

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

THIRTY-FIFTH REPORT



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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

November, 2003/Agrahayana, 1925 (Saka)

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(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

(Presented to Lok Sabha on 4 December, 2003)



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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Shri Basudeb Acharia — *Chairman*

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**THIRTY-FIFTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS
(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Petitions, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Thirty-fifth Report of the Committee to the House on the following matters:—

- (i) Petition regarding environmental pollution caused by Nagaon Paper Mill, Kagajgaon, Assam.
 - (ii) Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations made by the Committee on Petitions (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) in their Thirteenth Report on the representation regarding construction of a level crossing between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19 along Bongabari Birgiri, Purlia on Adra-Tata Section, Adra Division, South Eastern Railway.
 - (iii) Action taken by the Government on the recommendations of the Committee on Petitions (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) in their Twenty-fifth Report on the representation regarding provision of passenger amenities at Anchuri Halt Station under Adra division, South-Eastern Railway.
2. The Committee considered and adopted the draft Thirty-fifth Report at their sitting held on 24th November, 2003.
 3. The observations/recommendations of the Committee on the above matters have been included in the Report.

NEW DELHI;
24 November, 2003
3 Agrahayana, 1925 (Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARIA,
Chairman,
Committee on Petitions.

CHAPTER I

PETITION REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CAUSED BY NAGAON PAPER MILL, KAGAJGAON, ASSAM

On 18th December, 2002, Shri P.A. Sangma, M.P. presented a petition to Lok Sabha signed by Shri Jitendra Kumar Deka, President, Brihattar Jagiroad Bachao Sangrami Mancha, Jagiroad, Morigaon, Assam and others regarding environmental pollution caused by the Nagaon Paper Mill, Kagajgaon, Assam (See Appendix-1)

1.2 In the petition, the petitioners stated that the pollution caused by the Nagaon Paper Mill (NPM) of Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. (HPC) in and around Jagiroad at Kagajgaon in the Morigaon district of Assam has threatened all forms of biological life in the area. Scores of reports of the Assam Pollution Control Board, newspaper reports and study reports by scientists highlight the pollution problem in the area. However, the casual attitude of the HPC management towards preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment dossier in liaison with various public forums for environmental management was alarming. In the year 1999, the Deputy Commissioner of the Morigaon area had made an on-the-spot verification of the effects of pollution caused by this Paper Mill and given a report wherein he had recommended certain measures, to be taken to combat the pollution at Kagajgaon, Jagiroad. The Assam Pollution Control Board had also issued show-cause notices on several occasions to the HPC Management on the pollution in Morigaon District. A study by the Assam Pollution Control Board conducted in 2000 had revealed that a high amount of non-permissible and harmful chemical effluents was being emitted from the Nagaon Paper Mill. For quite some time, the people living in the villages adjacent to the Paper Mill have been complaining about the ill-effects of untreated effluents on their agricultural lands and health of the villagers. The rich flora and fauna of the entire region has been destroyed. The verdant Sonaikuchai Hills and the wetlands have all lost their real natural glory due to pollution.

1.3 The petitioners, therefore, requested that suitable pollution control measures to combat air, water and soil pollution caused by the Nagaon Paper Mill should be undertaken.

1.4 The petition was referred to the Ministry of Environment and Forests on 19th December, 2002 for furnishing their comments on the points raised therein. In response, the Ministry of Environment and Forests *vide* their communication dated 8th January, 2003 informed that the Nagaon Paper Mill, Kagajgaon, Assam of M/s. Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. is located at Jagiroad in district Morigaon, Assam, and has a production capacity of 300 Tonnes Per Day (TPD). With a view to estimating environmental implications of the paper mill, Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment

(REIA) was carried out for the project by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur. After appraisal of the project, the Ministry of Environment and Forests had accorded environmental clearance to the NPM in January, 1992.

1.5 The Ministry further stated that the Assam Pollution Control Board has been regularly monitoring compliance to stipulated standards and pollution level by the NPM. As per the monitoring report, the industry had installed Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) for treatment of waste water. Similarly, the industry had also put up Chemical Recovery Unit (CRU) for recovery of chemicals from the black liquor. A recent analysis of samples of effluents from the industry had revealed that the industry met the discharge standards except for Bio-Chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) which was 2 mg higher than the specified standard of 30 mg/l. The analysis of sludge from mercury disposal pit was also done and mercury content was found to be at 0.01 mg/l. The analysis of mercury as Hg was measured in effluent and was found to be beyond detectable limits. For ascertaining the impact of discharge of treated effluents on flora and fauna of Elogna Bool water course, a study was carried out by Guwahati University during January-May, 1998. The physico-chemical analysis of soil on both sides of the Elogna Bool and confirmed that no damage had been caused to agricultural land due to discharge of treated effluent from the NPM.

1.6. The Ministry also stated that the Nagaon Paper Mill of M/s. Hindustan Paper Corporation had undertaken implementation of the Environmental Management Plan which had been drawn after discussions with the Assam Pollution Control Board. The Industry had identified an area of 53 acres for environmental improvement programme. In pursuance of the directions issued by the Assam Pollution Control Board, the project authorities had furnished a legal affidavit with an amount of Rs. 5 lakh as security deposit for implementation of pollution control schemes. In addition, as per the judgment dated 17th October, 2002 of the Hon'ble National Human Rights Commission, State Government and the Pollution Control Board, Assam have to take effective steps from time to time to ensure that pollution around the mill area is under control and the health of the people around is not affected by the pollution.

1.7 After considering the comments furnished by the Ministry of Environment and Forests on the matter; the Committee took oral evidence of the representative of the Ministry of Environment and Forests on 24th April, 2003.

1.8 The Committee pointed out to the representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Forests during evidence that the petitioners have brought to the notice of the Committee that Sonaikuchai Hills and wetlands around the NPM at Kagajgaon in Assam had lost their rich and diverse habitat due to the pollution caused by the Mill. At this, the Special Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forests explained as follows:—

"Generally in pulp and paper industry, the pollution is caused by black liquor generated through pulping process, emissions from chemical recovery boilers and solid wastes from effluent treatment plants etc. State of the art technologies and pollution control techniques in this sector include Chemical Recovery Units, improved bleaching processes

and Effluent Treatments including Tertiary Treatment for removal of odour etc. Large paper mills have by and large installed majority of these facilities. However, the small scale sector has yet to adopt many of these technologies."

1.9 In a subsequent written note, the Ministry of Environment and Forests informed that the NPM uses bamboo as basic raw material. The Ministry also informed that the Unit had undertaken pollution mitigation measures and had installed the following equipment in this regard:

- (a) Chemical Recovery Plant for recovery of Chemicals from the most polluting stream of black liquor;
- (b) Effluent treatment plant for treatment of waste water;
- (c) Multicyclones for coal fired boilers for control of particulate emissions;
- (d) Electro Static Precipitor (ESP) with the chemical recovery boiler;

The unit had also provided lined pits for disposal of mercury bearing sludge emanating from caustic soda plant.

1.10 The Ministry of Environment and Forests in their written note also stated that the NPM had been facing the problem of colour in the effluents due to bgnin and disposal of lime sludge. Colour in the effluents persists even after treatment and causes aesthetic problems. However, this is not hazardous and is not likely to cause impact on aquatic flora and fauna. As regards the disposal of lime sludge which was generated to the tune of 180 tonnes per day, the Assam Pollution Control Board and the NPM were proposing to install a lime kiln for recalcination and re-use of that sludge.

The details of the main ingredients of water and air pollution caused by the NPM *vis-a-vis* the permissible limits of pollutants according to the standards for Pulp and Paper Industry notified under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, were also submitted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. (See Appendix-II).

1.11 On the question of reducing the level of Bio-Chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) in Kagajgaon area, the Ministry in their written note dated 28th July, 2003 informed that NPM had installed Effluent Treatment plant consisting of primary and secondary treatment. Further to reduce BOD and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), the NPM have placed an order for procurement of four Oxy-aerators costing Rs. 24 lakh. These are expected to be commissioned within six months. With these installations, the BOD and COD levels would be brought under control. However, the Assam Pollution Control Board had been directed to continue its monitoring.

1.12 On a query regarding obtaining of an expert opinion about the damage caused by the effluents to the flora and fauna, the Ministry in their written note informed that the Government of Assam had constituted an Expert Committee to carry out a study on "Utilisation and disposal of treated effluents from Nagaon Paper Mill", with members from Indian Council of Agricultural Research,

National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur, Central Pulp and Paper Research Institute, Assam Pollution Control Board, etc. The Expert Committee had opined that:

- The quality of treated effluent is suitable for irrigation purpose, which gets further improved while travelling through the Bheel of about 25km. due to natural oxidation;
- The effluent is not toxic to locally available fish population; and
- The effluents can be used by farmers of the area for growing paddy and other crops without any adverse effect.

The Expert Committee suggested the following precautionary measures:—

- NPM should monitor effluent quality regularly;
- The effluent should not have mercury beyond permissible limits and survey should be done for the Bheel stretch at least once in three years.

1.13 As regards, the security deposit by the HPC for pollution control schemes to keep the ecological standards in Kagajgaon and Jagiroad areas of Assam, the Ministry informed that the Assam Pollution Control Board had taken Rs. 5 lakh along with a legal affidavit from HPC, NPM to keep the Paper Mill Authority under legal binding for implementation of the schemes under Environmental Management Plan within time. The Environmental Management Plan for the NPM has the following components:

S.No.	Activity proposed	Estimated cost (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Installation of Disc save-all in paper machines for recovery of fibre from machine backwater.	450
2.	Installation of Flow Meters.	50
3.	Installation of Free Flow Falling Film Evaporator & Economiser to improve Electro Static Precipitator (ESP) efficiency.	1107
4.	De-sludging of Aerated lagoons	2000
5.	Installation of Secondary Clarifier	70
6.	Cooling Towers for reusing water.	175

1.14 The Ministry also informed that since the study conducted by the 'Expert Committee' to combat pollution was five years old, it was proposed to constitute an "Expert Group" including representative from Guwahati University, IIT Guwahati, NEERI, Nagpur, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Delhi, etc. to study the current status of soil in the area and suggest remedial measures. This study would be completed within six months and it would be made mandatory on NPM to implement the findings of this study in a time-bound manner.

1.15 On a query about the involvement of local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local people for maintaining the environmental balance in the area, the Ministry informed that:

“As per the provisions of Impact Assessment Notification of January, 1994 and its subsequent amendment, public hearing has been made mandatory for 30 categories of industries including Pulp and Paper industry since April, 1997. The public hearing undertaken involves NGOs and local people. The NPM is under operation much prior to issuance of this notification and, therefore, no formal public hearing was held for this project. However, as and when complaints were received by the Pollution Control Board from the local people, the same were attended to.”

1.16 On being pointed out that the National Human Rights Commission had given its judgment on the pollution caused by the NPM, Kagajgaon, on 17th October, 2002 in Ministry stated that:—

“The Commission directed the State Government and the Pollution Control Board, Assam, to take effective steps from time to time to ensure that the pollution around the mill area is under control and the health of the local residents is not affected by the pollution. As per the directions of the Human Rights Commission, Assam Pollution Control Board is continuously monitoring the effluents standards at various locations near the industry.”

1.17 Subsequently the Ministry of Environment and Forest *vide* their communication dated 20th November, 2003 informed the Committee that in pursuance of the Committee's recommendations the Ministry constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Chairman CPCB. The Expert Group has submitted their interim report. The Expert Group has entrusted detailed studies to IIT, Guwahati. The main recommendation contained in interim report of Expert Group are as under:—

- (i) The industry should ensure that the entire effluent from the mill water is passed through the effluent treatment plant except the mercury-bearing stream, which is being treated separately.
- (ii) The sealing water of vacuum pump should be recycled & reused in the process.
- (iii) House keeping at the sludge-dewatering vacuum pump should be improved so that sludge spreading is avoided.
- (iv) Piezometers may be placed around the ETP so as to detect seepage of effluent from the ETP into ground water, if any.
- (v) The industry should take steps to ensure proper chemical recovery and stop leakages and other measures so as to bring down the SAR to 26.
- (vi) Though, no significant impact on soil characteristics has been noticed, due to heavy rains. However, crop yield may be affected due to high SAR. It is

therefore, desirable that study on the impact of industrial effluent on the crop cultivation along the Elenga Beel may be entrusted to Assam Agricultural University, Assam.

- (vii) It is recommended that IIT, Guwahati should carry out comprehensive study of pollution control measures, its adequacy and effect on surrounding areas.
- (viii) ETP of the industry is required to be upgraded so as to achieve the prescribed standards. The recommendations of IIT, which is likely to be available by January, 2004, should be implemented. The industry should submit time bound action plan within a further period of three months. The industry shall provide a flow-measuring device at outlet of ETP.
- (ix) The industry has submitted action plan for implementation of recommendation of CREP to State Board. This needs to be implemented.

The Expert Group would submit its final report based on above.

Observations/Recommendations

1.18 The Committee note that the Nagaon Paper Mill (NPM) of the Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. (HPC), which is situated at Jagiroad, Kagajgaon, in Assam, is an integrated Pulp and Paper Unit which uses bamboo as basic raw material for its paper production. It has a production capacity of 300 tonnes per day. The NPM is liable to maintain the standards for the Pulp and Paper Industry as stipulated in the Environment Protection Act, 1986 in regard to emissions into the environment, from the industrial unit, of suspended solid wastes, water discharge, mercury discharge and other harmful effluents/emissions. As per the governing provisions, the NPM is required to maintain the standards of the Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) in its adjacent environment, thereby, synchronizing the natural ecological balance.

1.19 The Committee note that the Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment (REIA) was carried out by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur, in order to estimate the environmental implications of the Nagaon Paper Mill, Kagajgaon, Assam. Based on the REIA report, the Central Government had accorded environmental clearance to this Paper Mill in January, 1992.

1.20 The Committee also note that based on the representations by the local people about the ill-effects of the pollution caused by the Nagaon Paper Mill in Assam, the National Human Rights Commission intervened in the matter and directed the State Government of Assam and the Assam Pollution Control Board on 17th October, 2002 to take effective steps from time to time to ensure that pollution around the NPM is under control and the health of the people around is not affected by the pollution.

1.21 The petitioners have submitted to the Committee on Petitions that for quite some time, the people living in the villages adjacent to the NPM have been complaining about the ill-effects of untreated effluents on their agricultural lands and health of the poor villagers. Even the rich and diverse *flora and fauna*, verdant Sonaikuchai Hills and wetlands in the region have lost their original natural glory due to the pollution. The petitioners have also stated that the HPC, the parent company of the NPM has not taken the requisite corrective measures to combat the pollution created by this Paper Mill and has kept a casual attitude towards the issue. The petitioners have, therefore, requested that suitable pollution control measures to combat air, water and soil pollution caused by the NPM be implemented.

1.22 The Committee note that certain pollution mitigating measures have been taken by the NPM which *inter-alia* include installation of:—

- (a) Chemical Recovery Plant for recovery of Chemicals from the most polluting stream of black liquor;
- (b) Effluent treatment plant for treatment of waste water;
- (c) Multicyclones for coal fired boilers for control of particulate emissions;
- (d) Electro Static Preceptor (ESP) with the chemical recovery boiler.

The Committee are, however, concerned to note that despite these measures, BOD levels and other hazardous chemical wastes like mercury are beyond the approved limits in environment. The Committee have been informed that the NPM has identified an area of 53 acres for the Environmental Management Plan. The Project Authorities have also furnished a legal Affidavit with an amount of Rs. 5 Lakh as guarantee for compliance with this plan to the Assam Pollution control Board. The Environment Management Plan envisages the following components:—

- Installation of Disc save—all in paper machines for recovery of fibre from machine backwater with an estimated cost of Rs. 450 lakh.
- Installation of Flow Meters with an estimated cost of Rs. 50 lakh.
- Installation of Free Flow Falling Film Evaporator & Economiser to improve ESP efficiency with an estimated cost of Rs. 1107 lakh.
- De-sludging of Aerated lagoons with an estimated cost of Rs. 2000 lakh.

- Installation of secondary Clarifier with an estimated cost of Rs. 70 lakh.
- Cooling Towers for reusing water with an estimated cost of Rs. 175 lakh.

The Committee have also been informed that for disposal of lime sludge of 180 tonnes which is being generated by the Paper plant per day, the NPM has proposed to instal a lime kiln. In order to reduce, BOD, it has been proposed to commission four Oxy-aerators. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the proposed Environmental Management Plan and other projects to keep the effluents/emissions from the NPM within permissible limits should be completed in a time-bound manner. Needless to say these vital measures/projects should not be hampered on account of shortage of finance. The Committee also desire that eco-friendly measures be taken by the NPM in cordination with the Assam Pollution Control Board, NGOs and local people for improvement of the environmental conditions in Kagajgaon and Jagiroad areas of Assam to make it a model project with the objective that the plant does not discharge any kind of hazardous effluents/emissions.

1.23 In line with the recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission, the Committee would also like to emphasise that periodic and proper assessments must be carried out by the Assam Pollution Control Board to ensure that the proposed measures are used to the maximum to make the area pollution free and timely remedial measures are taken, whenever necessary.

1.24 The Committee are glad to note that in pursuance of commitments made by the Ministry before them during the examination of the subject, an 'Expert Group' comprising experts from Guwahati University, IIT-Guwahati, NEERI-Nagpur, IARI-Delhi with Chairman, CPCB as Chairman of the Group was formed by the Government to study and report on the subject. The Expert Group has since submitted their interim report containing several recommendations. The group will be submitting their final report later. The Committee trust that the administrative Ministry will continue to pursue the matter with concerned departments with a view to implement the recommendations of the Expert Group so as to make Kagajgaon a pollution free area.

CHAPTER II

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA) IN THEIR THIRTEENTH REPORT ON THE REPRESENTATION REGARDING CONSTRUCTION OF A LEVEL CROSSING BETWEEN POLE NOS. 319/18 AND 319/19 ALONG BONGABARI BIRGIRI, PURULIA ON ADRA-TATA SECTION, ADRA DIVISION, SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY

The Committee on Petitions in their Thirteenth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) presented to Lok Sabha on 14th March, 2002 had dealt with a representation regarding construction of a level crossing between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19 along Bongabari Birgiri, Purulia on Adra-Tata Section, Adra Division, South Eastern Railway.

2.2 The Committee had made certain observations/recommendations in the matter and the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) were requested to implement those recommendations and furnish their action taken notes for the consideration of the Committee.

2.3 Action taken notes have been received from the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in respect of all the recommendations contained in the report.

2.4 The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of their recommendations.

2.5 In paras 5.17 to 5.19 of their Thirteenth Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows:—

“The Committee are also informed that now, both side roads between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19 have been constructed and the road has been upgraded to a metro road which connects the Barakar Road and Hura Road, both State Highways. They are further informed that the Local Panchayat is ready to bear the initial expenses for construction of the connecting road to the level crossing between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19.

[Para 5.17]

The Committee note with satisfaction from the written reply of the Ministry that if a provision of a level crossing at the proposed location is considered essential, provision of a manned level crossing can be considered on 'deposit' terms, if a proposal is sponsored by the State Government/Local Body concerned duly agreeing to bear the initial

capital cost as well as capitalized value of the annual recurring maintenance and operational cost.

[Para 5.18]

While the Committee agree that existence of level crossing in close proximity to each other is a safety hazard for both rail and road traffic, the Committee would urge the Government to construct level crossing between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19 along Bongabari Birgiri, Purulia on Adra-Tata Section, Adra Division and close the level crossing at Pole 320/6 later on enabling the people to save time in reaching their destinations. The Committee, therefore, desire that the work of constructing the proposed level crossing between Pole Nos. 319/18 and 319/19, should now be taken up on priority alongwith the State Government/Local Body without any further delay under intimation to the Committee and it should be completed in a time bound manner."

[Para 5.19]

2.6 In their action taken replies, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated that Railway has requested the District Magistrate to communicate the willingness of the State Government to bear the capital cost as well as capitalized value of annual recurring maintenance and operational cost for provision of level crossing at the proposed location. However, the State Government's willingness to bear the cost has not been received. As soon as the State Government's willingness to bear the cost is received, the work of construction of the level crossing would be taken up.

Observations/Recommendations

2.7 The Committee regret to note that from the reply of the Ministry of Railways it is not clear as to when the matter was taken up by the Railways with the State Government for seeking their concurrence to bear the cost of level crossing at Adra-Tata Section.

2.8 The Committee would, therefore, like the Railways to pursue the matter with the State Government vigorously for agreeing to bear the cost of construction of the level crossing between Pole No. 319/18 and 319/19 along Bongabari Birgiri, Purulia on Adra-Tata Section, Adra Division of South Eastern Railway. Needless to say, after concurrence of the State Government the required construction works should be completed expeditiously with a view to facilitate easier movement of the people in the area.

CHAPTER III

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA) MADE IN THEIR TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT ON THE REPRESENTATION REGARDING PROVISION OF PASSENGER AMENITIES AT ANCHURI HALT STATION UNDER ADRA DIVISION, SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

3.1 The Committee on Petitions (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) in their Twenty-fifth Report presented to Lok Sabha on 25 February, 2003 had dealt with a representation regarding provision of passenger amenities at Anchuri Halt Station under Adra Division, South-Eastern Railways.

3.2 The Committee had made certain observations/recommendations in the Report and the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) were requested to implement those recommendations and furnish their action taken notes for the consideration of the Committee.

3.3 Action taken notes have been received from the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in respect of all the recommendations contained in the Report.

3.4 The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on their recommendations.

3.5 In paragraphs 3.10 and 3.11 of the Report, the Committee had recommended as follows:—

“The main contentions of the petitioners are that the stoppage of 469Up KGP-Adra and 464 Adra-Howrah Shiromani trains at Anchuri Halt Station, Adra Division of South-Eastern Railways should be provided. Also, all the basic passenger amenities should be provided at this Halt Station for the facility of the daily commuters including the ailing patients of the nearby Gouripur Leprosy Hospital.”

[Para 3.10]

“The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have informed the Committee that at present 7 Up and 7 Dn trains have stoppage at Anchuri Halt and these are considered adequate to existing level of traffic at Anchuri Halt. Stoppage of additional trains at Anchuri halt have not been found commercially justified. In the context of demand from passengers as also considering the requirement of leprosy patients from the nearby hospital, the officials of Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) assured the Committee to review the matter relating to stoppage of additional passenger trains at Anchuri station. The Committee, therefore, recommend that such review

should be completed within a specific time schedule and Committee be informed of the outcome in the matter at the earliest.”

[para 3.11]

3.6 The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their action taken note have stated that stoppage of 469/464 Adra-Kharagpur Passenger has been provided at Anchuri Halt from 1.4.2003. As already advised to the Committee during the Oral Evidence, Anchuri Station is a Halt Station (F category) dealing with 38 passengers per day with a maximum of 15 at any time. Minimum Essential Amenities required as per the laid down norms have already been provided at this station. However, the review of availability of passenger amenities is a continuous process and the same would be considered for augmentation in future with increase in passenger traffic.

3.7 In paragraph 3.12 of the Report, the Committee had recommended as follows:—

"With regard to passenger amenities, the Ministry of Railways have apprised the Committee that as per norms the Anchuri Station is a halt station of 'F' category and it does not qualify for passenger amenities like lighting etc. The Committee, are, happy to note that after taking up of the matter by them, the Railways have electrified the Anchuri Railway Station. Similarly for drinking water, facilities have been provided by providing one hand pump and one Tubewell. Toilet facilities are, however, yet to be provided, as under the existing guidelines on the subject, the station does not qualify for toilet facilities. The Committee strongly feel that considering the use of the Anchuri Station by leprosy patients from the nearby leprosy hospital, there is a strong case for upgradation of this station. As assured by the Railways to review the matter, the Committee would await the concrete results of the review by the Ministry of Railways in the matter.

3.8 The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their action taken note have stated that the matter regarding provision of toilet facilities was reviewed. It is felt that as the provision of toilets is not a minimum essential amenity at halt (F category) stations, the request for toilet facilities could not be considered. However, the suggestion has been noted.

Presently, 7 pairs of passenger carrying trains stop at Anchuri per day. The average daily number of passenger is 33 with an earnings of Rs. 430/- per day. The existing capacity of MDN-ADA section is 34 trains each way per day and utilization of the section is 53% during 2001-02. Upgradation of Anchuri Halt Station into full-fledged crossing station will not generate any additional capacity. The existing passenger amenities at this station are adequate for the present level of passenger traffic.

Observations/Recommendations

3.9 The Committee are happy to note that in pursuance of their recommendation the Railways have provided stoppage of 469/464 Adra-Kharagpur Passenger at Anchuri Halt from 1.4.2003.

3.10 The Committee, however, regret to note that even after assuring the Committee about a detailed review of the existing passenger amenities at Anchuri Halt, the Railways have reiterated their earlier contention that the amenities there are as per the existing status of Anchuri Halt Station. The Railways have ignored the Committee's recommendation to upgrade the passenger facilities particularly when the Station is also used by leprosy patients. The Committee strongly deprecate the contention of the Railways that this Railway Station is not qualified for toilet facilities. The Committee strongly reiterate that taking into consideration the specific needs of passengers, mainly leprosy patients, the Station should be provided with minimum basic passenger amenities including toilet facilities.

NEW DELHI;
24 November, 2003
3 Agrahayana, 1925 (Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARIA,
Chairman,
Committee on Petitions,
Lok Sabha.

APPENDIX-I

(See Para 1.1 of the Report)

LOK SABHA

PETITION No. 25

(Presented to Lok Sabha on 18-12-2002)

To

The Lok Sabha,
New Delhi.

The humble petition of Shri Jitendra Kumar Deka, President and Shri Atul Chandra Das, General Secretary Brihattar Jagiroad Bachao Sangrami Mancha, Jagiroad, Morigaon, Assam.

SHEWETH

We the petitioners, want to draw your attention to the pollution caused by the Nagaon Paper Mill which has threatened all forms of biological lives in and around Jagiroad needs no reiteration. Scores of reports of the Assam Pollution Control Board, Newspaper reports, study reports by scientists-all speak volumes. What is more alarming is the casual attitude of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation management towards preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment dossier in liaison with various public forums, environmental management of the area. Instead it has been observed that the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation authorities believe in going alone in their public relations exercises. During all the past phases of movements the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation authorities have dealt with this issue on a tentative basis, forgetting it soon after reaching a so-called agreement-clauses of which remain still unfulfilled.

The report which came out in 1999, is a severe indictment of the Hindustan's Petroleum Corporation attitude towards minimising pollution. In its very foreword the then Deputy Commissioner, the district administration of Morigaon a witness to all the demonstrations and movements in the past took the job of compiling a comprehensive report on the ground reality. He remarked candidly about a status report submitted by the NPM authorities in the strongest terms possible. The Deputy Commissioner says "Though the report declares that a number of suggested measures have either been taken or are in progress but even a perfunctory observation of the surrounding villages is sufficient enough to disprove the same as results are neither quite convincingly visible nor palpable". The said report consisted of studies and observations of eight various government departments. The very necessity of this report is a pointer of the gravity of the situation.

The communications with the Assam Pollution Control Board needs special mention as the board on several occasions sent letters and show-cause notices to the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation management. A study conducted by the Assam Pollution Control Board in 2000 reveals high amount of non-permissible and harmful chemical effluents being emitted. The report of the Department of Chemistry of the Gauwahati University has also nullified the claim of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation that many of the effluents have increased the fertility of the soil. The production in pollute also runs contrary to the claims of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation. Several other studies are on the way and they would re-establish the truths.

A very important but often neglected matter in the gamut of pollution of the NPH is the total disturbance of the biodiversity of Jagiroad and surrounding areas. The rich flora and fauna habitat of the entire region has been destroyed. The verdant Sonaikuchai Hills and the wetlands have all lost their real glory—there rich and diverse habitat the condition of the adjoining beels (wetland, marshy lakes) like Alenga has been a much discussed matter. That the fishes and other biological lives of these beels are avoided by the buyers is of common knowledge to everyone.

In fact, the whole area has become a graveyard of environmental protection of various species of flora and fauna.

We, therefore, submit this petition before you and request your goodself to adopt a comprehensive Environmental Impact Association dossier with public forums like ours, reputed Non-Governmental Organisation, Environmental scientists and also to adopt all pollution control measures to stop air, water and soil pollution in the area.

And your petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Name	Address	Signature
Shri Jitendra Kr. Deka	Brihattar Jagiroad Bachao Sangrami Mancha, Jagiroad, Morigaon, Assam	Sd/-
Shri Atul Ch. Das	-do-	Sd/-

Countersigned by Shri P.A. Sangma, M.P.

Appendix-II*(vide para 10 of the Report)*

Standards for Pulp and Paper Industry notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 *vis-a-vis* actual position in NPM.

Sl. No.	Parameters	EPA Standards	Actual position
Effluent Discharge Standards:			
1.	PH	7.0.8.5	7.4
2.	Total Suspended Solids in mg/l	50	15
3.	BOD, mg/l	30	32
4.	COD mg/l	350	211
5.	TOCI, Kg/tonne of product	2.0	Below detectable limit
6.	Total wastewater discharge m ³ /tonne of paper	200	135
Emission Standards:			
1.	Particulate emissions mg/Nm ³	250	270
2.	H ₂ S, mg/Nm ³	10	Not monitored

MINUTES OF SEVENTY-SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
PETITIONS HELD ON 24TH APRIL, 2003 IN COMMITTEE ROOM 'C'
PARLIAMENT HOUSE ANNEXE, NEW DELHI.

The Committee sat from 15.00 to 17.15 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri Ram Rati Bind
3. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo
4. Shri Anant Gudhe
5. Shri Babubhai K. Katara
6. Shri P.R. Khunte
7. Shri P.R. Kyndiah
8. Shri Sis Ram Ola
9. Dr. Bikram Sarkar
10. Shri C. Sreenivasan

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri John Joseph — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri Brahm Dutt — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Smt. Neera Singh — *Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

*Representatives of the Ministry of Communication & Information Technology
(Department of Telecom) and MTNL*

1. Shri Vinod Vaish — Secretary, DoT, & Chairman
(Telecom Commission)
2. Shri N. Parthasarthy — Member (Finance),
Telecom Commission, (DoT)
3. Shri P. Ramachandran — Member (Services)
Telecom Commission, (DoT)
4. Shri Narinder Sharma — CMD, MTNL, New Delhi

5. Shri K.H. Khan — Executive Director,
MTNL, New Delhi
6. Shri A. C. Padhi — Deputy Director General (TPF), DoT
7. Shri Sunder Pal — G.M. (West-III), MTNL, New Delhi
8. Smt. Sujata Ray — GM (TR), MTNL, Delhi
9. Shri M.M. Sharma — GM (Legal), MTNL, Delhi

Representatives of the Ministry of Coal/Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd.

1. Shri C.D. Arha — Special Secretary, Ministry of Coal
2. Shri Sanjay Bahadur — Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Coal
3. Shri G.K. Chaudhary — Director (Personnel), Mahanadi
Coalfields Ltd.

*Representatives of the Ministry of Environment & Forests/Central Pollution
Control Board*

1. Shri V.K. Duggal — Special Secretary
2. Shri C. Viswanath — Joint Secretary
3. Dr. (Mrs.) Nalini Bhat — Director
4. Shri D.K. Biswas — Chairman, Central Pollution
Control Board (CPCB)
5. Dr. B. Sengupta — Member-Secretary, (CPCB)
6. Shri Paresch Barua — Member-Secretary (CPCB-Assam)

2. The Committee took oral evidence of representatives of concerned Ministries/
Organisations on the following subjects:—

- (i) the Ministry of Communication & Information Technology (Department
of Telecom) and MTNL on the representation regarding erratic bills and
wrongful disconnection of telephone No. 25737937;
- (ii) the Ministry of Coal on the representation requesting for restoration of
Kendriya Vidyalaya in Brajrajnagar, Orissa; and
- (iii) the Ministry of Environment & Forests on the petition regarding pollution
caused by Nagaon Paper Mill, Kagajgaon, Assam of Hindustan Paper
Corporation Ltd.

3. Before start of evidence of each Ministry the Chairman drew the attention of
the witnesses to direction 55(1) of the Direction by the Speaker The Committee then
put questions and the same were replied by the witnesses on the subjects under
consideration of the Committee.

4. A verbatim record of proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES OF EIGHTY-FOURTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS
HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER, 2003 IN COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 62,
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI.

The Committee sat from 14.30 to 16.00 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri Ambati Brahmanaiah
3. Shri Ram Rati Bind
4. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo
5. Shri P.R. Kyndiah
6. Dr. Bikram Sarkar

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Brahm Dutt — *Director*
2. Smt. Neera Singh — *Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

Representatives of the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board)

1. Shri S.M. Singla — Member Staff
(Railway Board)
2. Shri Anand Mathur — Executive Director Esstt. (N)
3. Shri O.P. Agarwal — Executive Director (RRB)
4. Shri P. Ananth — Director (MPP)
5. Shri A.M. Dharmalingam — Chief Personnel Officer,
Southern Railway

Representatives of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

1. Dr. A.V.S. Reddy — Secretary
2. Shri S. Chatterjee — Joint Secretary
3. Dr. R.C. Mahapatra — Deputy Director

2. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of the concerned Ministries/Organisations on the following subjects:—

- (i) Representation requesting to give appointment to the course completed Act Apprentices against existing vacancies in Southern Railway.
- (ii) Representation regarding inclusion of Halba Koshti (Weavers) Tribe residing in Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in the List of Scheduled Tribes.
- (iii) Representation regarding inclusion of Panika Community of Chhattisgarh in the List of Scheduled Tribes.

3. At the outset the Chairman drew the attention of the representatives of each Ministry, to Direction 55(1) of the Directions by the Speaker regarding confidentiality of the proceedings. The Committee then put questions on the subjects under consideration of the Committee which were replied to by the witnesses.

4. Thereafter, the Committee considered the Draft Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Reports of the Committee and adopted the same with few modifications. The Committee then authorised the Chairman to finalise the Reports and present them to the House on 4th December, 2003.

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned.