

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) held on 8th February, 2012

The 2nd meeting of the Standing Committee of NGRBA, chaired by the Union Finance Minister, was held in Room No. 41, North Block on 8th February, 2012. The list of participants is at *Appendix-I*.

2. Welcoming the participants to the meeting, the Union Finance Minister informed that in view of the ongoing election process for State Legislative Assemblies in Uttarakhand & Uttar Pradesh, it would not be appropriate to discuss agenda items/issues pertaining to these 2 States in this meeting. Another meeting of the Standing Committee would be held before the next meeting of the NGRBA to discuss the left out agenda items, so that the consolidated decisions of the Standing Committee could be placed before the NGRBA for its consideration.

3. Thereafter, the agenda was taken up for discussion. Minister of State (I/C), Environment & Forests indicated that discussion on the following agenda items would be deferred to the next meeting of the Standing Committee:

- Agenda No. 1 (Action taken on the decisions in the 1st meeting of the Standing Committee)
- Agenda No. 2 (Declaration of eco-sensitive zone and impact of hydro-electric projects)
- Agenda No. 4 (Review of progress of sanctioned projects)
- Agenda No. 7 (Environmental Clearances – Ganga Expressway project)
- Agenda No. 8 [part] (Response to the points raised by the State Governments during the 2nd Meeting of NGRBA)
- Agenda No. 9[2] (Proposal of UP Government/Sankat Mochan Foundation for STP at Ramana, Varanasi)

4. The various institutional arrangements put in place for effective implementation of the NGRBA programme (Agenda No. 3) were noted and approved. It was also agreed that all projects under the NGRBA programme, irrespective of the cost limit, would be appraised by the Empowered Steering Committee (ESC) chaired by Secretary (Environment & Forests). Projects up to Rs. 25 crore, which are within the delegated financial powers of Secretary (Environment & Forests), would be approved by the ESC, while those more than Rs. 25 crore would then be put up to the Competent Authority for approval.

The Chief Minister, Uttarakhand requested that cost sharing pattern for NGRBA projects between Centre & the State may be changed from 70:30 to 90:10, considering the special

category status of Uttarakhand. He also requested that the Centre should share the O&M cost for 15 years, instead of 5 years at present. The Chairman informed that in view the ongoing election process in the State, it would be appropriate that the matter is discussed in the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

5. The status of World Bank assisted NGRBA project (Agenda No. 5), preparation of Ganga River Basin Management Plan (Agenda No. 6) and response to the points raised by NGRBA Expert Members (Agenda No. 8 [part]) was noted by the Standing Committee.

6. Regarding the project proposal of Beliaghat Circular Canal, Kolkata (Agenda No.9[1]), it was informed by Secretary (Environment & Forests) that the project could not be considered as it was not found in accordance with the NGRBA Guidelines. The Government of West Bengal was, therefore, requested to restructure and reformulate the project in line with the prescribed guidelines for reconsideration. The Minister for Urban Development, West Bengal agreed for reformulation of the project and its submission to the NMCG.

7. Regarding the request received from the Chief Minister, Bihar to allow sanction of projects costing up to Rs. 100 crore by the States themselves (Agenda No. 9[3]), it was decided that the letter of the Chief Minister, Bihar and the response sent by Minister of State (I/C), Environment & Forests would be circulated to all members of the Standing Committee for their views and comments. Thereafter, this matter would be discussed in the next meeting of Standing Committee.

The meeting concluded with thanks to the Chair.

List of Participants

1. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Union Minister for Finance - In chair
2. Shri P. K. Bansal, Union Minister for Water Resources
3. Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission
4. Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Environment & Forests

Uttarakhand

5. Shri B. C. Khanduri, Chief Minister
6. Shri Utpal Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary, Peyjal
7. Shri S.K.Muttu, Principal Resident Commissioner
8. Shri S.D.Sharma, Resident Commissioner

Bihar

9. Dr. Prem Kumar, Minister of Urban Development

West Bengal

10. Shri Farhad Hakim, Minister-in-Charge, Urban Development
11. Shri Debashis Sen, Principal Secretary, Urban Development

Uttar Pradesh

12. Shri D. S. Mishra, Principal Secretary, Urban Development

Jharkhand

13. Shri Sanjay Kumar, Additional Resident Commissioner

Ministry of Finance

14. Smt. Omita Paul, Adviser to FM
15. Smt. Meena Agarwal, Joint Secretary
16. Shri Pradeep Gupta, OSD to FM

Ministry of Environment & Forests

17. Shri T. Chatterjee, Secretary
18. Smt. Mira Mehrishi, Addl. Secretary
19. Shri Rajiv Sharma, Mission Director, NMCG
20. Shri Aniruddhe Mukerjee, Director
21. Shri Brijesh Sikka, Director, NRCD
22. Shri B. B. Burman, Director, NRCD
23. Shri K. C. Rathore, Director, NRCD
24. Shri J. S. Kamyotra, Member Secretary, CPCB
25. Shri L. K. Bokolia, Joint Director, NRCD
26. Shri Sanjay Singh, Deputy Director, NRCD
27. Shri Amardeep Raju, Deputy Director, NRCD
28. Shri Vinod Kumar Singh, Deputy Director, NRCD
29. Shri C. Uppili, Under Secretary, NRCD
30. Shri K.A. Roy, Project Officer, NMCG
31. Dr. Vikash Shukla, Communications Coordinator