals are being recorded and all of them will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The Expert Appraisal Committee takes decision in this regard. Mr. Lobo objected that the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was supposed to conduct the public hearing after verifying all the reports.

33) Dr. Gajendra Bhanji -

Reports made available to locals are partial, inaccurate. First those reports should be completed and then made available to the locals. Adequate time should be given to locals to study it. In any case, the expansion port project has to be cancelled. Here Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that others should be given an opportunity to speak.

When it was called to cancel the public hearing as it was a partial report, it was supported by all by raising hands. Dr. Gajendra Bhanji said that the public hearing committee on environment must have understood the sentiments of the people. However, this public hearing should be canceled and held only when the locals ask.

34) Advocate Rahul Dinesh Thakre -

How can you proceed with the government process if complete and correct documentation is not deliberately made available to the locals? Although it is a crime to provide false, incomplete information, it is completely wrong to implement a government process on that false report.

At that time Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that the suggestions, objections raised have been noted and we should not pressurize other persons on those who have registered. You as well as those present in other compartments should be given the opportunity to register suggestions, objections.

35) Shri Santosh Koli, Madha Daryavardi Macchimar Sahakari Society -

He said in the meeting that the collector says to give others the chance to speak, but if your representatives have studied here, let your representatives speak, when they asked if they all supported this, they all raised their hands. At the same time, Mr. Lobo, the labor union, said that the people's representatives had come here, and they also wanted to speak.

36) Hon'ble Vinod Nikole, MLA, Dahanu Vidhan Sabha

Many issues, views and objections have been raised by the office bearers of various fishermen's associations and societies in this meeting on the occasion of the expansion of the port. Brian Lobo of Labor Association, representative of Dahanu Fishermen Committee, Mr. Vaze, Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangharsh Committee raised technical issues. Shri Bhushan Bhoir has also raised issues. This public hearing is to know the sentiments of local people. Fishermen here, tribals and others belong to any caste and religion, they are sons of the land. All of them have objected that the correspondence and reports provided by the project proponent are incomplete. So, if such a large number of people say that the report is not complete and everyone should cancel the open public hearing on environment and make all the documents available. Everyone is saying that we should stop the public hearing and take it up later. So, act accordingly. I am accompanied by honorable MLA of Vikramgad Sunil Bhusara saheb who will present his opinion.

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37) Hon'ble Sunil Bhusara, MLA, Vikramgad Vidhan Sabha:-

As stated by MLA Vinod Nikole, I request the administration that they say that the information provided by them is incomplete considering the sentiments of the public. The letters and reports they expected are incomplete. If the public is so demanding, they have expressed their objections and displeasure about the Marathi translation as well.

So, we should stop the speculation that we are doing, the government should do what people expect. The Hon'ble Chief Minister's role is to do what the people expect. We should do what the people want. However, this public hearing should be stopped immediately. The necessary letters, documents should be made available to the people and then a public hearing should be held.

Shri V.M. Motghare, Joint Director, Air Pollution Control, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board said that the suggestions made by us have been noted and will be included in the minutes and will be communicated to the MOEF&CC, Government of India.

Local fishermen objected here and opined that others should not take over while the chairperson is conducting the meeting.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that honorable public representatives, local functionaries and others have raised objections that the document provided by the project promoters is incomplete, while the project promoters say that they have followed the provisions of the laws for making applications for public hearing with submission of all relevant documents. These issues have been noted and will be included in the minutes. An expert committee of the Government of India will take a decision in this regard.

At this time Hon'ble MLA Sunil Bhusara raised an objection. There was an online meeting of all honorable MLAs and the Collector with Guardian Minister, Palghar. At that time, the Collector promised to hold another meeting of all the people's representatives and understand the obstacles of the people due to this project. At the same time, the Collector will make available all the documents related to this project.

That meeting has not taken place and we have not received the information. Therefore, the demand of the people regarding the meeting should be accepted. I request you to stop this public hearing at this point keeping in mind the sentiments of the people, as we have not held the agreed meeting regarding this reference. All six MLAs and MPs from here were present.

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Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment said that the provisions of the Act have been fulfilled. A meeting was held in this regard with the Hon. Chief Minister, Maharashtra as per the instructions of that meeting, all the legal provisions have been followed and public hearing meeting date was rescheduled.

As directed in the meeting, Marathi reports were made available to the locals. Regarding the organization of the meeting yesterday, A petition was filed in the Hon. High Court. All the directions given by the High Court are being followed and this public hearing process is going on. The suggestions and objections raised by the person sitting in the meeting are being recorded.

It will be recorded in the minutes and submitted to the MOEF&CC, Government of India. Regarding that all rules are being followed. The objections of providing insufficient information by the locals have been recorded and it will be included in the minutes.

Here MLA Mr. Vinod Nikole opined that Chairman of the Committee asked other people to speak, then if the documents are not available to the people with all the information, then how the people can raise the issues.

Chairman said that please people should not be pressured not to speak. Everyone is given a chance to speak here.

MLA Shri Sunil Bhusara said that in the meeting people said that some of our public representatives will speak on our behalf, the administration should not pressurize that the concerned person should speak. The President said that the representatives of the organization, people's representatives spoke, their words were heard and recorded. But others should also be given a chance to speak.

38) Shri Swapnil Ashadeepak Tare, Lokprahar Sena, Safala, Taluka & District – Palghar -

A reply has been received from the project promoter JNPA that after the public hearing various letters, survey reports will be made available as per demand. This means the survey is incomplete. This Public Hearing EIA Notification, 2006 has been organized for the public. But if the public hearing is being held on the incomplete report, then the district administration itself is violating the EIA Notification, 2006. However, first the complete document should be made available, only then public hearing should be held.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee said that as per EIA Notification, 2006, the project promoters have made available the environmental document including various scientific study reports in Marathi version also to the all relevant Gram Panchayat of the affected/ influenced villages. As per the directions of the Hon. Chief Minister, additional documents – reports have been

made available in Marathi and if anything else is required, they will also be made available. The President asserted that the said public hearing committee is a means of conveying your thoughts, suggestions, criticisms, objections to the Government.

39) Local Person -

The fisherman asked that if the incomplete report is completed and made available to the locals, the Collector should clarify whether he will hold a public hearing again. Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee said that their suggestions, objections will be submitted to the MOEF&CC, Government of India.

Local persons said that if our fishermen union, various societies have not received the report, public hearing should be held again with sufficient time for study after its availability. This public hearing should be stopped immediately.

Chairman said that from 11.00 am the public hearing process is started. The project proponent has provided requisite reports in Marathi Also all reverent Grampanchayats and Public Hearing is going on as per the instructions of the Hon. Bombay High Court and suggestions and objections have been raised by people's representatives, representatives of various fishermen's associations, locals and the same has been recorded. Every matter will be noted in the minutes and will be submitted to the MOEF&CC Government of India.

40) Shri Dhanaji Pandurang Koli -

Technically the survey is a complete failure. Ram Rajya will come on January 22. Rama, who went into exile for his stepmother Kaikai, and sentenced his wife to satisavitri because of a dhoba, don't you see so many people gathered here? However, the Collector should inform the Government of India that the locals do not want the port to be extended.

41) Shri Milton Soudiya, Vasai, District- Palghar:-

Hon. Collector sir, now the point raised by Swapnil and you are replying that non-disclosure has been recorded. Otherwise, it should be noted that the information is not given in the language of the project victims (Mother tongue of Maharashtra which is Marathi). The project is being set up in Maharashtra, the official language of Maharashtra is Marathi and all the project documents should be made available in easy Marathi language that can be understood by the project beneficiaries. We do not understand the Marathi, translated by Google because 'Nature of Port' is translated as 'Bandracha Nisarga', so pay attention to that.

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42) Shree Aniket Patil, Leader of ' Bandar Yuva Sangharsha Association' , Varor, Vadhvan

Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment said that the work of public hearing is going on as per the instructions of the hon. Chief minister. I was present in that meeting; you were not present due to family events. In that meeting Hon. Chief Minister had given a clear order that we should not proceed further unless all the demands of the fishermen or the information about the fishers were met. If there is a clear order not to proceed then why are we holding this public hearing? This is a public hearing imposed by a dictatorial system. If the Collector conducts public hearings on the basis of incomplete information, then we should say whether this should be considered a failure of administration.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee said that as per EIA Notification, 2006, the project promoters have made available the environmental document along with all relevant scientific reports to the all related Gram Panchayat of the affected villages. As per the directions of the Hon. Chief Minister, additional documents and reports have been made available in Marathi and if anything, else is required, they will also be made available.

43) Shree Ashok Bheema Ambhire, Village Dhakati Dahanu taluka, District- Palghar

I am an active fisherman. Still, I go in the boat, my son goes. My grandson goes. Three generations of us still go fishing. I have read the DPR report. There are many errors in it. While the affected villages are more, the less affected villages are shown. The inclusion of all the affected villages was required in the report, which is a critical error. No of Fisheries Societies is shown six, actually there are eight. There are many other errors.

As I am an active fisherman myself, if the extension happens, our fishery will be completely shut down. I tell everyone please don't bring any politics. The day politics comes, there will be no expansion without a port. So, the political people present here want to question that when you are posing as MLA, then why the question was not raised in the session.

The question is not to be answered here, people come here to show, this duplicity will not work. We fisher folk start fishing. Politicians do politics. I will live as a fisherman, die as a fisherman. What is going to go, it is going to go to the fisherman. I am active fisherman, also active farmer.

My education is M.A. B.Ed. My son is 12th pass, grandson is ITI pass and all three of us go on boat. Our three generations were on the boat for ten days straight. We are living only by fishing. However, I request the government and the collector to study this report and hold a public hearing later.

MLA Vinod Nikole, who was present here, said that I and Sunil Bhusara have given announcements against the project while sitting on the steps of the

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Legislative Assembly. Similarly, an attempt has been made to attract attention. We don't do politics, even if we don't get re-elected, it's not a matter of politics.

44) Local Fisherman

Respected Chairman saheb, you are the chairman of this meeting and listening to the government officials and we the local people. You were the Fishery Commissioner; you know the problems of the fishermen. The public hearing on the bullet train was stopped twice because the documents were incomplete. Here also if the report is incomplete, we should decide to stop the public hearing. However, we should stop the public hearing immediately and resume the public hearing after completing all the documents.

Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment said that this question has been answered before. Everything you said will be part of the minutes of the meeting. However, the same issue should not be raised again and again. Another thing is that this is only an environmental public hearing. There is a separate platform for fishermen rehabilitation or other topics. Competent authorities of the government will take appropriate decision in this regard. The Chairman appealed to the women to raise any suggestions or objections.

45) Local Female Mrs Asha Rajan Macchi: You say ask questions, give answers, then the questions asked are still not answered. So, the questions asked to us should be answered orally and recorded. We haven't learned. But we need answers. Every question must be answered.

46) Shree Vikas Madve, Worker of Sangharsha Samiti, Padav Grampanchayat -

One thing is clear here. Even though the government has cadres like IAS, IPS, but our studies are less in front of the public. In this public hearing, the administration was expected to study ten times more than us, but it doesn't seem like that. We have been in correspondence with the Collectorate-Palghar and the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board since the public hearing date was announced.

In this public hearing I would like to raise a topic, here the supporters of the project should listen. Due to the expansion of port development, the environment and geography will change on a large scale. The source of water for thirty villages where this port is to be constructed is underground, lake and river.

During the construction of the port, there will be extensive excavation, which will definitely affect the surface and ground water resources. No study in this regard is shown in the report and presentation. However, detailed information should be made available through a survey in this regard.

Also, underground water, springs and sea are interconnected. When dredging/excavating in the sea, it directly affects the underground water resources

there. This means that after dredging/excavation in the sea, the groundwater in the area will become saline or impoundment in the water body.

Therefore, people in the proposed project area will die or leave due to water starvation. Hence, the report states that no rehabilitation is required. Why should we not believe that there is a conspiracy to take our drinking water for the project and kill us without water. This question should be answered. Then the project will pump the water from our area, after that the project will use the drinking water we get.

We will not impose an unjust port on our heads. Although our people are primitive, they are descended from all forces. However, the administration should conduct a thorough study on this matter and face the public again, hold public hearings again.

The project proponent stated that no ground water will be used for the construction purpose as per the environment norms, however, the project proponent approached Maharashtra Jeevan Prabhakaran to make requisite water for the port operations as well as the residents of the port (Township) and MJP, Maharashtra Govt is accordingly examining the matter for making provisions for such mega port.

47) Shree Pradip Bhaurao Pagdare, Navapur, Local Indigenous Koli, Fisherman Tribe, Public Officer President:

Fifteen representations have been given since 2020, but the collector's office says not a single representation has been received. We have sent 15 representations to JNPA, Maritime Board and Collector Offices. We are not given a single answer. I went to the Maritime Board, at that time the Collector said that we have nothing to do with the port. I told them to write it on the file, at that time the Collector said that this is coming for 25 years. JNPA and Collector's Office are working in collaboration. I have sent forty pages of letters to all the higher ups about your exploits. I have sent a letter to the Prime Minister. Gram Panchayat resolutions have been sent.

48) Rajashree Prakash Bhanji -

There are ten thousand women sitting in the back, they have been preparing for a month, they are sitting like that. But they have not been given a treaty. She is a housewife. Who gave the right to develop this, whose development is it the development of foreigners? This will destroy our sea. Mangroves are being slaughtered. Mumbai is not like before nor Maharashtra.

Today we have seafood. Who gave the right to attack it? If our aquaculture survives, we survive. Today, all the Koli palaces have been destroyed. All spiders will be destroyed. If the country is to be run, save the farmers and fish farmers. The house will work, the country will work. We don't want an extension port. All

those present raised slogans against the extension. Our decision is firm, otherwise a big protest will be launched against the authorities.

49) Shri Milind Vaidya

At the beginning of the meeting The Hon'ble Collector said that answers will be given only on the environmental issue. But suppose the project is done, who will answer for the injustice done to those who are going to be displaced? A local here said that if there is no port, there is no question of displacement.

Mr. Vaidya further said that most of the villages in this Palghar district are situated on the beach. Most of the community has occupations related to ocean. As the oil and water from the MIDC in Palghar district is going into the sea, fishing in the villages of Uchai, Dandi, Ghewadi has been completely stopped due to the polluted water.

Till date, the water there has not been cleaned. The business of fishermen in that village has come to a standstill. The port will bring in large ships, which will destroy the fish breeding grounds there. The fishing community will have to search for land.

If the Major Port Act is implemented due to this port, it will affect the agriculture, houses and land there. However, disclosure should be made regarding the Major Port Act.

Mr. Raut said that three of our men have been caught by the police. The meeting will not be allowed to continue unless they are resolved. He said that the pressure technique adopted by the government should be stopped immediately. Although the Collector is the guardian of the district, the administration should not resort to coercive techniques.

50) Shri - Local Person While registering objections in English and Marathi, he said that this open public hearing on environment is against natural justice. Complete information about the said project has not been made available to the project affected, locals. Therefore, this public hearing should be postponed immediately. This is my request. It is totally against natural justice to continue this public hearing. Therefore, this public hearing process should be stopped immediately.

51) Shree Balkrishna Barku Patil, Vadhvan, District Palghar: I was sitting at the back. Mike doesn't go behind, so he has to come forward and speak. Public hearing means taking into account the sentiments of the public. It seems that this ongoing meeting is not for the public but for the administration. All present are saying that this public hearing must be cancelled. An incomplete project report has been made available to the public. However, this public hearing should be canceled until the complete documents are available.

52) Shri Santosh Lakhan Because they have not raised a single issue for the farmers, tribals, laborers, local people, famous artisans here. We are saddened by this. Another thing is that there is no point in thinking about a village that you don't have to go to. We don't want an extension port at all.

Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee said that this public hearing is only to inform the government of your suggestions and thoughts about the proposed project. The administration has a lot of studied officers, but even the complete report has not been made available to us for study. However, our representatives who are sitting in the next section will speak for us.

The Chairman suggested that the people behind should come forward and raise the issues. That is what this public hearing is for.

53) Shri Kedar Naik: Opinionated that I am giving five examples of how this expansion is not port development but destruction. If the port is developed, five thousand acres of sea will be filled, another reason - thousands of tons of stone and soil will be required for filling, for this the mountains here will be broken. Third reason - If the sea is filled, then due to the increase in the water level, the water will go elsewhere, the planning government, the administration does not give a plan in this regard, because some part of Mumbai will go under water.

Fourthly, Ram Temple is being built in Ayodhya, but the signs of Rama here are not being considered. If Sri Lanka has Rama's Bridge, it can also be shown in this area. Here I myself showed the place of Rama, the hair of Rama, the biodiversity there, the fishing there.

The next thing is that this Dahanu taluka is the lung of Mumbai. It has been retained since the time of the British. If a port is built here, Mumbai's lungs will deteriorate and Mumbai will be destroyed. A person cannot live by eating money notes, for that we need clean air and water. The business of dye making is carried on here, for which the artisans are famous.

Many people of the country come here for month-to-month dye making. Gi-hikes in the country come at our feet. Stay here for months. Government gets income from it. Fishing is done here. Thousands of people depend on it. There is no question of 2-4 villages here, 47 villages are going to be destroyed due to this project.

Where will we go? We don't want your jobs. Don't want your money, bait. You send the unemployed to us, we are making short of dye making men. There are less people for fishing, more people are needed. However, people should be sent.

54) Shri Santosh Lakhan, Taluka- Vikramgad, District- Palghar :-

The Chairman, Public Hearing Committee on Environment asked that the people sitting in the back speak, so I am speaking. We strongly oppose the construction of this expansion port. We don't want your loss; we don't want your gain either.

VH



We get salt, bombil, mandial from there and that is enough for us. This public hearing is about the environment. The environment here is going to be destroyed due to the construction of the port. However, the extension port should be cancelled.

55) Adv. Nalin Subhash Bari:-

A public hearing was held in 2020 regarding CRZ. That public hearing was also conducted online and suggestions and objections were recorded in that meeting. After that they were going to submit it to the government. There was no public awareness about that public hearing even at that time. Public awareness about this public hearing has not been done even now. There are many errors in the project report. False reporting is illegal. The report should be made available after correcting it. Until then, the public hearing should be cancelled.

He opined that it is a very important question in terms of the security of the country. Adjacent to where the augmentation port is going to be, there is a nuclear power station. It is sixty km. is at a distance. In our India, bombs explode, explosives are carried. The administration as usual swallows the beans. Cars are not even checked here. If bigger ships come, then safety issues will arise. Who is responsible should be answered.

56) Miss Aasha Rajesh Macchi:-

I am from Pachu port. Our fishermen society has come here with five buses. We don't want this extension. They force us to close the business. Fishing is our traditional occupation. So we will not stop our fishing business. We are uneducated. We do not want to court-martial.

We don't want an extension port. From August will conduct a survey, asking us to stop our occupation of fishing. After the meeting is over, our demands should be read out. Earlier our boats used to come back in five days, but now they don't come in 15days, because there are no mosquitoes, we will not allow this increase as a port.

57) Shri Kedar Naik, Samudra Bachav Manch:-All the Gram Panchayats along the coast have passed resolutions saying no to the expansion of the port. We have submitted all those resolutions to the government. However, the question why public hearings are being held is still in everyone's mind. Here locals are asking questions, which are not getting any answers. I consider it an insult to the general public, just to note. However, this public hearing should stop here.

58) Shri Sunil Badug

Mr. Chairman, we live in a democracy. Public hearings are for the people. However, do not continue this public hearing as a show. Because when we bring the case of land, even if there is no paper at that time, the district administration

closes our case. Here the public hearing is being carried forward in a dictatorial manner despite repeated demands by everyone to stop the public hearing by giving an incomplete report to the public. This is not acceptable to us. However, this public hearing should be postponed.

59) Mrs. Jyoti Rajesh Meher, Satpati, District- Palghar

We understand that your study has not been completed and that you have submitted an incomplete report. So, we should accept it and cancel this public hearing. We know that Dahanu taluka has been declared as ecologically sensitive. So, no projects can come here. So how can you implement this giant project of expansion?

Wildlife board permission should be taken for corals there. How can you impose this port on us without taking it?

Due to the proposed project, fishermen and fisherman will be affected. The entire fishery will be destroyed. Our fishermen are going to perish. However, this project should be scrapped. According to the report, only 16 villages will be affected. So this is wrong. Breeding area of fishing is increased here. Cuff-Parade to Zhai is called the Golden Belt.

Although the report says that not a single village will be displaced. But our Satpatti village is half under water. Our villages are going to expand naturally. We do not want the project, so this public hearing should be cancelled.

The Chairman of the Committee appealed to the audience not to raise the same issues again and again. Cancel hearing, report incomplete, back public hearing, these issues have been raised by many people. However, if there are other issues, they should be mentioned.

60) Shri Santosh Jaywant Raut, Vadhvan, Tigarepada, Local, District- Palghar

Mr. Chairman, do not repeat the points you are making, but many points have been made. We don't want a port. We have given the reasons for it. But you don't react to it. Collector is our guardian. If he doesn't listen, will the government listen? If five thousand acres are filled, where will the water go? They will come to the creek, to our castle, to our farm. We don't want projects.

61) Shri Hemant Tamore, Dhakati Dahanu, District: Palghar

I request my local colleagues not to talk too much, the questions you have raised have not yet been answered. Don't make speeches though. This public hearing will also be carried forward as per CZMP. Our only request is that this public hearing be adjourned, and the public hearing be called again later.

62) Miss. Pranali Raut, Chandigaon, District - Palghar

This public hearing is organized by the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board. So, they know that the Landsat report says that 20-25 lakh people die every year due

to air pollution in India, then how can you hold a public hearing to approve a carbon emitting project like Vadhvan port? Everyone here knows that you do not have research on these topics. The government's attempt to bring this project back is unethical even though it was cancelled based on a report 25 years ago.

In addition, I would like you to remind that about this situation, the Paris agreement was signed in 2015, 196 countries of the world signed it, and the Prime Minister of our country also signed it. It means violation of Prime Minister's agreement.

The Collector has the custody of the district, similarly he is also called the District Magistrate. But they should cancel this public hearing to give us justice.

According to the Guardian's report, Ice on Greenland is melting 30 Crores Ton/hour then how can MPCB agree for a reclamation in Arabian Sea. Please Send the message to the Government of India that this project cannot happen here as per the Paris Agreement and cancel today's hearing and cancel the project.

63) Shri Kundan Sankhe

The fishing community goes to the sea and brings fish to us. Similarly, we who eat fish are also fishermen. Fishermen, fishermen's association have strong feelings about the expansion of port. It is important to take into account feelings of the local residents. Previously, there was an effort made to construct the Port of Nandgaon. At that time fishermen and countrymen had shown strong resistance. Fifty years ago, locals have generously given their land for the development of MIDC at Tarapur. Number of projects have been initiated but there were very a smaller number of affected people. And after fifty years the locals, the project victims have to protest for justice.

Hence feelings of fishermen, farmers and other locals should be respected while agreeing to the project. We promised to transform the local area but not at the cost of lives of locals, if this is happening then feelings of residents should be 100% respected. I agree to this opinion.

64) Shri Sanjay Silverster Koli, Ex- Corporator, Vasai.

I am a Science student. Here it can be seen that a complete process should be followed while conducting a public hearing. So, it appears that the administration is trying to divert this hearing. But if this hearing goes through the entire process. It is not known how many nautical miles the port will shift from JNPA to Vadhvan. Millions of fishermen from Mumbai to Gujrat will be destroyed due to this project. I have worked on sand excavation since 1999. I protested the excavation, but no one listened to us and hence all the fishermen from Vasai are destroyed. If the port is constructed, we will be destroyed, we will starve to death, but we will not let the port to be build.

65) Shri Hemant Pandurang Patil, Countryman-

It is shown in presentation that the port will be constructed at the distance of 6 kilometers. Reclamation will be put for that. So, if such a port can be built anywhere, why here? Because you can get depth of 20 meters anywhere. Hence, this project should be moved to the state of Gujrat. Because all the projects which achieve profit are taken to the state of Gujarat. Why injustice to our countrymen?

66) Shri Vikas More, Chief of district Shivsena, Mahim

I am asking as a Shiv Sena District Chief. My question is to the Collector and if he knows Bombil, Mandiyali, Karli. We only eat pomfrette, prawns and hence because of port these will be destroyed.

Lot of projects have been moved to the state of Gujrat, so please move this project to Gujrat as well.

67) Shri Nitin Kashinath Raut, Vadhvan, District- Palghar

In fact, the report submitted by Environment Protection Authority, a mega port at Vadhavan would be implemented. Today, Late Justice Chandrasekhar Dharmadhikari is not with us. How can his judgment be overlooked, and new judgment of Justice Chaudhary considered legal and trustworthy after 25 years. I want answer for this.

68) Shri Ghanashyam Patil, Vadhvan, District- Palghar

My opinion is to cancel the Port of Vadhavn. The port created by JNPT hasn't renovated in 24 years. Hence we do not want Port of Vadhvan. Secondly, the fishermen isn't a community but a profession. Koli is a community and its movement has been started to be classified under Scheduled Tribe. However, the Port of Vadhvan should be cancelled.

69) Chairman, Jhai Mangala Society,

The Port of Vadhvan has been initiated without taking account into well-being of local fishermen. The local fishermen have been doing fishing for generations.

If an extension port is to be brought, the local fisherman who is poor, should pay the payment for the port by adding the sacrifice of the local fishermen.

70) Shri Narayan Patil, Vadhvan, Dist. Palghar, Chairman, Vadhvan Bandar Virodhi Sangarsha Samiti: -

I welcome all who are attending this public hearing and also thank them. This Environment Public Hearing called. But there are some technical issues for adjournment of this meeting. Many participants have raised very nicely all the technical issues of cancelling this meeting and it should call again after giving sufficient time to people to study the EIA report.

Here I have to raise some points on which the survey is not carried by the Project Proponent/Consultant. Since last 27 years, we are opposing for the development





of Vadhvan Port. There were many agitations and Government was very nice briefed in the past.

As per the Notification of Govt. of India dated 20th June, 2019, the port will be developed at a distance of 6.0 km from the seashore. This Dahanu Taluka/area is Most Environmental Sensitive Area. It falls under CRZ. Moreover, the industries which are identified under A Category-Highly Polluting Industries are totally prohibited to commission and operate in this Environmental Sensitive Area. But Government has planned to commission this port in the prohibited area. Since last 27 years, we are fighting against this decision by agitations and filing of cases in the various Court of Law.

Now MPCB has planned this Environmental Public Hearing for the development of Vadhvan Port, in which many issues have been identified where the survey is not carried. In the meeting, all the participants have requested to Environment Public Hearing Committee to stop this meeting immediately as public is not received the fool-proof EIA. All the participants have requested to stop the proceedings of this meeting, direct Project Proponent to make available all the documents with fool-proof EIA report, give sufficient time to people for study and then call the Environment Public Hearing Meeting.

We desire that though the survey regarding water, air and solid waste is carried, the light which is underneath the sea is not surveyed. Also, there will increase in noise levels due to movement of big ships, the proposed impact of it is not considered. These two points should be surveyed.

He said that reclamation will be carried on 1,448 hectares in the sea, out of it, there will be development of buildings and other essential services on 153 hectares.

Also, there will be 220 KVA substation to carry iron welding work. The survey is not carried for ill-effects of Intense Light Zone on the aquatic life and mammals. Further to inform that this port will be commissioned where there are reproductive areas of the various fishes. It will be affected. The survey is not carried for this also.

There will be movement of various big ships after the development of Vadhvan port, which will create huge noise underneath the sea. The study is not carried for this also. Noise underneath the sea will compel the various fishes to move from this place to other. Some fish communities will be ruined.

The fresh water of 21.0 MLD will be required which will be lifted from the Surya dam. In the report it is mentioned 42,000 acres of land will be required after full-fledged commissioning of the port. Due to reclamation for the port, the water level of sea will increase and the water will enter in the creek and further in the surrounding villages, which will compel villagers to move from this area.

Hence this meeting should be curtailed now, then all the above discrepancies referred above should be rectified, then another public hearing should be called.

One lady participant appealed to make available water and eatables to the women sitting in the pandal. Chairman of the Committee promised for it.

71) **An aged lady raised** objections in Gujarati language. She opposed the project.

72) **Shri Amol Mahale, Former Chairman, Chandika Vikas Society :-**

We are farmers. The water from Surya dam is not brought to the western side, which will make our fields fertile. Instead of completing the Eco-friendly project, why this environment destructing project of Vadhvan port is taken in hand.

In the Presentation, it is mentioned that the water of Surya Dam will be made available to Vadhvan port. Moreover, the Vadhvan port project should be cancelled and the water of Surya dam should be brought to the western side, which will make our fields fertile and there will be eco-friendly atmosphere.

73) **Shri Manoj Keshav Sane, Resident – Chandigaon, District – Palghar -**

I am a farmer and have irritated agriculture field. Due to thermal power stations, the water has become salty and polluted. Hence, we cannot cultivate our fields. If the Vadhvan Project is installed, we will not be able to cultivate the remaining agriculture fields. Inform how we can carry our livelihood, how the labors working in our fields will survive and how we can pay the loans; how the labourers will be rehabilitated.

74) **Smt. Usha Ashok Jain, Chairperson, Fishing Society**

We are illiterate. We sell fishes and carrying our livelihood. Our fishing will be ruined after the commissioning of this port, we do not want Vadhvan Port.

75) **Shri Jitendra Patil, Vadhavn, Dist-Palghar:-**

Many people have raised their suggestions and objections. Almost all have opposed the project. It means that nobody desires the development of port here. I feel that there is big port at Alang, Gujarat. I demand that this port should be commissioned at Alang, Gujarat, as the big ships do come at Alang. There is big activities of ship breaking. If this project is shifted at Alang, the problems of local people will be solved. There is very large sandy area/land at Alang. The population is sparse at Alang. Hence this project should be shifted at Alang.



76) Shri Jitendra Patil, Vadhvan , Dist – Palghar-

I am bringing to the notice of the Environment Public Hearing Committee that ballast system is installed in big ships to float the ships when they come on port and to keep balance. The effluent from the ballast system is released in the sea, the released water from the ship contains chemicals. There are many incidents of fish killed due to this. I know this as I worked at Dubai. This project should not be allowed. I oppose this project.

77) Mrs. Vinita Raut, Former Sarpanch, Vadhvan Gram Panchayat, Now Member, Dist-Palghar-

The place where this Vadhvan Port will be developed, at one side there is BARC and at other side, there is Anushakti Kendra. There is threat to security of our country as foreigners will come several times due to shipping activities.

Since 2016, I am looking (involved in) Gram Panchayat. Government has declared Palghar District as "Green Zone District." When Palghar is Green Zone District, how can Government give permission to this Environment Destructing Project Vadhvan Port which will release the carbon. Why Government is asking us to implement Vasundhara Yojana. We do not want this project. When we violate the Law, we are punished, then what about you, are you not violating the Law, then why you should not be punished? We want answer from District Collector.

Chairman of the Committee answered that the objections are noted, and the proposed port will be developed as a Greenfield port.

78) Shri Santosh Lakhan, Vikramghad –

We have been sent notice of no.149. Why is it served to us? Because you have planned and conducting Environment Public Hearing, we never planned to bring Morcha here. When District Administration has called all the general public for this meeting, how you can issue notice of no.149. We request that this meeting should be stopped immediately, and Government should be informed not to consider this project.

Chairman of the Committee answered that it is issued as per the provisions in the Law, as many people from various villages and many talukas are going to come here. Here many thousand people are attending this meeting. Nobody is prohibited to attend this meeting. Moreover, since last 30 days, we are accepting the suggestions, objections regarding the proposed project.

79) Shri Manoj Keshav Sane, Chandigaon–

It is informed that not a single house will be affected due to Vadhvan port. As informed, the Vadhvan Port will be developed at the distance of 6.0 km from the seashore. But where the residential colonies for officers and staff with other essential facilities such as school, college, recreation clubs, garden will be developed. Inform the source where you will take the land. If there is no answer, this meeting should be stopped immediately and call another meeting.

Project Proponent informed that two questions have been raised here. One is residential colonies for Vadhvan Port. The residential colonies will be developed on the land of CIDCO near Palghar district headquarters at Palghar. The proposal is submitted to CIDCO for further action.

The births will be erected on the reclamation land which will be in the sea. No other additional land will be acquired.

80) Shri Jitendra Patil, Vadhvan-

He said to Chairman to Committee that people are not getting answers. Hence Chairman should declare that the meeting is concluded. Why you are giving unnecessary torture to the people. Information is incomplete, no answer is given, what the use of this meeting.

81) Mrs Gangotri Sudhir Aakare:

I belong to OBC community. I am student. Since independence, we have been deprived from scholarships. The survey of OBC community is not carried. When my father will go for fishing, then only will get money and we can eat. If fishing business is affected due to this project, how we can survive?

82) Shri Ankush Tandel -

We do not want Vadhvan Port. But how JNPA is fraudulent, this can be understood from this letter. 38 years back, JNPA has developed port at Nhava Sheva. Many people from Shevagaon still did not get residential facilities. They have not been given job opportunities in the project. Letter of victim which is sent to Central Government is read, he is suffering since 38 years. They are still staying at transit camp only since last 38 years.

Shri Tandel here blamed that as not a single answer is given, we should stop here and meeting should be curtailed immediately. Chairman of the Committee directed Project Proponent to answer the same.

Project Proponent answered that there is village named as Hanuman Koli Wada. Here it is read by you that this is second rehabilitation. 105 families were

rehabilitated during project stage. After the rehabilitation with provision other facilities, it is affected by termites. Hence, JNPA has sanctioned Rupees 46 crores to rehabilitate them and 12 hectors new plot area is also sanctioned. In this regard, the proposal is moved to MoPSW and now it is before the Cabinet of GoI. Please note that this is second rehabilitation of village Hanuman Koliwada for which JNPA has taken necessary steps.

83) Shri Rupesh Ramdas Sankhe, Chairman of Prayawaran Samiti -

It is informed that this environmental public hearing. In 1964 when Mrs. Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister visited Trombay area, the promise was given of rehabilitation and jobs. Nothing is given till today. While developing the projects anywhere and even in MIDC, many lakhs of trees have been cut down. If one tree is cut, Forest Department directs to cultivate ten number of trees or culpable homicide is registered against the concerned person. Then various government departments have cut down many trees, why they have not been punished?

Participants in the meeting feel that this meeting is a show and project will get NOC from the Government. Nothing is mentioned regarding the compensation of cutting trees for the project in the report. We do not want this project.

84) Shri Mohan Mhatre, Tarapur Kuran, Boisar Patrakar Sangh –

I have observed that the EIA report which made for this project is wrong, which is circulated by MPCB. MPCB is also misleading the common people regarding the project. Government should appoint whom have scientific degree in MPCB. EIA report is totally wrong, I am registering the objection.

85) Shri Nishant Naik, Khare Kuran, Active Fisherman

Meeting is started on 11.00. Many participants have taken part in the meeting. All the participants have opposed the Vadhvan Port. Hence, a resolution should be adopted and it should be submitted to Government. Not a single person supported the project, everybody opposed the project. Hence, meeting should be stopped. We do not want project.

86) Shri Vinod Patil, Former Chairman of Satpati Sanstha

The EIA report is incomplete. No answer is given in the meeting. Marathi transcription of EIA is also wrong. Due to this project, from Cuffe Parade to Zai, all fishing community will suffer. It is requested that project affected area should not be considered as 10 km radius.

The EIA report in Marathi should be made available to all i.e. from Cuffe Parade to Zai, to various fishing societies. We have agitated against NIO, and they accepted that their report has discrepancies.



87) Shri Kiran Koli, Mumbai Mahim, Secetary, Fisherman Society, Active Fisherman –

This is not public hearing, this meeting for noting the points. I am at present active fisherman. All the reports made to the people are wrong and bogus. It is made in air-conditioned rooms; no practical survey is carried. Here there is large Fishing Area. In the Fisheries Department of Govt. of Maharashtra, 9,349 boats are approved for diesel quota. Out of it, nearly 7,000 boats do carry fishing activities in Palghar Fishing area. In the report there are many discrepancies like no bio-diversity information, no information about reproduction places of fishes, He said that no answers are given here, hence Collector should be requested to give another date, or make voting and we will walk out from the meeting after registering our protest.

88) Shri Aniket Patil Varor Krushi Samittee

JNPA is developed at Nhava Sheva. When there is port at Nhava Sheva, why another port is required at Vadhvan. Secondly, though there is no demand, Satpati will be given Floating Jetty. Fishermen Jetty is declared as Commercial Jetty.

It is informed here that many people came early at 9.00 for the meeting. Persons should be known whether they were local people or brought from outside. We should know.

89) Dr. Girish Salgavkar local person

When all have opposed, why Chairman of the Committee is pressing hard to raise suggestions, objections here again and again. At last, we are again informing that we do not want the project, It is informed that the meeting should be declared as concluded.

90) Shri Mohite:

Since 11.00 am this meeting is started and many participants have raised many questions. But no answer is given by the Environment Public Hearing Committee. This public hearing is for the people and people have raised suggestions, objections regarding the project. Now this public hearing should be concluded here next date of public hearing should be informed here. This is request.

Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee here said that many people have raised the issues.

91) Shri Ankush Tandel -

It is requested to Chairman of the Committee how many people have supported the project and how many people have opposed the project and declare that the meeting is concluded.

Chairman of the Committee said that this cannot be declared as many people have sent suggestions, objections in writing before this meeting and at various gram panchayat offices and outside this pandal also. It will be noted in the minutes of meeting. Minutes along with final EIA, written objections will be submitted with the approval of Chairman of the Committee through MPCB to MoEF & CC, New Delhi. An Expert Committee there will take further decision.

92) Shri Brian Lobo, Chairman, Kashtakari Sanghatana

I have not registered any point on environment. I want clarification, you say that the questions will be noted and it will be sent to MoEF&CC, it is not acceptable to me.

Chairman of Committee said that Shri Lobo knows that Project Proponent has to clarify the points, suggestions, objections before the Committee. Chairman appealed to submit written suggestions, objections.

Shri Lobo objected that there is provision in the Law that clarification should be given regarding the questions raised during the meeting.

93) Dhwani Shah -

She complained that I am attending this meeting since last 2-3 hours, but I get water after two hours. There are many people who want to talk. Lady said that Committee has to attend every person's opinion.

Lady said that after obtaining ToR by the company, MPCB should verify all the points whether it is as per ToR and then further step of conducting public consultation as per EIA Notification. MPCB has not followed the directives. Public hearing is conducted though the EIA report is incomplete.

Shri Motghare informed that after issuance of ToR, within 45 days further proceedings have to be completed by the MPCB.

Shri Motghare further said that after submission of application by Project proponent for public hearing, MPCB has to complete the procedure within 45 days. Dhwani Shah objected and remarked that MPCB has not carried its duty as per the EIA Notification, 2006. Shri Motghare disagreed the remarks raised by the Dhwani Shah and clarified the points.

Shri. Lobo pointed out that email address published in newspaper Loksatta is wrong. It is informed by MPCB that typographical mistake might have happened. But in various other advertisements the correct email id has been printed.

Dhwani Shah said that Chairman of the Committee informed that the written suggestions/objections have been received today in various Gram Panchayats. She asked who has received the objections. She has objected that this meeting should have to be conducted at the project site. How it is conducted here? She demanded that this public hearing should be conducted again at the project location.

Shri Lobo read the information which is submitted by the Project Proponent and objected on certain points i.e. N.A. remarks for eco-sensitive zone.

Shri Motghare clarified that the public hearing has been taken up as per the directions of Verdict of Hon'ble Bombay High Court dated 18th Jan, 2024.

This question is raised again at DTEPA. When we took this issue to DTEPA, it means that the project falls under fragile zone.

Project Proponent said that the information is correct, and this has been taken note by NGT as well. The DTEPA is fragile area and in the same Form the NOC requirement was also mentioned as such we do not want to hide anything.

94) Shri Aniket Patil

He remarked that this Palghar District is declared as PESA Zilla, it means Adivasi Zilla.

95) Shri Lobo objected that in the report it is not mentioned that Palghar district has been declared Adivasi Zilla and PESA Act is applicable here.

Project proponent informed that all approval will be taken as per the Acts and notifications while acquisition of any area.

96) Dr. Girish Salgaonkar

He here informed that this is environmental public hearing, but plastic bottles are lying everywhere.

97) Shri Milind Raut

He wanted to know whether TAPS has given the NOC for the project as TAPS denied issue NOC under RTI.

 

Project Proponent informed that after having lot of discussion and carrying out various types of studies recommended by TAPS, DEA issued NOC and based on that GOI has given in principle approval for the said Vadhvan Port Project. Project Proponent further informed that BARC is very close to Mumbai Port and JN Port. Recently, MTHL inaugurated which is very close to both ports. Thus, Project Proponent has received NOC dated 31.7.2019 from DAE for the Vadhvan port project.

98) Shri Raghunath Sutar

He said that due to Vadhvan Port, the system of taking two crops season will be finished, Secondly, though Project is in Palghar, nothing will get to Palghar.

Shri Lobo remarked that there will be water scarcity as water from Surya dam will be diverted to Mira Bhayandar.

It is informed by Project Proponent that water will require for operations of the port as well as residential township. JNPA is in agreement with MJP, GoM for 15 MLD provision of water requirement. It is promised that underground water will not be used in the project.

99) Shri Sujay More, Vadrai

He asked about the depth mentioned in the bathymetry chart are different as actuals. Project Proponent stated that the bathymetry survey was done, and the Master Plan has been prepared based on the bathymetry charts as well as the rock contours. The earlier proposal was different than the present proposal. The present proposal is in the offshore taking into consideration rock levels etc. It was further mentioned that the mariners are using the admiralty chart issued by NHO (National Hydrographic Office) for their safe navigation and approaching to Ports.

100) Chairman of the Committee requested to check the depth of coastal area and it should be noted.

101) Shri Vinit Patil, Varor –

This Palghar District hilly district which have seashore, but due to project there is heavy cutting of trees, and loss of agriculture fields. Whether survey is carried, and it should carried.

102) Shri Milind Raut again objected regarding the location project considering BARC and Atomic Commission. He remarked that secrete reports also warned against the project considering the chances of sabotage.

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Project Proponent informed that BARC is close to Mumbai Port and JNP Port. Recently, MTHL inaugurated which is very close to both ports. Thus, Project Proponent has received NOC dated 31.7.2019 from DAE for the Vadhvan port project.

Project Proponent gave the answers to the following points raised by locals as under: -

1. Is there any study carried out by the project proponents on the noise as well as sound which will have impact on the fishes?
Ans:- The project proponent clarified that NIO in his study report studied the above aspect and the report was made available to the relevant Gram panchayats.
2. Whether JNPA has studied effects of light during the port construction activities?
Ans:- The project proponent has studied from CMFRI and high wattage lights will be used during construction of the port under supervision.
3. Whether JNPA has carried out impact of sound on fisheries due to movements of ships?
Ans:- The project proponent has carried out underwater sound study through NIO and said aspect is studied detailed in the report.
4. Whether aspect of solid waste management is detailed in the project?
Ans:- The project proponent will have solid waste management for processing and disposal of solid waste for the Vadhvan Port Project after getting consent from MPCB prior to commissioning port project.
5. Whether waste water of ships was studied?
Ans:- The project proponent will adhere to the guidelines of IMO as well as MARPOL applicable to Major Ports.
6. Whether JNPA will go for cutting of trees for bringing water from Surya River?
Ans:- The project proponent will comply that all rules and regulations of MOEF&CC if there is a need of tree cutting in this regard.
7. The area of reclamation mentioned is 1448 ha however, there is also mentioned about 16,967 ha of land for reclamation?
Ans:- The project proponent has clarified that the area of reclamation is 1448 ha and the port limit is 19697 ha in which the port has authority under Indian Port Act 1908 for navigational purpose.

Project Proponent informed that Disaster Management Plan is prepared for the Project to take mitigative measures in case of emergency.

Project Proponent clarified regarding the ballast water as the Port authority is strictly following IMO convention and MARPOL rules in addition to ISPS rules for Security concerned of the area.

The query regarding Marathi reports, the Hon Chairman explained that JNPA has kept the executive summaries in English and Marathi as per the MoEF&CC, public hearing procedure and also submitted the other reports in both languages as a gesture on insistence of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra meeting dated 5th Dec. 2023 towards obtaining better suggestions from the public. The Marathi version was got done from particular experts and there were Marathi words which were translated for the first time but they were not fully technical in nature. The Hon Chairman also explained that as per the norms there was copies in English which could be also referred to. Thus the issue of Marathi translation was resolved amicably.

6,087 Nos. of written objections/ suggestions received in MPCB till 18.01.2024. 44,658 Nos. of written objections/ suggestions received during public hearing on 19.01.2024. 104 Nos. of objections/ suggestions received in MPCB till 19.01.2024 through e-mail. 1142 Nos. of objections/ suggestions received in MPCB through concerned Gram panchayat offices on 19.01.2024. Copies of all (total 51,991 Nos.) objections/ suggestions received in MPCB are annexed with the minutes.

Clarifications of Project Proponent in respect of majority of objections/ suggestions including that of Conservation Action Trust are annexed with the minutes.

Conclusion:

On 19th Jan 2024 at around 4.45 pm, Collector, Palghar asked the attendees to raise issues/ objections/ suggestions requesting to stop the slogans. But certain groups keep on raising the same issues again and again and raising slogans. Also, they did not allow others to speak. The points on which the JNPA has given a comprehensive reply, they kept raising the issues again and again. Collector Palghar appealed that they could submit a written objections/ suggestions to the M.P.C. Board officials. Some group of attendees continued to make slogans and repeat the issues raised without responding to the appeal to raise issues/ objections/ suggestions. Hence, Collector, Palghar declared the end of the public hearing thanking JNPA, MPCB and the attendees.

Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee thanked all and on behalf of Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee declared that the meeting is concluded.

Meeting ended extending thanks to the Chair.



(Virendra R. Singh)

Convener,

Environment Public Hearing Committee
and Sub Regional Officer, Tarapur-2,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Boiser, District Palghar.



(Kiran Hasabnis)

Member,

Environment Public Hearing Committee
and Regional Officer- Thane,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,



(Shri Govind Bodke, IAS)

Chairman,

Environment Public Hearing Committee
and District Magistrate, Palghar,
District Palghar

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