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Relevant Websites & Contacts

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TSR COMMITTEE REPORT: AN ASSESSMENT OF ITS PILLARS AND FOUNDATION (PART -1)

The TSR Subramaniam Committee submitted its report reviewing the Forest and Environment Related Laws in December 2014. The Report had been criticised and subsequently junked due to its focus on expediting environmental clearances and limiting public participation, to promote economic development. But the real criticisms relate to the approach – missing the forest – and less on the details – for the trees.

First, the Report assumed a bargaining approach to the environment. The administration - acting as an agent of its citizens and environment - accepts development activity will result in environmental damages. Even as the administration is assumed to be able to quantify exactly the level of damages, the onus of providing the information to assess and quantify the damages was primarily from the project proponent undertaking the development activity. The administration placed 'utmost good faith' on the project proponent for providing information and also for compliance and monitoring, verified through scientific research centers – e.g. National Environment Research Institute, that would have been set up.

After administratively assessing the 'exact' level of damages, the project proponent was to undertake compensatory actions to 'conserve' the environment - pay Environmental Reconstruction Cost (ERC), contribute to Environmental Reconstruction Fund (ERF), rehabilitation and resettlement costs, and/or social/compensatory afforestation. Market mechanisms such as trading schemes – cap and trade for incentivizing non-polluting industries and 'treeland' trading were proposed.

Assessment: The Report placed 'utmost good faith' in the project proponent, and its own yet to be set up institute's efficacy for technical verification. The report did not consider economic constraints of "utmost good faith" i.e. adverse selection and moral hazard a.k.a. lying, cheating etc. Valuing the environment and converting it into compensatory amounts requires correlation between ex-ante (forecasted) value and ex-post (actual) damages. Assessing environment value and quantifying damages are not exact sciences as they require ascertaining total economic value (TEV) - direct-use value, indirect-use value, non-use value and intrinsic value - and monetarily quantifiable levels of pollutions/degradation during, and sometimes beyond, the life time of the development activity. These approaches are often limited in scope and accuracy. The technicalities needed for the above task are enormous even as intrinsic value affects valuation. For e.g. how is the worth of the discovery of unique species of reptiles to be made in monetary terms? Any administrative figure would thus merely put a plucked out of the air, skewed value, resulting in mismatch between ex-ante value & actual ex-post damages.

Second, the report sought to strengthen the monitoring and compliance mechanisms. For this purpose, National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) and State Environment Management Authorities (SEMA) would subsume the Pollution Control Boards and become "standing technical organizations having the primary responsibility for processing all environmental clearance applications, in a strictly time-bound manner."

Assessment: Irrespective of the type of institutional structure, greater monitoring and ensuring compliance is the need of the hour. Whether these new Authorities would be more effective than the PCBs is a moot question. Further, the Supreme Court in the *Larfarge* case stated that a "National Regulator, enforcing environmental conditions for approvals and to impose penalties on polluters" should be in place, making NEMA and SEMA, technical organizations, legally unviable. (contd)

BHEL COMMISSIONS 500 MW UNIT OF TUTICORIN THERMAL POWER PLANT

State-run BHEL today said that it has commissioned the second 500 MW unit at Tuticorin Thermal Power Station (TPS) in Tamil Nadu.

"Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has successfully commissioned the second 500 MW unit at Tuticorin Thermal Power Station (TPS)," the company said in a press release. The first 500 MW unit of the project was commissioned on March 10.

Tuticorin TPS has been set up by NLC Tamil Nadu Power Limited (NTPL), a joint venture of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) and Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO). The project is

situated near the Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) port on the shore of the Bay of Bengal. Earlier stages of Tuticorin TPS comprise five units of 210 MW, all installed by BHEL in three phases between 1979 and 1992. Recently, BHEL had commissioned second unit of NLC's 250 MW circulating fluidised bed combustion (CFBC) based power plant at Neyveli. The other project being executed by BHEL for NLC is the prestigious, 2x500 MW pulverised lignite fired thermal power plant, also coming up at Neyveli, which is the highest rating set of its kind in the country.

BHEL commissioned 8,230 MW in the power sector utility segment in the country during the

financial year 2014-15, surpassing government's capacity addition target of 6,914 MW set for BHEL, by 19 per cent. In all, BHEL commissioned/synchronised 11,941 MW in domestic and international markets during 2014-15, besides making major contribution to another 1,600 MW by commissioning two boilers of 800 MW each.

Significantly, BHEL's installed capacity has crossed 155 GW, including 132 GW of domestic utility sets and the company has joined the elite club of international manufacturers that have supplied power generating equipment of more than 150 GW. ([Business Standard](#), July 10, 2015)

THERMAL COAL IMPORTS SOAR 23% AT 12 MAJOR PORTS

Import of thermal coal jumped 23 per cent to 24.08 million tonnes at 12 major ports in the first quarter of the fiscal, even as the government continues to push for boosting domestic production of the fuel.

Handling of coking coal, which is used mainly for steel-making, however remained nearly stagnant with less than 1 per cent increase in the period at 8.17 MT, according to the Indian Ports Association (IPA).

These 12 major ports had handled 19.62 MT and 8.10 MT of thermal and coking coal, respectively, in the first quarter of the previous fiscal. Altogether, they handled 32.25 MT coal during the April-June quarter of the current fiscal as against 27.72 MT in the same quarter of the previous fiscal.

Coal is the mainstay of India's energy programme as 70 per cent of power generation is dependent on the dry fuel, while

Coal Minister Piyush Goyal has been emphasising the need to increase the production by state-run Coal India. India is the third-largest producer of coal, after China and the US, and has 299 billion tonnes of resources and 123 billion tonnes of proven reserves, which may last for over 100 years.

India has 12 major ports – Kandla, Mumbai, JNPT, Mangalore, New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Ennore, V O Chidambarnar, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Kolkata (including Haldia) which handle approximately 61 per cent of the country's total cargo traffic.

Thermal coal is used in power generation and with the world's largest miner Coal India, which accounts for over 80 per cent of the domestic requirement consistently failing to meet its target as well as demand of the firms, the power plants resort to imports. Less production coupled with increased demand

from power firms is further widening the demand-supply gap in the country, which is likely to widen to 185.5 MT in 2016-17.

Coal India could record barely a 31 MT increase in coal production in four years from 2010 to 2014, but in 2014-15, it recorded an increase of 32 MT. For the current fiscal, CIL's production target has been fixed at 550 MT. CIL missed the production target for 2014-15 by 3 per cent recording an output of 494.23 MT. The company's output target was 507 MT for the fiscal. In 2013-14, the company had clocked production of 462.53 MT against a target of 482 MT. In 2012-13, Coal India produced 452.5 MT of coal, falling short of the 464 MT goal.

The Centre has announced plans to boost Coal India's annual production to the level of 1 billion tonnes by 2019 to meet growing fuel demand. ([Business Standard](#), 12 July, 2015)

Use less hot water by installing low-flow shower heads

THE NINE GREEN POLICIES KILLED OFF BY THE UK GOVERNMENT

Amber Rudd, the energy and climate change secretary has been accused of “grotesque hypocrisy” for claiming the government is leading on climate change while overseeing a string of attacks on green policies.

Scrapping support for onshore wind: Amber Rudd said she was halting new subsidies to onshore wind farms on the grounds that the technology should stand on its own feet and save bill payers money. In fact the writing had been on the wall for onshore wind farms since February 2012 when 101 back-bench Conservative party MPs wrote to David Cameron demanding “dramatic cuts” in subsidies. A moratorium on more onshore wind was rejected by the Tories’ coalition partners. But the Conservatives went into the election promising to “halt the spread of onshore wind farms”. Ironically onshore wind has attracted a lot of investment and can be the most cost-efficient way of producing low carbon energy.

Solar subsidies to be axed too: Ministers have targeted larger solar installations of less than five megawatts – enough to power 2,500 homes – in a consultation on the early closure of the renewable obligation (RO) subsidy aimed at April 2016.

But the government also announced a review of another subsidy, the feed-in tariff, to make further significant savings in a move that could threaten state support for solar panels on domestic roof tops. The solar power sector has grown dramatically over the past 18 months, leading ministers to panic about a forthcoming potential budget overspend on support schemes of £1.5bn by 2020. It later admitted the benefit of scrapping support for this nascent industry at this stage would only save energy consumers 50p a year.

Biomass hit too: The government also confirmed it was removing the guaranteed level of

RO subsidy for coal or other fossil fuelled-power stations which are converting to wood or another biomass fuel.

Killing the flagship green homes scheme: The government effectively killed off the green deal, its “transformational” way of helping homeowners bring down their energy bills through installing insulation, and fitting new boilers and draught-proofing.

But what’s striking is Rudd has nothing to replace it with. So, apart from poorer households, who get support through the separate ECO scheme, there is now no serious energy efficiency policy for homes, which account for around a third of UK carbon emissions.

Selling off the green investment bank: Launched in 2012 to help green projects with an initial injection of £3.8bn of public money, the green investment bank is probably the example cited most often by George Osborne and David Cameron in their defence of the government’s environmental record. But last month the business secretary, Sajid Javid, said he would be selling off as much as 70% of the bank. Whether that harms the energy efficiency, waste and offshore wind power projects that the bank invests in remains to be seen.

Watering down the incentive to buy a greener car: The summer budget ripped up the current system of taxation for new cars (vehicle excise duty, often erroneously referred to as road tax). Anyone who currently buys a new car pays a different rate for the first year based on how polluting the car is, a system which continues every year thereafter, ranging from free for electric cars to £505 for the dirtiest. But from 2017, after the first year, all cars will pay the same £140 annual fee, so a Porsche will be taxed the same as a Prius. The car industry says the change takes away the incentive to buy a low-emissions

car, while Friends of the Earth says a greener car will now cost £1,000 more over seven years.

Giving up on zero carbon homes: A decade-long plan to force all new homes to be ‘zero carbon’ from 2016 was binned by the Treasury earlier this month, prompting the former Lib Dem energy secretary Ed Davey to say David Cameron “may as well hug a coal power station”. Major housing developers said the decision was “extremely disappointing”, a view that was echoed by planners, green groups and the designer of a new ‘carbon positive’ house that just opened in Wales.

Goodbye green tax target: A target set during the last government to keep increasing the proportion of revenue from environmental taxes was dropped in Osborne’s emergency budget.

Tidal power in the firing line?: There has already been speculation that one talismanic project, the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon, currently awaiting a subsidy offer from the Treasury, could be being lined up for the chop. This £1bn scheme is expensive but was name-checked positively by chancellor George Osborne in the spring budget. Its supporters have always argued it would trigger a whole new industry that could lead to 30 similar projects starting around an island country perfectly suited for this low carbon technology.

What’s left – and safe? Nuclear power certainly. The government – like its predecessors of all political stripes seem mesmerised by atomic power and are willing to provide extremely generous financial support and other help to kickstart a renaissance. Britain’s first planned new nuclear plant for over 25 years at Hinkley Point in Somerset is backed by government but faces all sorts of other hurdles such as uncertain equity investors, legal challenges, which could scupper it yet. ([Guardian](#), 24 July, 2015)

UK government effectively killed off the green deal, its “transformational” way of helping homeowners bring down their energy bills through installing insulation, and fitting new boilers and draught-proofing.

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Established in 1985, Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) is an advocacy and campaigning group that works towards protecting citizens rights in consumer and environmental issues and promotes good governance processes including transparency, accountability and participatory decision-making.

STATEWISE ESTIMATED COAL RESERVES (2015)

(in Billion Tons)

States/ UTs	Proved		Indicated		Inferred		Total		Distribution (%)	
	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.13	31.03.14
Andhra Pradesh	9.60	9.73	9.55	9.67	3.05	3.07	22.20	22.47	7.43	7.46
Arunachal Pradesh	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.09	0.09	0.03	0.03
Assam	0.47	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.17	0.00
Bihar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.05	0.05
Chhattisgarh	14.78	16.05	34.11	33.25	3.28	3.23	52.17	52.53	17.45	17.45
Jharkhand	41.16	41.38	32.99	32.78	6.56	6.56	80.71	80.72	27.00	26.81
Madhya Pradesh	9.82	10.41	12.36	12.38	2.88	2.88	25.06	25.67	8.38	8.53
Maharashtra	5.67	5.67	3.19	3.19	2.11	2.11	10.97	10.96	3.67	3.64
Meghalaya	0.09	0.09	0.02	0.02	0.47	0.47	0.58	0.58	0.19	0.19
Nagaland	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.11	0.10
Odisha	27.28	27.79	37.11	37.87	9.32	9.41	73.71	75.07	24.66	24.94
Sikkim	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.03	0.03
Uttar Pradesh	0.88	0.88	0.18	0.18	0.00	0.00	1.06	1.06	0.35	0.35
West Bengal	13.40	13.40	13.00	13.02	4.89	4.89	31.29	31.32	10.47	10.40
All India Total	123.19	125.44	142.66	142.46	33.09	33.15	298.94	301.05	100.00	100.00
Distribution (%)	41.21	41.67	47.72	47.32	11.07	11.01	100.00	100.00		

Source: Office of Coal Controller, Ministry of Coal

As on 31.03.2013 and 31.03.2014,

REGULATIONS AND CASES

- EU, Directive 2001/80/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2001 on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants, click [here](#)
- NGT, Judgement of the National Green Tribunal regarding construction activities within the CRZ area, 13/08/2015. click [here](#)

PUBLICATIONS

- EU, Market functioning in network industries, 2015. click [here](#)
- World Energy Council, 2015 World Energy Issues Monitor, Energy price volatility: the new normal, 2015. click [here](#)

MISCELLANEOUS

- CEST2015, 14th International Conference on Environmental Science and Technology, , 3-5 September 2015, Rhodes, Greece. Click [here](#)
- Yale Courses, Environmental Politics and Law with John Wargo. Click [here](#)

உங்களுக்கு தெரியுமா...?



சுற்றுச்சூழல் தாக்க மதிப்பீட்டு முறை
பற்றிய ஒரு படக் கதை

Do you know...?



A Cartoon Booklet on the Environmental Impact
Assessment Process

"Do you know?!"

A Cartoon Booklet on the Environmental Impact Assessment Process

CAG is pleased to launch the
Cartoon book **"Do you know?!"**

The book aims to demystify
and educate communities and
general public on the adminis-
trative and environmental
regulations and laws on the
Environmental Impact Assess-
ment (EIA) Process, with spe-
cific reference to Thermal
Power Plants (TPPs).

The people can learn while
they read the comics with their
family!

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