



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
RAJYA SABHA

Member of Standing Committee on Finance
Member of Consultative Committee on Finance
Member of Central Advisory Committee for the National Cadet Corps
Co-Chairman, District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee, Bengaluru Urban District
July 30, 2017

Dear Kumaraswamy avaru,

Sub: Urge you to call for an inquiry and take action against officials of the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority-Karnataka (SEIAA-K).

I write to you to bring to your attention irregularities in the function of SEIAA- Karnataka and its role in not carrying out its duties mandated in Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006. As you are aware, the SEIAA-Karnataka is responsible for scrutinising and issuing Environmental Clearances (EC) for Category B projects of the schedule in the EIA notification, 2006.

As an independent body the SEIAA-Karnataka is supposed to study and assess the damage of anthropogenic activities in the states and issue ECs only if developmental projects are sustainable and do not have negative implications to the Environment.

Unfortunately, however, the SEIAA-Karnataka has been fraught with compromise and has been party and complicit to rampant violation of Environmental of environmental regulations. Additionally, many years of corruption and collusion between politicians and vested interests has reduced the SEIAA to a rubber stamp for the State Government and vested interests.

There are many examples of during the controversial Steel Flyover Fiasco and Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) projects in Bengaluru last year, SEIAA-K approved these area development projects by merely going by the requisition of the executing agency, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) as road expansion projects, in clear violation of EIA notification.



The SEIAA-Karnataka has no authority to approve projects on the basis of only information provided by the executing agencies but must scrutinise all project related details before issuing clearances. This was not the case with respect to the 6.7 km steel flyover which was not in the case.

Similarly, the SEIAA-Karnataka has granted clearances to large scale building constructions, stone quarries and sand-mining across Bangalore. A report released by EIA Resource and Response Centre in 2016 stated the SEIAA-Karnataka had cleared 97% of the projects in Karnataka in 2015. Moreover, the report says that the SEIAA-Karnataka granted clearances in record time without scrutinising the projects.

Given my own experiences with the functioning of SEIAA-Karnataka, I have reason to believe that the SEIAA-Karnataka needs to be investigated and exposed.

Numerous development projects are close to being implemented across Karnataka, many of them cutting across crucial forests and biodiversity hotspots. Projects like the Bengaluru-Mangaluru, Chitradurga-Dharmasthala etc cutting across the Western Ghats are bound to kill 7.35 lakh trees.

The SEIAA-Karnataka needs to take due cognisance of the impact and they need to conduct in-depth appraisals of the project and go beyond the documents submitted by project proponents or developers. They must assess the environmental feasibility and have experts decided on whether the projects must be cleared or declined.

Similarly, the network of 95 km elevated corridors proposed in this year's budget for Bengaluru is bound to have massive Environmental impact and given that the SEIAA-Karnataka is already compromised, I have no reason to believe that sustainability and the environment will be a priority for our city.

The only recourse for citizens in Karnataka and Bengaluru to the irregularities of the SEIAA-Karnataka is the National Green Tribunal (NGT), NGT questioned the SEIAA for its lethargy in not monitoring the Government's move to build the controversial Steel Flyover in Bengaluru. Unfortunately, given the NGT has been overburdened with petitions and has thus provided the Government and regulatory authorities with a 15 day window to act on petitions. But for that we need a functioning regulatory authority which SEIAA-K is supposed to be but unfortunately is not.



I urge you to take immediate action against SEIAA-K officials who are complicit of irregularities.

Yours sincerely,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

Shri HD Kumaraswamy
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka
Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru

Copy to:

Dr. G Parameshwara, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister & Bengaluru Development Minister
Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru