

Odisha Seeks MoEF Approval for Nalco's Slurry Pipeline



The Odisha government has sought the nod of the Union ministry of environment & forests (MoEF) for diversion of 12.63 hectares (ha) of forest land to lay a slurry pipeline from its captive power plant (CPP) at Angul to Bharatpur South coal block of Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) as reported by Business standard.

“I am directed to send herewith a proposal for diversion of 12.63 ha of forest land for laying of slurry pipeline for disposal of ash from the CPP of Nalco to Bharatpur South coal block of MCL and to bring back decanted water from the mines after treatment to CPP for re-use in Angul district for consideration of MoEF and approval under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980,” Debabrata Swain, special secretary (forest & environment), Odisha wrote to additional principal chief conservator of forests (central), eastern regional office, MoEF.

Earlier, Nalco had approached MCL for providing abandoned or disused open cast mine for dumping of fly ash from their CPP. MCL had agreed to provide such part of the disused open cast mine of Bharatpur South in Talcher coalfields.

Later, Nalco's board approved the implementation of lean slurry

disposal system of ash for filling up the allotted mine void at Bharatpur at an estimated expenditure of Rs 167.5 crore. Nalco runs 1,200 Mw CPP at Angul, consisting of 10 units with capacity 120 Mw each. According to a report by the principal chief conservator of forests, Odisha, the company's slurry ash is being disposed of in two ways.

From sixth to ninth units, fly ash is being collected in dry form in silos and is being disposed of for filling quarry voids or for making fly ash bricks and the bottom ash is being carried in slurry form to designated ash ponds in slurry form.

For units one to six, both fly ash and bottom ash is being carried in slurry form to designated ash ponds.

As per Nalco's present proposal, the entire ash generated from the CPP will be carried to the mine void of the Bharatpur open cast coal mine of MCL from where coal has already been extracted.

Nalco has said the project is environment friendly. First, the space that would have been required for disposing the ash in the ash ponds would be saved and the permanent void created after coal mining will be filled up and a huge area of reclaimed land will be made available.