



Public hearing on MPT's West of Breakwater project was cancelled due to a technical hitch

Since GSPCB had not complied with legal requirement of EIA notification 2006, GSPCB is to be blamed for delay and not the people

* AAI's "parking fees" has raised questions about the intention

First coal then ore, Vasco stalls another MPT hearing

SUBHASH RAO

➔ Citizens stop another GSPCB hearing for MPT's West of Breakwater on 'technical ground'

➔ Demand coal hearing before iron ore public hearing



MAKING A POINT: Concerned citizens raised relevant questions and ensured that the GSPCB's public hearing on MPT's West of Breakwater project was cancelled. (Right) Savio Correia brings to Navti's attention that as per law EIA report should have been put up for public view, which in this case wasn't

TAURAPPA LAMANI / THE GOAN

VASCO: The alarming regularity, with which Goa State Pollution Control Board's public hearing on Mormugao Port Trust's West of Breakwater project is getting cancelled on technical grounds,

COALGATE >>

is raising serious doubts about whether it is serious to have a public centric debate on Vasco's health at all. On Sunday last, another public hearing on MPT's ambitious West of Breakwater project ended up in a naught, as GSPCB had failed to place copies of EIA reports in libraries and Municipal / Panchayat for public inspection under Section 2.4 of EIA notification 2006. The reason although trivial speaks volumes of the Pollution Control Board's increasing rest-

lessness and sloppiness in conducting public hearings for MPT in the face of growing criticism that while it has failed to hold public hearings for the much polluting coal berth no. 10 and 11, it is more keen to hold public hearing for West of Breakwater project. "We have already submitted our written objections before GSPCB and MPT. Since GSPCB had not complied with legal requirement of EIA notification 2006, GSPCB is to be blamed for delay and not the people," explains Vascokar United Forum Convener Bharat Kamat. Kamat and his colleagues have in recent times been leading the charge to enforce stringent coal pollution curbing measures on MPT. Kamat's fellow campaigner Savio Correia was responsible for pointing out simple yet pertinent point in the law that the Environmental Impact Assess-

QUOTE ROOM
➤ *MPT has complied with all conditions laid by GSPCB. As per GSPCB's requirement we submitted the comprehensive EIA report in February 2012. It is up to GSPCB now to complete the public consultation hearing*
– **P Mara Pandiyan**, MPT Chairman
➤ *There were so many lacunas while conducting the public consultation hearing. Though, I chaired the meeting I could not proceed until all legal formalities laid down in EIA notification 2006 was compiled by GSPCB. Since people had objections that GSPCB had failed to keep EIA report in public library for inspection I had to adjourn the meeting*
– **N S Navti**, Additional Collector, chair WoB, EIA Public Hearing on Novemvber 25, 2012

ment report should have been put up for public view. "Certain legal non-compliance of minor nature shouldn't lead to adjournment of a meeting. Public consultation hearing should have been continued. We had given the EIA report to Mormugao Municipal Council," said Dr Mohan Girap, scientist at Goa State pollution Control Board. "How could a Council that has a public library fail to put the EIA report for public scrutiny is a matter of investigation. But what is emerging is that there is a sinister plan to bypass the proceedings," the scientist said. "With so many adjournments, we have an apprehension that MPT might approach the Ministry of Environment and Forests or Centre Pollution Control Board to by-pass public consultation hearing," a worried Advocate T. T. Shreedharan said.

WEST OF BREAKWATER IRON ORE BERTH
➔WoB is second dedicated iron ore berth worth Rs 1370
➔Berth capacity 7.2 metric tonnes that requires nearly 140,000 hectares of land to be reclaimed in sea
➔Sterlite Group operating company of Vedanta has been selected for project
➔MPT had set completion deadline in February 2014
PUBLIC HEARING FIASCO TIMELINE
➔ Year 2010:
➔ July - MPT submitted EIA report along with Rs 5 lakhs fees for public consultation hearing
➔ Aug/Sept - GSPCB refuse to conduct public hearing, though, it was supposed to be held within 45 days after application
➔ Oct - GSPCB asked MPT for comprehensive EIA study of all projects including WoB
➔ Year 2012:
➔ Feb - MPT approaches GSPCB with fresh 369 pages comprehensive EIA study.
➔ July 25 – GSPCB announces public hearing date, but later postponed in wake of Lord Shree Damodar Saptah festival
➔ Sept 16 – Meeting was adjourned, GSPCB could not issue notice in minimum notice period of 30 days prior to meeting
➔ Nov 25 – Meeting adjourned till next date for noncompliance of legal requirement

AAI DADAGIRI AT DABOLIM AIRPORT?

SAGUN GAWADE

NAVIN JHA / THE GOAN
Under the cover of maintaining traffic inflow at Dabolim airport terminal, the Airport Authority of India, Goa chapter has been charging "parking" fees for vehicles which come to pick up or drop people at the airport. Since last three years the AAI has engaged a contractor to collect parking fees of Rs 60 for cars and Rs 295 for coaches in the parking lot constructed by AAI on PWD land. After initial protest by the local taxi operators and after the intervention of the then Tourism Minister, Mickey Pacheco the issue was resolved but few months later AAI managed to give a back door entry to the system. In the new system a person entering the airport with a vehicle



MAKING A FAST BUCK: An officer issues token to each and every vehicle entering to drop or pick up people at the airport. Dabolim airport is the only airport that is charging vehicles to drop passengers in its premises has to accept a token with time restriction of 5 minutes. Those who manage to come out within five minutes do not have to pay anything. But those who exceed the limit have to pay a fine of Rs 60 for cars and Rs 350 for coaches. This system has upset almost everyone who enters the airport. Many times locals have refused to take the time bound

token. But a new comer or those who do not know about the system is forced to pay Rs 60 considered to be parking charges. What is more surprising is that if anyone dares to challenge the system and refuses to pay, the traffic cops do the rest of the work for the contractor. "We feel sorry for those who are victimized by the horrifying attitude of the people who issue time bound tokens. The tourists, private cars owners are the worst sufferers," said Domnic Mascarenhas, the General Secretary of Tourist Taxi Union of Dabolim airport. When someone comes to drop a passenger or family members to the airport it invariably takes more than 10 minutes for security check or there may be some other problems like traf-

fic congestion. "Despite people's protest AAI continue with its token system and indirectly harass the public. AAI should stop such activity and instead make life easy for those who visit the airport," said Jayant Jadhav, the Goa Tourism Development Corporation Board director. Ironically even the officer engaged by the contractor (M/S Garuda Aviation Service Private Limited) to issue the tokens has to face taunts from the public. "The system is useless as although we issue tokens to more than 1200 people every day, only 15 to 20 pay up rest all curse and move without paying," said Ramakant Velip the officer who is engaged to issue the token.

➔ Dabolim is the only airport charging vehicles for dropping passengers inside its premises

➔ AAI devises a novel idea to force passengers who do not use its pay park, to pay up