



Science for Society

Science for Man

Science in Thinking

BREAKTHROUGH SCIENCE SOCIETY

All India Committee

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Registration No. S/86180 of 1996-97 under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961

A Voluntary Organization Committed to the Cause of Science, Culture and Scientific Outlook

Date: Aug 11, 2020

To,
The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road,
Aliganj, New Delhi 110 003

Sub: Request to Withdraw the draft EIA 2020 in its present form.

The Breakthrough Science Society had submitted a letter to you on June 30, 2020, requesting you to postpone the last date for submission of the feedback. We now request you to consider our points of concern, and not to proceed with the draft EIA2020 in its present form and to prepare a new draft taking into account the very many objections raised by scores of concerned citizens and organisations.

Points to consider:

The Draft EIA 2020 caters purely to the 'ease of doing business' in India and does not address the issues of the destruction of natural habitats, steps to contain global climate breakdown, steps to conserve forest cover etc.

The proposed notification considerably relaxes various guidelines, restrictions and safeguards which legally exist for the protection of the environment. **On the contrary**, it seems to make circumstances strongly favourable to industrial and corporate interests. Pertinent examples of this are the allowance of post-facto clearances and the non-requirement of EIA for B2 projects, which include potentially harmful ones like river valley projects, many chemical manufacturing units, petrochemical industries, expansion of national highways, etc. Further, expecting the perpetrators of ecological crimes to keep themselves accountable is an incompatible idea.

While there has been some streamlining with respect to the categorisation of projects, the public consultation step has been severely undermined. This dilutes an important democratic process ensuring the welfare of stakeholders in the project areas. Moreover, the draft EIA notification completely

restricts public participation. It restricts the public from lodging complaints to the authorities and in exercising democratic right to protest against projects that have adverse environmental impacts. As far as the public consultation is concerned, it limits the number of days, there are restrictions in languages etc.

Already illegal mining is causing havoc, increasing landslides, depleting forest cover etc., in this background increasing the validity of the environment clearance for mining projects to 50 years versus the present 30 years is going to be detrimental.

Many scientists, environmentalists, environment groups and concerned citizens have raised serious concerns about the draft EIA 2020. We request you to honour the democratic voice of the people, not to proceed with the present draft EIA2020 Notification and to come up with a new draft that would focus on environment protection, would ensure adequate checks on project developers and would involve peoples' participation in that process.

Thanking you,

Truly yours,



Dhrubajyoti Mukhopadhyay
President



Soumitro Banerjee
General Secretary