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## 'Radiation from Kaiga causing cancer'

Shimoga, Mar 14, 2013, DHNS :

**Western Ghats Task Force Chairperson Ananth Hegde Ashisara said on Thursday that radiation from the Kaiga nuclear plant in Uttara Kannada district was causing cancer among residents of nearby villages.**

He told a press conference that members of the Task Force had visited villages in a radius of 15 km of the plant and interacted with the residents. It is true that the number of cancer patients in areas close to the plant had increased in the recent past, as borne out by medical tests, he said.

Villagers brought to the notice of the Task Force the rise in cases of cancer among village residents and miscarriages among pregnant women around the power plant during the visit, Ashisara said.

The Task Force conducted field studies and interacted with residents in these villages, along with the management of the Kaiga plant and the district administration, regarding the impact of radiation, he said. It came to light that the radiation was the cause for cancer among the residents.

The Task Force had submitted a report to the government over higher incidence of cancer among residents in the vicinity than other areas, along with recommendations.

So, the State government, through the Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, was conducting a study on the impact of radiation on the health of people in villages close to the nuclear plant for the past four months, the chairperson said.

He said members of Citizen for Alternatives to Nuclear Energy, Bangalore, had conducted a primary health survey of 10,000 people living around Kaiga before the plant was set up, and there were just three cases of cancer then.

But, in the recent preliminary study, "we came across 35-40 different cancer cases (including blood cancer) in villages with a population of around 3,000 each, including Vajralli and Bare. We have also come across cases of still birth, said to be the result of radiation in the atmosphere around Kaiga," Ashisara said.

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The Kaiga Generating Nuclear Station in Karnataka, India ,owned and operated by the Nuclear Power Corp. of India Ltd. (NPCIL), should be closed immediately.

Investigation should be held by a third party experts including The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) . The Department of Atomic Energy Government of India should initiate action without fail.

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