

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON THE 24TH APRIL 2012 OF THE PROPOSED
(3 x 80 MW) UMGOT HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AT SIANGKHNAI VILLAGE IN EAST
KHASI HILLS DISTRICT, MEGHALAYA BY MEGHALAYA ENERGY CORPORATION LTD.**

An Environmental Public Hearing in respect of the proposed 3x80 MW Hydroelectric Project of Meghalaya Energy Corporation Ltd. was held at Siangkhnai Village in East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya on the 24th April 2012. The hearing which commenced from 11:00 A.M. was presided over by Shri A. Bhagotia, I.A.S, A.D.C, East Khasi Hills District.

At the outset Smti. B . Majaw, Environmental Engineer, Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board (MSPCB), Shillong gave the welcome and introductory address.

Smti. B. Majaw welcomed the Chairman, officers and staff of the MeECL, the Meghalaya Police Department and other Government Departments, the members of the Press, the project proponent and public who have turned up in large numbers to attend the Hearing. She explained that the Environmental Public Hearing has been conducted as per provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006 dated 14th September 2006 and subsequent amendment E.I.A. Notification No. S.O. 3067(E) dated 1st December 2009 notified by the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Govt. of India. She explained that the objective of the Hearing is to solicit and record the opinions, views, comments or objections of the people residing in the adjoining areas of the Project site likely to be affected by the establishment of the proposed HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT at Siangkhnai Village, in East Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya by Meghalaya Energy Corporation Ltd.

Further, she 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. She 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, New Delhi for the Environmental Clearance.

In the Opening Address Shri A. Bhagotia, I.A.S, A.D.C, East Khasi Hills District and Chairperson, EPH, welcomed the Public, the Local Headmen, NGOs, villagers, members of the press and representatives of Meghalaya Energy Corporation Ltd. present at the EPH. He invited those who wanted to speak to submit their names to the staff of the M.S.P.C.B. and reiterated that speakers should not repeat the views, comments, etc. presented by those who spoke ahead of them.

On invitation from the Chair, highlights of the proposed project relating to technical aspect were presented by Shri. H. Lyngdoh Mawnai, Superintending Engineer, Meghalaya Energy Corporation Ltd. He informed that Meghalaya Energy Corporation Ltd. has applied for prior Environmental Clearance for the proposed Hydroelectric Project from the Ministry of Environment & Forest in 2007. The work for EIA/EMP studies as per the TOR's given by the

Ministry was given to Agriculture Finance Corporation a recognized consultant by the MoEF. He informs that the project will be located in a village called Saida which is in between East Khasi Hills District and Jaintia Hills District of Meghalaya at an installed capacity of 3 x 80 MW and having a Catchment area of 304 sq. km. Roads to the project sites will be from Moosakhia in Jaintia Hills District and Siangkhnai in East Khasi Hills District. He informs that the dam to be constructed will be an ogee type concrete gravity dam having a live storage of 41.34 Mcum, length of 362 m and a maximum height of 111 m.

The cost of project will be R1564.62 Crores and the total area of land that will be utilized for the project will be 390.52 Ha. The study area as conducted by the consultant is 10 kms radius from dam area and power house area covering East Khasi Hills District and Jaintia Hills District. He also informs that the proposed project is located in a seismic Zone V very close to the Dawki fault and for the design of the dam, power house, tunnel etc. expert advice is being sought for from IIT Roorkee. The impacts that will arise once the project is implemented will be decrease in discharge of the river downstream of the dam and also the flora and fauna of the area will be affected.

However he informs that compensatory afforestation will be undertaken by the department on a large scale and hopes that the reservoir will promote fish production. He emphasized that hydel projects are non-polluting and are a green source of energy as compared to Thermal Power Plants. According to the EIA/EMP he informs that the total area proposed for treatment in the Catchment Area will be 3018 Ha. which will include afforestation, turfing, erosion control measures etc. For Land Management will involve muck disposal site and restoration plan for quarries. Bio-Diversity Management Plan will involve Green Belt Development, Bio Diversity Conservation Plan, Wildlife Conservation Plan and Fishery Management Plan.

He informs that the Department will involve various departments during the implementation of the various management plans. Public toilets with septic tanks and soak pits will be provided to the labourers during the implementation of the project. He also says that water quality, air quality and noise will be regularly monitored. Also, he says that dispensaries will be provided to the public and various awareness programmes will be held in different areas within the catchment of the project. Precaution will be taken during the construction of the dam to prevent any dam break in future.

For any disaster that may arise the department will be providing fixed fire detection & protection systems, portable fire extinguishers, communication facilities, emergency power supply, emergency safety equipment, emergency alarms and training in disaster preparedness. A resettlement and rehabilitation plan is being prepared for the people that will be directly and indirectly affected by the project. Lastly he highlighted a few benefits where first & foremost benefit will be direct and indirect employment to the local people in terms of job opportunities, supply of raw materials, contract works, tourism, electricity benefits, local area development and upliftment of the socio-economic conditions of the people.

The Chairperson then invited Smti. B. Majaw, Environmental Engineer, MSPCB, to present the written presentations, comments, etc. received by the Board. The following is a list of the written presentation received:

1. Office of Lyngdoh Raid Mawshai, Hima Khyriem, East Khasi Hills District
2. Wah Umngot Hydel Project Development Association, Hima Khyriem, East Khasi Hills District
3. The Residents of Umsawwar Village, East Khasi Hills District
4. Office of the Raid Lynshing, Khyrim Syiemship, East Khasi Hills District
5. Office of the Dorbar Shnong Mawjatap, East Khasi Hills District
6. Letter from Concerned Citizens
7. Office of the Syiem of Khyrim Syiemship, Smit, East Khasi Hills District

The translations of the written presentations in local language are enclosed as Annexures.

The Chairperson of the Committee then invited the public to offer their comments, suggestions, objections etc.

SL. No.	NAME & ADDRESS	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS/REMARKS
1.	Mr. W.S. Lynshing, Sordar Raid Lynshing, Lynshing	Firstly he extends his gratitude to all those present in the public hearing. He informs that most of the people at large are still unaware about the project whether it will really benefit them or not. He is of the opinion that the EIA/EMP report presented by the officials of MeECL should be in the local language. He suggested that information regarding the proposed project should have first been given to the Local Dorbars of various villages including the Syiem. Also he says that regarding the public hearing information was known only from newspapers and no efforts was made by MeECL to reach out to the people to help them understand better about the proposed project. He demanded that MeECL should again reach out to the various local heads and people of the area to make them understand about the project. With respect he says that he is saddened that the survey conducted by MeECL was done without the information of village heads. In this regard he opines that he is neither for nor against the proposed project.
2.	Mr. R. Nongrum, Secretary Raid Lynshing, Lynshing	He informs that the land of the area is still under the lookout of the Syiem & village heads and that MeECL had bypassed them with regards to the proposed project. He feels that for development to occur in the area it should be in collaboration between Government and the Local People. He is of the opinion that he is not for or against the proposed project on the ground that detailed information regarding the pro and cons of the proposed project was not given to the Local

		Dorbars of various villages including the Syiem. Requests MeECL to go back to the grassroots level to make people understand about the proposed project.
3.	Mr. Pynbianglang Lynshing, Village Elder, Lynshing	He feels that MeECL had bypassed them in all angles and that information regarding to the proposed project was not given to the Local Dorbars of various villages including the Syiem before hand. In this regard he is neither for nor against the proposed project. He therefore request MeECL to go back to the grassroots level to make people understand more about the proposed project so that the people will reap the benefits with the coming of the project.
4.	Mr. Klip Lynshing, Village Elder, Nohron	He feels that the people are still in the dark about the setting up of the project by MeECL. Also he is of the opinion that with the coming of the project there will be benefits to the people of the area but the people should first be made to understand about the project. He therefore requests MeECL to guarantee everyone that there will be all round development with the coming of the project and not in paper or as presented. Therefore he is neither for nor against the proposed project.
5.	Mr. W.S. Suting, Nongryngkoh	He says that MeECL has to give first preference to the people of the affected area as they are the final authority over their lands. He welcomes the setting up of the project as it will bring development to the area which is still backward. However, he does not want a repetition of the Lafarge problem where the affected persons were not given any recognition. He wants that the affected persons get due compensation. A clear understanding of the project should be made to the people. He also requests that MeECL set up its offices in the Khyrim side as 70% of the affected area fall in the Hima and 30% in the Jaintia Hills. In this regard he supports the proposed project by MeECL
6.	Mr. Herod Suting, Syntung	He says that MeECL had since 2005 approached his village to inform about the project and to seek permissions from the different authorities. He welcomes the setting up of the project by MeECL as it will be a blessing to all the people of the area. He suggests that an association comprising the Syiem, Sordars, villagers, etc. may be set up to scrutinize the execution of the project.

7.	Mr. Khlansing Suting, Sordar Shnong, Siangkhnai	He welcomes the project on behalf of the residents of Siangkhnai. However, he requests the MSPCB to put on hold the setting up of the project as the affected persons still have no awareness of the project. He wishes that another PH may be held after the residents are more aware. He also says that an association has been set up to look into the setting up of the project.
8.	Mr. Kansing Lynshing, President, Dienglieng Youth Welfare Organization	He says that only the affected persons can ascertain how much turnover they get from selling broom sticks and paan leaves and they are the right persons to speak in the PH. He says that the project will benefit the area but he fears that there may be problems after the project is set up. He believes that the promised compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs may not be adequate as their farmlands will be lost forever and there will be nothing to pass on to their future generations. He welcomes the project but he requests that all affected households should be endorsed in a court of law so that adequate compensation can be given. He also requests that MeECL give employment to educated youths and local contractors be employed in the project as per their capacity. He wants that an agreement between all stakeholders be made first, especially with affected persons, and to have it endorsed by a court of law.
9.	Mr. Joe Thangkhiew, Umsawwar	He informs that in 2008 officials of MeECL has started the EIA/EMP study and survey forms were distributed among few people of the area. He says that the presentation given by officials of MeECL did not cover all aspects of the project. He says that various letters was sent to the department against the setting of the project and till now no reply was given. Also, he informs that as per the EIA/EMP report requires a detailed study of the socio-economic survey. He wants clarification as to when the socio-economic and household survey was conducted and the authenticity of the EIA/EMP report. He informs that only the village heads knows about the proposed project. He then enquired the people of various villages whether the economic survey was conducted or not and most of them replied it was never done. Ended his speech by saying that he strongly opposed and boycott the public hearing.
10.	Mr. Peter J. Lawai, Assistant General	Informs that the KSU is neither for nor against the project by MeECL. He wants people

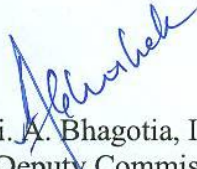
	Secretary, K.S.U. Central Body	participation or grassroot level planning from various angles in the form of a public meeting and awareness campaigns to discuss what the various benefits that will assist the people from the proposed project. He opines that an agreement should be drafted amongst the village heads, the Syiem and MeECL. He requested the officials of MeECL and MSPCB to first make the people understand about the pros and cons of the project.
11.	Mr. Eugenstar Kurkalang, Assistant Organizing K.S.U Eastern Central	From his understanding he says that the MeECL had bypassed and avoided the various village heads in trying to implement the proposed project. Suggested that proper procedures should be followed and suggestions as given by the elders. He feels that with the coming of the project there will be development but he is of the opinion that the people should be first made to understand the benefits that will arise with the coming of the project. Feels that information presented by MeECL is still unsatisfactory as it did not cover all aspects of the project. He informs that he is neither for nor against the project. Requests everyone to work collectively to make the project a success for the benefit of everyone.
12.	Dr. B.S. Syiem, Syiem Khyrim, Smit	Informs that a public meeting was held between the officials of MeECL, various local heads and the Syiem in 2008 and the outcome was fruitful. However, over the past three years MeECL has bypassed and proper information was not provided about the proposed project to the people. He says that he stands for the benefit of all the people and is not against the project. The right belongs to all the landowners that will be affected with the proposed project. He says that the duly implementation of the project depends entirely on the village heads and durbars. The project he feels will bring an all round development and requests MeECL to first make the people understand so as to make the project a successful one. Also, he requests a collective participation from the people to make the proposed project a success. In this regard he is neither for nor against the project.
13.	Mr. Colin Rangtong, Sordar Nongjrong	He wants MeECL to first make the people understand about the proposed project as desired by most that have talk before him. In this regard he is neither for nor against the project at the moment.
14.	Mr. Phorius Nongrum, Umsawwar	He wants MeECL to first make the people understand about the proposed project as desired by most that have talk before him. In this regard

		he is neither for nor against the project.
15.	Mr. Philip Suting, Umsawwar	He feels that with the coming of the project will not benefit the people and the compensation that will be provided will not be enough as he earns his livelihood through farming. In this he strongly opposed the project.
16.	Mr. Silvestar Suting, Umsawwar	He feels that he will not be benefitted from the coming of the project. Requests everyone to think for the future of their children as the compensation that will be provided will not be enough. In this he strongly opposed the project.
17.	Smti. Merrysha Nongrum, Umsawwar	She is of the opinion that people should not fooled by the compensation money that will given as it will not be enough to support them for a lifetime and for future generations to come. In this she strongly opposed the proposed project.
18.	Mr. G.R. Nongrum, Nohron	Express his gratitude to MeECL for preparing the Detailed Project Report. He feels that first the people should understand the pros and cons of the project. He says the MeECL should include Nohron village in its development works which earlier he says was neglected. Informs that majority of the people in the area are farmers, daily wage labourers and uneducated. He says that cost of land is more than as that projected from the D.C. office. Requests a collective understanding between the NGO'S, local heads and landowners and not take advantage of anyone for personal gain. He says that MeECL should go back to the grassroot level as desired by everyone that has spoken before him. Demanded that in future MeECL should construct the project and not by any other private party. In order to be it a blessing for everyone he requests the officials to take appropriate steps to first make the people understand about the project. He says that at the moment he is neither for nor against the proposed project until MeECL has taken appropriate steps.
19.	Mr. Lauren Pohksang, Secretary Moosakhia	He is surprised that most of the people present at the Public Hearing do not know much about the proposed project as compared with Public Heaing conducted at Moosakhia Village in Jaintia Hills District. Informs that people form Jaintia Hills District collectively support the proposed project. He feels that MeECL should first make the people understand. He extends his supports to the proposed project by MeECL.
20.	Mr. M. Bareh, Secretary Lai Kur, Samanong	Informs that the proposed project will greatly benefit all the people of the area. Also he says that from past experience with works executed by

		MeECL there will be an all round development in the area with the coming of the project. He pointed that the R 2 lac as presented is a grant for the affected landowners and not as compensation. In this he extends his support to the proposed project by MeECL and not by any other party.
21.	Mr. Rollingson Bareh, Moosakhia	Supports the proposed project by MeECL and not by any other party. He says that projects like these should be supported, however, not at the cost of the affected people. Requested the people of the area to have a collective understanding amongst themselves so as to enable the work to start fast.
22.	Mr. S. Kassar, Samanong	He says that the people from Jaintia Hills, where he comes from, have welcomed the project as he feels that the people will greatly benefit from it as observed with the Myntdu Leshka Hydroelectric Project executed by MeECL. He wishes that the project will start soon so that development and benefits can come to the area and the state as a whole.
23.	Mr. Ma Kar Roy Lyngdoh, Raid Mawshai, Mawshai	He pointed out that MeECL has made a mistake by not consulting the traditional authorities first. He said that, had the officials of MeECL met with the affected land owners and the traditional authorities first there would have been no need for the PH. He suggests that MeECL, MSPCB, BDO, office of the Deputy Commissioner, the Syiem, the Lyngdoh Raid Mawshai, Sordar Lyngshing come together with the affected people and finalize an agreement before the project can be allowed to start. In this he says that he does not oppose setting up of the project provided a proper agreement is reached between all stakeholders.
24.	Mr. Stoly Lynshing, Sordar Mawlang, Mawlang	He says that there has been no awareness among the people, the traditional authorities, etc. about the project. He says that only 10% of the people know about the project and therefore he requests MeECL to restart the process of public awareness and to follow the traditional laws so as to gain their support.
25.	Mr. Atiar Dkhar, Sordar Syntung, Syntung	He requests MeECL to follow the traditional procedures and to make all affected people aware of how much they stand to lose or gain from the project.

26.	Mr. Albin Mukhim, Sordar Mynsang, Mynsang	He informs out that there has been no door to door survey conducted in Mynsang. He wants the people to accept only long term developments and not short term ones before accepting the project.
27.	Mr. Komen Nongbri, Sordar Jatah Nonglyer, Jatah Nonglyer	He says that MeECL has not followed proper procedures before preparing the report and even door to door survey was not conducted in his village. He requests that they redo the whole report and to make people understand about the proposed project.
28.	Mr. Niat Lynshing, Sordar Mawsir, Mawsir	He requests that MeECL first informs the village heads of all villages before starting any work in the future.
29.	Mr. Liyad War, Sordar Ksanryngi, Ksanryngi	He says that the people from his village were also in the dark about the project and supports what all the previous speakers have said earlier.
30.	Mr. Isack Khyriem, Syntung	He requests that MeECL should put the project in abeyance for now as there has been no awareness about its benefits or drawbacks.
31.	Mr. Kegitar Lyngdoh Lyngkhoi, Lyngkhoi Village, Mawphlang Block	He says that projects like these should be supported, however, not at the cost of the affected people.

The Public Hearing ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair to all the officials, participants, Sordar and Headmen of different Villages, members of the press and the public present at the Hearing for their co-operation.


 Shri. A. Bhagotia, IAS,
 Addl. Deputy Commissioner,
 East Khasi Hills District & Chairperson, E.P.H.