





cts

Dakshina Kannada &amp; Udu

# Complaints pour in at UPCL meet

**'Expert panel recommendations to be submitted within 45 days'**

**UDUPI:** Karnataka Bio-fuel Development Board (KBDB) (Bangalore) Chairman Y B Ramakrishna said that recommendations of the expert committee on coal-based UPCL thermal power plant will be submitted to the government in four phases.

Speaking at the expert committee meeting on coal based Udupi Power Corporation Limited held here on Saturday, Commissioner's office on Saturday, Ramakrishna informed that the overall report of the committee on UPCL power project will be submitted to the government within one-and-a-half months. He said the first phase will comprise of the attempts to bridge the gap between district administration and local people in the power plant area. Besides, instructions will be given to the district administration over the measures to be taken in this direction. The second phase will focus on the lapses by the Company and the measures to be taken to rectify the lapses. The third phase recommendations will include an attempt at focusing over the lapses of the plant and the plant as a whole, especially the failures on the part of monitoring the plant. These failures will be brought to the notice of the government. Finally, it is the responsibility of the State government and Central gov-



An aged woman airing her grievance at the expert committee meet on UPCL on Saturday.

ernment to take action.

There are many issues to be taken care by the government. The issues like environment, public hearing, technical issues, impact assessment, amendments in the environmental policies come under the jurisdiction of the Central government, he added.

Ramakrishna informed that the committee received 55 written applications from the victims. The expert committee will analyse each application in depth and take decision over the matter. The team will also visit the UPCL site.

#### Threat to water body

Balakrishna Shetty, the executive president of Nandikur Janajagruti Samiti said the plant can not function at the present location. The project is serious threat to water body of

the region besides affecting the health of the villages. The geological conditions, soil conditions, the meteorological conditions, hydrological conditions and heavy precipitation make the area unsuitable for the project, he added.

The Karnataka Raja Raitha Sangha (KRRS) Udupi unit President Jayavani Hegde alleged that public hearing is not done prior to the setting up of the plant. Besides, the Joint Measurement Committee is not constituted.

Though human right violation taken place in the plant, no official has visited the site so far. The power plant was set up without obtaining permission from the Panchayat.

The substandard and cheaper technology is used in the plant to generate the power, he said.

Briefing over the problems

encountered by the villagers, KRRS President Suresh Hegde said. We don't need development at the cost of our lives and by destroying the precious environment. As many as 8 villages are massively affected by the plant. The public in the area are breathing heavily and are drinking contaminated water. The yield of paddy cultivation has drastically come down."

Dr Y N Shetty who owns private hospital in Padubidri said he receives many number of patients from Nandikur Janajagruti Samiti complaining over the respiratory problems and skin diseases.

Diseases like allergy bronchitis, allergy dermatitis and bronchitis asthma are common among the residents of the area, he informed.

Ramakant Devadiga from

Padubidri said that the high tension wire is oxidized due to the salt vapor emerging out of the chimneys of UPCL.

A localite, Gopi Pojary, alleged that her house with good yield was crushed down overnight by the company officials without giving any prior intimation. The case of land acquisition was pending before the court when the company officials destroyed her farm land.

KRRS District Vice-President Pракаш Shetty said the contaminated salty water released to the sea has affected marine lives.

Yellur Gram Panchayat Member Jayanth Bhat alleged that pollution control board officials have been bribed by the Company.

The expert committee team comprised of six members besides Karnataka Bio-fuel Development Board (KBDB) (Bangalore) Chairman Y B Ramakrishna, J V RamaChandra, scientist from Bharatiya Vijnana Kendra, Karnataka Environment Pollution Control Board, Senior Officer C D Kumar, Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT) Chemical Engineering Department Professor Jaydev Bhat, MIT Civil Engineering Department Professor T Ganesh, NITK Civil Department Professor Dr Subhash and Regional Environment Pollution Control Board Director T Balachandra.

DH News Service

THE HINDU NOVEMBER 20, 2011

# UPCL: people narrate their woes

Seven-member committee holds hearing in Udupi

Staff Correspondent

**UDUPI:** As many as 56 people from villages surrounding the thermal plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL) narrated their tales of suffering because of pollution caused by the plant, before the committee of experts here on Saturday.

The seven-member committee is headed by Y.B. Ramakrishna, who is also the Chairman of Karnataka Bio-fuel Development Board. Pain, agony and anger marked their narration of problems. The meeting, which began at 10.30 a.m. at the Deputy Commissioner's office complex, concluded at 2.45 p.m. The meeting was interrupted twice by remarks made by two persons which irked those affected by the plant.

Executive president of Nandikur Janajagruti Samiti Balakrishna Shetty told the committee that the plant should not be allowed to function from its present location with its severe environmental ramifications. Nearly 300 acres of the forest had been razed for the sake of the plant. Another four lakh trees would have to be felled for laying transmission lines in the Western



Executive president of Nandikur Janajagruti Samiti Balakrishna Shetty (left) speaking at a meeting on issues relating to the thermal plant of UPCL in Udupi on Saturday.

Ghats, which was unsustainable. The geographical features, soil, meteorological and hydrological conditions, and heavy precipitation made the area unsustainable for the plant. The plant was a serious threat to welfare of the people of the region. The financial and economical costs were not commensurate with the benefits from the plant, Mr. Shetty said.

President of the district unit of the Karnataka Raja Raitha Sangha (KRRS) Vijaykumar Hegde said that saline water from the plant flowed into the fields of farmers and destroyed their crops.

Y.N. Shetty, a fisherman from Padubidri, said that

he was getting less than 15 "murras" of paddy (one "mura" is roughly 40 kg). When Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda was Udu-

pi-Chikmagalur MP, he visited the area and promised to stop pollution from the thermal plant. But after he became Chief Minister, he did not bother to visit the village, Mr. Pojary said.

Gopi Pojary from Yellur said that though her case with regard to her land was being heard in the court, the authorities demolished her house and acquired her agricultural field. "Why should we be the ones when it's causing distress to so many people," she said.

Christine Quadros from Yellur said that her arecanut plantation and jasmine plants had been destroyed owing to pollution from the thermal plant. "But the government wants electricity and money and not the people," she said.

President of the Country Boat Fishermen's Association Jayaraj Thangalay said that the discharge of effluents into the sea by UPCL had affected fish production, and consequently, the livelihood of fishermen.

President of Yellur Gram Panchayat Suresh S. said that the panchayat could not hold "gram sabhas" (village meetings) as people wanted their problems regarding the thermal plant to be solved before any such meeting.

## Panel to submit report on UPCL plant soon

Staff Correspondent

**UDUPI:** Y.B. Ramakrishna, Chairman of the seven-member committee of experts to look into the problems of people in villages surrounding the thermal plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL), said on Saturday that the committee would submit its report to the State government.

Mr. Ramakrishna told pressers that the committee would give four-stage recommendations to the government. Its first recommendation would be that the gap between the people and the district administration should be reduced.

There should be coordination in dealing with problems of the affected persons. All matters should be resolved through discussions.

The second recommendation would focus on the lapses on the part of UPCL. The committee would submit an interim report on the lapses of UPCL.

The company had submitted an action taken report. Yet, there were some lapses. The committee would ask UPCL to set right the lapses.

The third recommendation would deal with lapses in procedures and monitoring UPCL after the company started functioning, especially with the regard to pollution. Here, the committee would focus on the steps which the State government would have to take.

#### Pollution control

The fourth recommendation would focus on pollution control.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be done properly. Without conducting public hearing and approving projects despite protests created problems.

The report would recommend steps needed to be taken by the Union and State governments in this regard.

The committee would also visit a couple of villages to study pollution, Mr. Ramakrishna said.

MANGALORE		
November	Rate	Set
Sun (20)	08.31	10.01
Mon (21)	08.31	10.01
Tue (22)	08.32	10.01
Wed (23)	08.32	10.01
Thu (24)	08.32	10.01
Fri (25)	08.32	10.01
Sat (26)	08.32	10.01
Sun (27)	09.18	14.22
Mon (28)	09.18	15.22

ಯುಪಿಸಿವಲ್ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ: ಒಂದೂವರೆ ತೀಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತಡ್ಳರ ವರದಿ

#### ■ ఏక సుద్ధిప్రాణికి శాశ్వతము

శాసుం పట్టణ వాయిదారెడ్డ  
(యుసుల్వా) సుప్పుర కామాసు శ్రద్ధ  
సమీ ప్రాంత వెల్కులు కేం  
స్థాపాలించి క్రూచుచు ప్రాంత  
కొండల ప్రాంత ప్రమాది నిమి.

ಕರ್ತವ್ಯ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶನ ಗ್ರಹ ಪ್ರವರ್ತನೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ದಾಂತ್ಯ ಎಂ. ಪ್ರತಿಭಾ ಮಾನ್ಯಲ್ಕಾರಿ, ನಾನ್ಯಾ ಪರಿಂಪಣಿನ ಸರ್ವಾರ್ಥಗಳ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ ರಿಂದ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮ ಬಂದಿಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ. ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮದಾರರು ಎಂಬ ಪದವಿ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮದಾರರು ಅವರು ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮದಾರರಿಗೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ. ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮದಾರರು ಅವರು ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕರ್ಮದಾರರಿಗೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ.

ಸಂತ್ರಸ್ಯರ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ತಜ್ಜರ ಸಮಾಂತಿ ದಿಕ್ಕಿರ್ ಭೀಣಿ

PRAJAVANI NOVEMBER 20, 2011

‘ಯುಪಿಸೀಲ್‌ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ – ಶೀಘ್ರವೇ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ವರದಿ’

ప్రాచీనమైన వార్తలు

କାହାର କ୍ଷେତ୍ରମର୍ଗ ପାରାନ୍ତରେ ଉଚ୍ଚତା  
ପାରାନ୍ତରେ ଉଚ୍ଚତା

“କମ୍ବୁ କାହାରୁଟି ହେଲିବାରେ? ଏହାରୁ କାହାରୁଟିକାହାରୁ ଅଧିକ ଯିବା  
କାହାରୁଟିକାହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ ଏହାରୁ

ಸಂತ್ರಸ್ತರ ಮಧ್ಯ ಮಾತಿನ ಚಕಮಚಿ; ಪೂಲೀಸರ ಮಧ್ಯಪ್ರವೇಶ



କାଳରେ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରୁ ମରାରିଦ୍ଵାରା ଏହା  
ବ୍ୟାପରୁ କେବଳରୁ କାହାରେ  
କାହାରୁ କାହାରୁ କାହାରୁ କାହାରୁ

‘ಎರಡು ತಿಂಗಳೊಳಗೆ ಸರಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ವರದಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಕೆ’

2011

ಯುಸ್ತಿಸಿವಲ್: ಯೋಜನಾ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ತಜ್ಜರ ಸಮಿತಿಯ ಭೇಟಿ, ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ



ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಂಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾರ್ಥಕ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಸಾಧಕರಿಗೆ ಸಾರ್ಥಕ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಸಾಧಕರಿಗೆ

ಮೊರ್ಗೆ ದಿಂಡನೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿತ ಹಾಯಾ. ಕೆಂಪಕ ರಾಧು ಶೈವ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಈ ಬಾಂದಿನ ವೈಜ್ಯಾಸಿ ಸಮಾಜಯು ಚಿಂಗಾರಿಸಿರು ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಜ್ಯಾಸ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ (ಬಾಂದಿನ್‌ಕೆ) ಕಾ.ಟೆ. ಎ. ಮಾರ್ಚ್‌ನ್‌ದ್ರಿಂದ, ಪರಿಸರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಕ್ರಮಾಗ್ರಂಥ ಮಾಡಿರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಉಂದ ಹಾದಿಬೆಳ್ಳು ದೇವತಾಗಳು ಮತ್ತಿತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಉಂದಿಂದ ಶುದ್ಧಿತ  
ಅದ್ದ ಮೂರ್ಕಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ ಕರಿಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ದಯವನಿಂದ  
ದೇವತಾಗಳ ಮಹಿಳೆಗಳ ಪರ್ವತ ಕಲುಹಕ್ಕ ಬಾಗಿ ನೀರು,  
ಕ್ಷಮೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಉರ್ಜ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಗೆ ನಾಶವನ್ನು ಶುರು  
ಪಡಿಸುವುದು.

କାହାରେମେଲୁ ଦେଇବ ମୁକୁତୁମୁକୁ କାହାରୁବାଦିଯାଏଇଦ  
ଦେଇବର ମେଲାବ କାହାରୁ ବାହି ଦେଇବର ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ  
ଦେଇବର ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ ଦେଇବ ଦେଇବ ବାହି ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ  
ଦେଇବର ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ ଦେଇବ ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ ଦାରୁକାନ୍ଦ

ಸಾರ್ಥಕ ಕರಿಯ ನೀತಿ ವಾದಾರ್ಥಕ ಸಾಧನೆ ದಾಖಲೆ ನಾಯಕ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಹಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಾರ್ಡ್, ಮನೆಯದರು ಕುಡಿಯಲು ಬಳಸುವ ಈ ಬಾವಿಯ ನೀತಿ ಶಂಕ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ

మాటలాగిన్న చ్ఛికలించిందయి.

ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮಾತ್ರ, ಕೆಲವು ಮನೋರ್ಥ ಹಾಗೆ ನೀರು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಕ್ರಾಂತಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿರುತ್ತಿದ್ದು. ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಗೆ ಇದನ್ನು ಅಂತಿಮವಾಗಿ ಕೊಂಡಿನಿಸಿ, ಅಂತಿಮವಾಗಿ ಅಂತಿಮವಾಗಿ ಕೊಂಡಿನಿಸಿ.

ಕಲುವಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡಿ ಯಾವುದೂ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಪಕ ಮುಂದಾಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು ಮತ್ತು ಅವರು ಸರಿಸಬಾಹುವು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.

ଏହା ପରିବାରି ମୁଖ୍ୟମାୟୀଙ୍କ ନିରାକାର କୁରାନ୍ତିକୁ  
ଦାନ କୁଳୀଙ୍କ ନିରାକାରଙ୍କ ଦାନ କୁରାନ୍ତିକୁ



# THE HINDU

## [News](#) » [States](#) » [Karnataka](#)

Published: May 3, 2012 09:30 IST | Updated: May 3, 2012 09:30 IST

### **Report highlights 'adverse effects' of UPCL plant**

Staff Correspondent

A Technical Report on the problems caused by pollution allegedly from the coal-based 1,200 MW thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Ltd. (UPCL) at Yellur and its surrounding villages by two experts T.V. Ramachandra and Y.B. Ramakrishna was released by Visvesha Tirtha Swami of Pejawar Math at a press conference here on Wednesday.

While Dr. Ramachandra is from the Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Centre of Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, Mr. Ramakrishna is the Executive Chairman, Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board. Visvesha Tirtha Swami had asked these two experts in January this year to submit an independent report after they were dropped from the government-appointed expert committee to look into the pollution caused allegedly by UPCL.

This technical report is based on detailed field investigation (water, soil, biotic elements) and interaction with the local people. A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, conducted a detailed scientific assessment of the environmental conditions of the region from August to November 2011, which is deliberated in the report. The other members of the team were Gautham Krishnadas, Sudarshan P. Bhat, Durga Madhab Mahapatra and Bharath H. Aithal from IISc, Bangalore.

In its executive summary, the report gives a graphic picture of problems caused by pollution from the thermal power plant in Yellur (including Kolachur), Nandikur, Nadsal (including Tenka Yermal), Bada, Padebettu, Santhur, Palimar, Karnire and Hejmady villages.

The report states that there was contamination of water (surface and ground), soil and air apart from the impaired functional aspects of biotic elements. This was evident from reduced productivity (grains, jasmine flowers, coconut, arecanut and livestock – milk), reproductive ability (livestock, poultry animals).

Deposition of dust with toxicants in floral parts of the vegetation had reduced phyto-toxicity leading to poor pollination and hence reduced productivity. Reduced population of pollinators (bees) had been reported in these villages due to degradation of environment.

Field investigation had revealed stunted growth of saplings (evident in the power plant's green belt), drying up of leaves, corrosion of metals and resultant damage to tin roofs, dish antennas, transmission lines, railway tracks, fencing of the power plant boundary, enhanced respiratory diseases, non-palatable grass (livestock refrain from feeding on grass). This was due to deposition of supersaturated saline mist on soil and foliage.

Along with field observations with causal factors, the report gives mitigation measures.

Keywords: [thermal power plant](#)

Printable version | May 3, 2012 10:29:34 AM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/karnataka/article3377343.ece>  
© The Hindu

## Mangalorean May 3, 2012

### Udupi: Damage Caused by UPCL Should Not be Paid by Gov't: Pejawar Swamiji

[Print article](#) | [E-mail article](#) | [Post comment](#)

Published Date: 03 May, 2012 (8:41 AM)

Report and pics by Michael Rodrigues

Team Mangalorean Udupi

**Udupi:** Shri Vishwesha Tirtha Swamiji of Pejawar had named a team of scientists for study of damage caused by the coal-fired thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation and they have submitted report. The Swamiji has handed over the report to chief minister Sadananda Gowda and directed him to pass the order as in the report.

The Swamiji released the report at a media meet in the Math on Wednesday and said that this report had given him enormous strength to his fight against the UPCL.



Under the guidance of chairman of Bio-Fuel Task Force Y B Ramakrishna, the Swamiji had appointed a team of 6 scientists and they have studied all the reports with precision and technical support. The report says that there is severe damage to surrounding villages' environment. He has also urged the UPCL to follow the rules without any conditions and also threatened to protest with the public.

Until now the affected public and environmentalists had opposed this but the UPCL had rejected it for reason that it was unscientific. Now that this report has been submitted by the experts, the Swamiji has exerted pressure on the state government and the UPCL.

The report details the financial, social and health-related problems, hence the UPCL must take responsibility of cleaning up the pollution, compensating the affected etc. The government need not pay all this amount from the tax-payers' money. Only the UPCL must be made to pay it, he said.

When the UPCL started functioning with the support of the BJP government in spite of opposition, the Swamiji began opposing it. To pacify the Swamiji, the late Dr V S Acharya recommended a team of 6 scientists, four of them from the government and two of Swamiji's choice. Annoyed over this, the Swamiji requested the two scientists of his choice to prepare a report separately.

The Dakshin Times 4 May, 2012

# The Dakshin Times

## UPCL affected lives of people, says Report

May 4, 2012



Udupi: Water has been contaminated, the yielding capacity of crops has gone down, and reproduction of livestock too has been affected.

These are some of the points mentioned in the findings of the expert committee that inspected the areas affected by Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL).

The report states that the lives of people living in villages like Yellur, Nandikur, Nadsalu, Thenka Yermalu, Bada Padebettu, Santhoor, Palimar, Karnire and Hejamady has been grossly affected. Along with air pollution, even the fertility of soil has gone down, thereby leading to depletion in crop yield.

The report also states about a startling fact that most of the animals domesticated in the area are not being able to reproduce.

"The growth of plants around the region is not like before. The dust settlements on the leaves of the plants are burning down the leaves. There is sudden dwarfing of plants. People are facing breathing problems due to the air pollution. The salt emanating from cooling tower of the unit has been depositing on the fodder, making it unfit for consumption by the cattle," the report reads.

The report says that the iron content in water available around two kms radius of the unit has increased drastically. The water in the region does not meet the UNO prescribed standards.

The coal waste is released to water bodies in Yellur, Padebettu, Thenka and south Kolachur, which has massively polluted the water bodies. The report speaks of the unscientific management of flying ash. It is said that the water from the ash pit is released into River Shambhavi due to which the underground water at Santhoor village is getting affected.

"The salt mixed water is getting leaked due to which the fertility of the soil is at stake. This is having direct impact on the yield," the report says and adds that the number of birds in the region too has decreased.

The report recommends steps to stop pollution in the region, restore the natural surroundings, all works related to pollution control and conservation of nature should be taken up by the management and Government should not fund these projects and the unit should abide by all rules and norms applicable to them.

Dr T V Ramachandra, Y B Ramakrishna, Gautham Krishnadas, Sudarshan P Bhat, Durga Madab Mahapatra and Bharath Aithal were the members of the team.

The Times of India May 4, 2012

## Pejawar seer submits report on Udupi Power Corporation Limited to govt

TNN May 4, 2012, 05:53AM IST

**Tags:** Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami | Pejawar seer | Karnataka State Biofuel | chief minister DV Sadananda Gowda

**MANGALORE:** Pejawar seer Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami has submitted a report prepared by the parallel expert committee, formed to study environmental impacts of the thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL), to chief minister DV Sadananda Gowda.

Earlier, the parallel expert committee consisting YB Ramakrishna, executive chairman of Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board and TV Ramachandra of Energy and Wetlands Research Group had submitted the report on the pollution caused by the plant to the seer.

The panel observed in the report that the open type box transportation method used by the unit is causing spillage of coal and coal dust in the vicinity. "Railway tracks, fencing of the green belt of the plant, tin sheets, transmission lines, iron pillar and silver-plated door frame and door of the main entrance of Subramanya temple in Padabetu and Durgaparameshwari temple in Nandikur, all located within two km of the plant, were found corroded. Higher salinity was observed in water samples collected from wells within the two km radius of the plant. It was also observed that water in nearby wells and streams had saltiness, difference in colour and oily layers. People in the zone had skin rashes, lesions, nail deformation (onychodystrophy) and skin itching due to water contamination. A change was observed in the groundwater table also," the report stated.

Respiratory ailments like asthma, alveolar infections, and bronchitis were reported from the area. Eye irritation and skin diseases were found in the south-eastern side closer to silos, where fly ash is stored, added the report.

It further said that livestock in the region too had skin and respiratory ailments, miscarriages and other health problems including decline in milk yield. The report pointed out that there was a reduction in paddy yield in the core zone by 57 to 66 per cent. Premature falling and reduced yield of areca, coconut and banana, and reduction in the population of peafowl, foxes and wild boar are other major concerns.

# 'Udupi thermal plant has impacted health, livelihood of village residents'

Divya Gandhi

**BANGALORE:** Air and water pollution from the contentious 600 MW thermal power plant in Udupi's Yellur village has not only corroded infrastructure and caused leaf burn in crops, it has also had a devastating impact on human health, finds a report of an expert team.

The report was submitted earlier this week to the State government.

A range of contaminants, including heavy metals from fly ash dumps, saline mist emissions from cooling towers and coal mix effluents have led to respiratory, skin and digestive disorders in residents around a six-km radius around the power plant, says the report.

Asthma, alveolar infection, bronchitis, skin rashes, lesions, eye infections and ony-

- **Study finds presence of heavy metals in water and soil in a six-km radius around the plant**
- **This led to respiratory, skin and digestive disorders in residents**

chodystrophy (nail deformation) were among the commonly recorded ailments by the team that included T.V. Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

Water samples collected within a two-km radius 'core zone' around the plant and soil samples from buffer regions (six-km radius) were found to have heavy metals such as cadmium, lead, cobalt, nickel, copper, chromium and manganese.

"The irresponsible act of releasing untreated effluents (rich in salinity, heavy metals,

hydrocarbons) is primarily responsible for contamination of water (ground and surface waters) and land resources," says the report.

In three villages within the core zone well water had turned saline, red and oily. Salt and soot depositions cloaked plants, clothes and household items. Farmers said that paddy yield had declined by 57 to 66 per cent, besides reporting leaf burn in crops that included coconut, banana and jasmine. Likewise livestock owners reported that there was a decline in milk yield.

Fly-ash, a toxic byproduct

of coal combustion has been mismanaged, the report says: "The inadequate or absence of impervious layer in the ash pond has led to seepage of contaminated water to the surrounding water sources... Ash pond effluents were discharged to a nearby perennial stream (which is being used for domestic activities by the residents of Santhur village)."

The report also refers to the unhygienic conditions in the workers' colony including unsafe drinking water, unhygienic toilet facilities and inadequate sewage treatment. A high incidence of malaria and chikungunya were reported among the residents of the colony. The study area included ten villages around the thermal power plant - Yellur, Padebetu, Nadsal, Nandikur, Santhur, Karnire, Bada, Palimar, Padebetu and Hejamadi in Udupi taluk.

## Today's Paper » NATIONAL » KARNATAKA

Published: May 7, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: May 7, 2012 04:46 IST

### UPCL issues may be resolved in two weeks

Staff Correspondent

The State Government will give priority to resolve issues that were delaying in commissioning the second unit of the Udupi Power Corporation's coal-based power plant. The Cabinet will be taking up the matter shortly and resolve the issues in the next two weeks, said Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda.

Mr. Gowda told presspersons here on Sunday that there had been several reasons for the delay. There was delay on the part of the company at the time of construction of power plants because of failure of Chinese engineers to attend the work following earthquake in China. There had been delay because of the change in the stand of Indonesia over supply of coal, he said.

On the other hand, getting clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forest was delayed for the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation's work of setting up the 400 kV transmission line for evacuating power from the project. "There are other problems too. There is also environment problem," he said.

Mr. Gowda said the State Government had taken a serious view of the project. In the coming Cabinet meeting, discussions would be held about memorandum of understanding to be signed by the UPCL, the Government, and the Electricity Supply Companies.

"We will take steps to resolve all issues in the next two weeks," he said.

The 1200 MW coal-based power plant of the UPCL was located in the Nanikur village near Udupi. While the first unit of the plant of 600 MW capacity started commercial operations in November 2010, the second unit, also with a capacity of 600 MW, was yet to begin its operations.

A few days ago, T.V. Ramachandra from Energy and Wetlands Research Group of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and Y.B. Ramakrishna, Executive Chairman of Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board, submitted to Vishwesha Tirtha Swami of Pejawar Mathi, a detailed report about the problems caused because of UPCL. The swamiji demanded the State Government take steps to stop pollution or shut down the plant's operation.

- **There are problems relating to workers, coal supply**
- **Escoms may be asked to sign power purchase pact**

## Pejawar seer serves ultimatum on UPCL

May 28, 2012

By Amit S. Upadhye DC



The expert committee appointed to assess the environmental impact on villagers living around the thermal power plant of Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL), in Yellur village in Udupi district has given the thumbs down for the company to operate.

The committee had submitted the report to the Pejawar seer, Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swami. Based on the report, the seer told the government that the company should either decontaminate the region or shut its doors.

The final report made available to *Deccan Chronicle* lists a series of irregularities and environmental degradations caused by the power plant, which is damaging people's health and livestock.

There are serious lapses in the way in which the company is running the power plant, the report says.

Streams in the vicinity of the power plant have been contaminated with coal mixed effluents, resulting in the increase of ionic concentrations of surface water in nearby water bodies.

This has resulted in declining crop yield and has affected the health of the human and cattle populations in the vicinity (see box).

High levels of salinity, fly ash dust and vaporised heavy metals have been found in the soil. The dust deposited on the flowering parts of crops reduces the population of pollinators such as bees, and this reduced pollination has contributed to the decline in crop yield.

The report is based on a study conducted in Yellur (including Kolachur) and surrounding villages of Nandikur, Nadsal (including Tenka Yermal), Bada, Padebetu, Santhur, Palimar, Karnire and Hejamadi, subsequent to the commissioning of the coal-based thermal power station.

"Since 2010 the region has been experiencing large scale environmental contamination (land, water, air and biotic elements) affecting the livelihood of the local people. The company has thrown all environmental norms to the winds and caused heavy contamination and environmental degradation in the region," said Dr T. V. Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science, who is on the committee.

Dr M. K. Ramakrishna, chairman of Bio Diesel Task Force is on the six-member expert committee constituted by the government to assess the impact of the thermal power plant.

Differences in the committee led to the dropping of two of the members, but they continued with the report and submitted it to the Pejawar seer recently.