

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE**

ORIGINAL APPLICATION. 162 OF 2021

IN THE MATTER OF:

Tribunal on its own motion- Suo-Motu based on the news item
Published in the Times of India Newspaper, Chennai Edition
dated 01.07.2021, under the caption “Another Pipeline leak
at Ennore power plant”

APPLICANT (S)

Versus

UNION OF INDIA & 11 ORS

RESPONDENT(S)

REPLY STATEMENT FILED ON BEHALF OF THE 7TH RESPONDENT

The 7th Respondent submit as follows:-

1. The 7th Respondent submit that, they have perused the news item Published in the Times of India Newspaper, Chennai Edition dated 01.07.2021 wherein it is alleged that the raw effluents are leaking from aging pipelines of TANGEDCO’s North Chennai Thermal Power Plant (NCTPS) in Ennore, Tamil Nadu. It is also alleged that leaks were spotted in at least five points. This Respondent humbly submits that, in the matter of OA 8/2016 (SZ) in which CPCB was a committee member, detailed report on pipeline leakage and status of surrounding area is submitted to the Hon’ble NGT during August, 2019.
2. The 7th Respondent submit that, Water is being used for pumping out the ash slurry generated from burning of coal in Stage I and Stage II of North Chennai Thermal Power Plants into the ash pond, which gets filtered there and the filtered water is put into reuse. Everyday about 48,000 Tons of wet ash slurry is being pumped into ash pond which contributes 3,300 Tons of Fly ash.
3. The 7th Respondent submit that, both the Stage-1 & 2 Thermal Power Plants have been designed for 40% wet ash and generation of ash slurry is inevitable.
4. The 7th Respondent submit that, the pipelines of Stage-1 were commissioned during 1994-95 and hence it is more than 25 years old. They have become rusty and corroded with numerous cracks. There are total 8 Nos. of series of pipelines in which 5 Nos. carry ash slurry and 3 Nos. being used for recycling the filtered water. The ash pond is located about 5kms from the Thermal Power Plant.

5. The 7th Respondent submit that, out of the above 5 Nos of pipelines, Line 1 & 5 were replaced and got completed during August 2020. These pipes are old used pipelines brought from Ennore Thermal Power Station (ETPS). They are Cast Basalt-lined having an outer diameter of 406 mm and Inner diameter of 356mm. Replacement of Line 2 & 3 is in progress with new Cast Basalt pipes, but for Line 4, the unit is yet to procure new pipes. TANGEDCO has committed a timeline for replacement of all the 5 Nos. of pipelines by December 2021 to comply with the orders of the Hon'ble Tribunal in Applications No.8 of 2016, 152 of 2016 & 198 of 2016.
6. The 7th Respondent submit that, the power plant takes breakdown maintenance works in the ash pipelines whenever leaks are detected. The unit has patrol team which keeps patrolling the pipeline area and the pumps are stopped soon after leaks are detected. In the matter of OA 8/2016 (SZ), M/s NCTPS stage-I has submitted time bound action plan to Hon'ble NGT to replace all old pipelines with new pipelines by December 31, 2021.

The present status of replacement of pipelines is as follows:

S. No.	Description of pipeline	Outer diameter	Pipe thickness	Length of pipeline	Present status
1	Ash slurry disposal line-1	406mm	6mm	5129m	Old pipeline. Tender invited. Scheduled for replacement by December 31, 2021
2	Ash slurry disposal line-2	406mm	6 mm	5405 m	Replaced with second hand pipeline from ennore TPP
3	Ash slurry disposal line-3	406mm	6 mm	4942 m	Replaced with new pipeline
4	Ash slurry disposal line-4	406mm	6 mm	4942 m	Old pipeline. Tender invited. Scheduled for replacement by December 31, 2021
5	Ash slurry disposal line-5	356 mm	6 mm	5577 m	Replaced with second hand pipeline from ennore TPP

7. The 7th Respondent submit that it is part of the committee constituted in the matter and the committee has inspected the area on 23.08.2021 and has proposed to conduct ambient air quality monitoring and ground water monitoring (by collecting borewell samples from the seppakkam village) in Seppakkam village. The committee observed that, as reported in newspaper, leakage has occurred in ash pipeline-2 on 01.07.2021 at 7:20 AM and the pump was stopped at 7:25 AM, the portion of the pipeline damage was repaired and pipeline was

put into service by 12:30 PM on the same day. After collecting all relevant information and based on the monitoring report, the committee will file the report to Hon'ble NGT. During committee inspection on 23.08.2021, no leakage was observed in the ash pipeline.

8. The 7th Respondent submit that, Environmental Clearance and CRZ clearance is granted by Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change and Consent for Establishment and Consent for Operation by Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. If there are any violations or deviations in the conditions imposed in the clearances and permissions granted for Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO), the same will be verified by MOEFCC and TNPCB.
9. Hence it is respectfully prayed that CPCB may be deleted / dispensed from the array of Respondents. However, this Respondent will abide by the order/directions passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal.

Dated at Chennai on this the 28th day of August 2021.

COUNSEL FOR 7TH RESPONDENT

7TH RESPONDENT



VERIFICATION

I, H D Varalaxmi, working as Scientist 'E' and posted as Regional Director (Chennai), Central Pollution Control Board of the 7th Respondent herein do hereby state that what is stated in paragraph 1 to 9 above are true to the best of my knowledge , belief and information.

Verified at Chennai on this the 28th day of August 2021.

7TH RESPONDENT

