

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON THE 28TH APRIL 2010 OF THE PROPOSED FERRO SILICON PLANT (8940 MT PER ANNUM) ALONGWITH CAPTIVE POWER PLANT OF 10 MW AT RIWIANG VILLAGE, NONGSTOIN IN WEST KHASI HILLS DISTRICT, MEGHALAYA BY M/S SHREE SHAKAMBARI FERRO ALLOYS (P) LTD.

An Environmental Public Hearing in respect of the proposed **Ferro Silicon Plant (8940 MT per annum)** alongwith **Captive Power Plant of 10 MW** at **Riwiang Village, Nongstoin in West Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya** by **M/s Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys (P) Ltd.** was held on the 28th April 2010. The Hearing, which commenced from 11:00 A.M., was chaired by Shri D.M.Wahlang, MCS, Extra Assistant Commissioner, West Khasi Hills District.

At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the officers and public present at the Hearing and invited Shri D.Hooroo, Member Secretary, Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board (MSPCB), Shillong to give the welcome and introductory address.

Shri D.Hooroo welcomed the Chairman, the members of the Press, the project proponent and public who have turned up in large numbers to attend the Hearing. He explained that the Environmental Public Hearing has been conducted as per provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006 (14th September 2006) issued by the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Govt. of India. He explained that the objective of the Hearing is to solicit and record the opinions, views, comments or objections of the people residing at and in the adjoining areas of the Project site likely to be affected by the establishment of the proposed Ferro Silicon Plant (8940 MT per Annum) alongwith Captive Power Plant of (10 MW) at Riwiang Village, Nongstoin in West Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya by M/s Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys (P) Ltd.

Further, he explained that the Environmental Public Hearing is a part of the Environmental Clearance process and that no decision on the Project will be taken during the Hearing as its role is strictly confined to recording of opinions, discussions, suggestions submitted in writing or orally so that the same can be submitted to the MoEF, Govt. of India. The Ministry will examine and scrutinize such views, comments, suggestions, etc. regarding the project as recorded during the hearing while processing the application for Environmental Clearance. He also emphasized that the Hearing should not be taken as a platform for any public debate. The views of the public are recorded and filmed. The proceedings are then drawn and submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Delhi for the Environmental Clearance.

In the Opening Address Shri D.M.Wahlang, MCS, Extra Assistant Commissioner, West Khasi Hills District and Chairperson, EPH, welcomed the Public, the Local Headmen, NGOs, villagers, members of the press and representatives of M/S Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys Pvt Ltd present at the EPH. He invited those who wanted to speak to submit their names to the staff of the MSPCB and reiterated that speakers should not repeat the views, comments, etc. presented by those who spoke ahead of them.

On invitation from the Chair, a highlight of the proposed project was presented by Shri S.C.Mahanta, Vice President, M/S Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys Pvt Ltd, on behalf of the Company. He highlighted the Summary of the project which includes a Ferro Alloys, Ferro Silicon manufacturing unit of 8940 MT per annum capacity from 10 MVA Submersible Arc Furnace and a 10 MW Captive Power Plant. The Company has acquired 11.47 hectares of land and the project will be the first big scale Project in West Khasi Hills District in Meghalaya. He highlighted the details of the two plants, including the raw materials required and proposed pollution control measures to be adopted both during the construction and operation phases. The Company proposes to spend Rs.655.09 lakhs on air pollution control systems with a recurring cost of Rs.80 lakhs. The proposed pollution control systems include bag filters at Raw Material Storage, raw meal preparation and coal grinding; and electro-static precipitator for the power plant. The water requirement of 312 KLD will mostly be met from stored rain water. Domestic water requirement will be met from the Riwiang River and drinking water will be purchased from outside to minimize the impact on the surface water quality. He informed that an ash handling plant with a capacity of 2 tonne/hour will be commissioned for ash control and the dust, being non-hazardous, will be used for land filling, brick making and other purpose. Ferro-silicon slag and fly-ash will be sold. The Company proposes to undertake plantation over an area of 3.65 acres in phases. He informed that the project will generate employment for 250 persons in addition to indirect employment which will help in improving social status of people in the area. The Company also proposes to take up rural employment, road development, construction of bus shelters and community hall, promote educational activities, literacy campaign, rain water harvesting, provide medical assistance, eradicate child labour, provide library, sports and cultural facilities in consultation with local Dorbar. The Company proposes to contribute to improve and encourage education, health and hygiene, to promote cultural and social welfare activities, and provide training to villagers through self help groups in the nearby villages. He ended with a note that this is the first big scale industry in West Khasi Hills District which is still backward and with poor infrastructure.

The same was interpreted in the local language by Shri G.R.L.Marshillong, Promoter/ Director, M/S Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys Pvt Ltd.

The Chairman then invited Shri. J.H. Nengnong, Senior Environmental Engineer, MSPCB, to present the written presentations, comments, etc. received by the MSPCB, if any. The Sr. Env'n. Engineer informed that no written presentations were received in this regard.

The Chairman then invited the public to offer their comments, suggestions, objections etc. and requested the speakers to speak only on the relevant subject of the Environmental Public Hearing.

1. Shri C. Nongkseh, Member, Synjuk Sordar Shnong Area Riwiang (S.S.A.R.)

He says that from the presentation of the Company's officials, it is understood that the plant will be utilizing highly sophisticated pollution control systems and he hopes that with these, the plant will come up, not only for the benefit of the Company, but will also

safeguard the environment, water, forests, soil and flora and fauna. He hopes that the plant will bring about all round development like better road connectivity and better educational opportunities. He hopes that the plant will bring direct employment to the educated youth and indirect employment like supply of raw materials, etc. will bring about a renaissance to the area. He is of the opinion that the plant will bring about a change in the market scenario with the abundant natural resources, which the local people do not know how to tap and have simply sold off to other districts, being utilized within the district itself. He supports establishment of the plant because in his opinion, it will bring about development in the area.

2. Shri Aloysius Dewsaw, President, Area Riwiang People Organisation (A.R.P.O.), Riwiang Village

He says that his Organization fully supports the coming up of the plant as it will bring about development in the area as stated by the previous speaker.

3. Shri Holin Marwein, Ex Sordar, Seinduli-I Village

He is of the opinion that the presence of the local MLA and MDC is required in such a Public Hearing so that the public will be satisfied.

4. Shri H. Marbaniang, Kriangrin Village

He represents the residents of the Seinduli Area and as the Secretary of the Riwiang Wildlife and Environmental Protection Association he is deeply concerned that the plant may affect the wildlife, agriculture and aquatic flora and fauna. He also suggests for setting up an independent monitoring body/committee/group to monitor the plant and in case of any incident occurring in the future affecting the environment, the people will know who to report the incident to.

5. Shri Orlandus Uriah, Riwiang Village

He wonders why there has been no industrial development in the West Khasi Hills District while other districts have developed industrially. He is of the opinion that the plant will come up for the benefit of the area where the people are still economically and educationally backward and neglected till now. He hopes that the Company will provide employment, bring about development and also provide the much needed electricity.

6. Shri M.H. Thabah, Secretary, Hima Myriaw

He says that the area under the jurisdiction of the Hima Myriaw and Hima Rambrai has plenty of natural resources, but due to ignorance of their values and utilities, the area has remained undeveloped till today. He is of the opinion that the plant will bring about development in the whole district and to the area in particular. He says that the establishment of a factory does not bring about 100% blessings but drawbacks in terms of

pollution will be there. He appreciates that the Government of India and the State Government have policies to safeguard the environment and to monitor and control pollution of the environment. He appeals to the public to support the plant as it will bring about development to the area. However, constant monitoring has to be done by the people and also by the MSPCB to check that the plant does not pollute the environment. He also suggests that the Agreement signed between the Company and the different Authorities be registered with the District Administration.

7. Shri Wimly Thongni, Member, Riwiang Wildlife and Environmental Protection Association, Patharkhmang Village

On behalf of the Association, he objects to the establishment of the plant because it may pollute the Riwiang River and its aquatic life-forms and, as charcoal is required for the plant, forests will be destroyed in charcoal making. However, he says that after hearing what the others have said, he feels that it is too late to make any objections but feels that a proper agreement with strict terms and conditions has to be signed between the Company and the people. He says that can the Company's claim to bring drinking water purchased from outside be really possible? However, if volunteers are present, perhaps, this can be monitored. Finally, he requests that a copy of the Agreement signed between the Company and the different Authorities be given to all Organizations and NGOs.

8. Shri H.F. Marngar, Lyngdoh, Hima Myriaw

He says that the coming of the plant it is a good opportunity for the area and should be supported but under the terms and conditions agreed upon.

9. Shri Witting Mawsor, Longshongthiang Village

He says that West Khasi Hills District is the biggest district in the State and very rich in various natural resources. However, it has remained the poorest because of oppositions to all forms of developmental activities. He says almost all the 160 existing industrial units in the State rely on this District for their raw materials and if this opposition continues, all the raw materials will be exported to the other districts with no benefits at all to the West Khasi Hills. He opines that with the existence of factories, all the natural resources will be utilized within the District itself. He says that rich countries like the U.S. and Japan have developed so much because of the existence of factories. Therefore, he requests the public to support the plant.

10. Shri Boniface Nongrum, President, Western People Development Council (W.P.D.C.), Pyndengrei

On behalf of the Organization, he supports the project so that it can benefit the whole District. He says that if in the other districts of the state factories can exist, why not in

West Khasi Hills District. However, the Company should follow the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

11. Shri A. Diengnan, President, Federation of Khasi, Jaintia and Garo People (F.K.J.G.P.), Mawthengkut Circle, Ryngkew (B)

He represents the F.K.J.G.P. West Khasi Hills District and shows his support for the project provided the terms and conditions of the Agreement are strictly adhered to. He requests for 100% employment in the plant for eligible locals. He requests the village councils to check inter-racial marriages and not to enter the names of outside labourers in the Electoral Roll of the District.

The Chairman requested those who are yet to speak to stick only to the subject relevant to the Environment Public Hearing.

12. Shri S.K. Bani, West Khasi Hills Headmen for Peace and Development Council

He is of the opinion that if the Company strictly follows the proposals in the Executive Summary of the EIA/EMP Report, then there should not be any harmful effects to the environment. He also requests the Company not to use charcoal as a raw material as this will lead to deforestation. He also asks the Company to clarify on the following points from the Executive Summary which were not clear:

- (i) On page 7 it is given that coal to be used in the factory will only be supplied from Nirang Village. He wants the Company to clarify if coal will be supplied only from this village or will it be from all over the District as this may lead to misunderstanding.
- (ii) On page 13 it is given that the Rs.40.6 lakhs earmarked for developmental works in the District within a 5-year period will be spent in consultation with Village Dorbar, i.e. Riwiang Village. He wants the Company to clarify if the money will be for developmental works in Riwiang Village only or will it be for the entire District.
- (iii) On page 4 it is given that the Company's Consultant for the EIA/EMP Report "carried out necessary environmental studies & monitoring during October-December 2010". He points out that there has probably been a typing error for the year.

He, further, requested the Company to employ suppliers only from the West Khasi Hills District as far as possible. He also dwelt on checking of inter-racial marriages. He calls on the people of the District to support this first major factory so that it will pave the way for more Companies to come for the development of the West Khasi Hills District.

13. Shri M. Syiem, Member, Hynniewtrep People Social Organisation, West Khasi Hills District

He requests the Company to protect the environment as it has been observed that the setting up of big industries in the State has led to unhygienic and unhealthy conditions.

He observes that the unplanned mining of natural resources has led to widespread discontent and even court cases as seen in Jaintia Hills District. He requests the people to jointly work in monitoring any pollution that the plant may release.

14. Shri K.P.Dkhar, Jt. Secretary, Hima Myriaw and Sordar, Mawrohporsohsat, Myriaw Syiemship

In his observations, it is not factories but the people themselves who have destroyed all forests by producing charcoal to escape from poverty. Even though charcoal production is banned by the State Government, it is still carried out and the product clandestinely sold in the other districts. Streams have dried up in places where forests have been cleared. He supports the coming of the plant but with strict adherence to the terms and conditions laid down in the Agreement with the Hima, one of which is to provide 100% employment to qualified locals of the West Khasi Hills District. He also requests the Board to monitor and control any pollution emanating from the plant.

15. Shri Moslander Marngar, President West Khasi Hills Student Union.

In his opinion, the coming of factories brings about development but there are also some drawbacks. He rues the loss of natural resources with no benefits at all to the West Khasi Hills District. He presents a few points of apprehension that the Organization feels towards the project and its impact to the environment:

- (i) The coming of the plant may lead to discontent and court cases and also to the destruction of rivers and aquatic life, like it happened with the Lukha River in Jaintia Hills District. He requests the Company to ensure complete protection to the environment, aquatic life, wildlife, etc. and also to set up an independent body to monitor this.
- (ii) He also points out that the plant is being set up too close to the Riwiang River and opines that in case of negligence from the Company's side, problems may arise later for the people of the area and the District as a whole.
- (iii) He requests the MSPCB and the Company's representatives to increase the distance between the boundary wall of the plant and the river bank from the prescribed 50 meters to at least 100 meters.
- (iv) He also requests for plantation of indigenous species in the buffer zone between the plant and river.

He also requests the MSPCB and the Company to ensure that no harm comes to the river and that there should not be any sacrifice and loss of any life-form due to the setting up of the plant. He also stressed on the Authorities of the Hima to see that the terms and conditions of their Agreement with the Company, especially those relating to employment and inter-racial marriages, are strictly adhered to.

16. Shri T. Lyngdoh, Member, Farmer and Cattle Farming Welfare Organisation, Mawthadraishan, West Khasi Hills District

He expressed his happiness for Riwiang residents for their opportunity in having the plant in their village. He supports the project and requests the Company to adhere to all its proposals given in the Executive Summary.

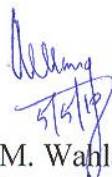
Replies to the queries of Shri S.K.Bani by Shri S.C.Mahanta, Vice President, M/S Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys Pvt Ltd and translated by Shri G.R.L.Marshillong, Promoter/Director, M/S Shree Shakambari Ferro Alloys Pvt Ltd.

To the first query, Shri Mahanta replied that coal will be taken from all over the District and not from Nirang Village only.

To the second query, he replied that developmental activities will be taken up after discussions with local dorbar and elaka on the requirement of each village and budget will be fixed accordingly. The Company has already taken up with concerned Departments regarding setting up of various developmental works like Health Centre, electrification of the village, etc.

Further, he informed that the main ferro-silicon plant shall be located more than 500 meters away from the river. The Company has kept almost 4 acres of free land for plantation and has approached Horticulture and Forest Departments for setting up the plantation. River side plantations are also planned.

As there were no more comments, suggestions and objections being offered by the public, the Chairman ended the Public Hearing with a vote of thanks to the public present at the Hearing for their co-operation and interest, members of the press, officials of the MSPCB, representatives of the project proponent, Police Department and all participants of the Hearing.



Shri D.M. Wahlang, MCS
Extra Assistant Commissioner,
West Khasi Hills District and Chairman