

Printed from

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

## Environment ministry clears Andhra project

TNN, Jul 30, 2010, 02:45am IST

NEW DELHI: Going purely on the assurances of the Andhra Pradesh government, the Union environment and forests ministry has cleared the long-pending case of diverting 3,831 hectares of forest land for the Rs 8,000-crore Polavaram project on Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh meant to provide irrigation water to four districts. The clearance came after Andhra officials met Union environment minister Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday.

Oddly, while the ministry had set up separate committees to investigate the settlement of rights under the Forest Rights Act in other high profile cases such as Vedanta and Posco which propose to displace far lesser people, in the Polavaram case the ministry has decided to accept the state government's compliance report on face value.

The mega-project is expected to submerge 276 villages displacing upwards of two lakh people by some estimates.

The clearance for the controversial project from the MoEF would come as a shot in the arm for the government which is embroiled in cases in both the Andhra Pradesh High Court and the Supreme Court over dispute with neighbouring Orissa and Chhattisgarh, which claim they would be impacted by the project.

The in principle clearance for diversion of forest land was given to the state government in December 2008. In October 2009 and then again in June 2010, the state government forwarded compliance reports to the MoEF.

A press release by MoEF mentions that the clearance is based on the assurance of the Andhra government that no forest rights need to be settled under the FRA in this case.

The clearance letter released by the ministry does not put the complete implementation of FRA as a condition.

The ministry has put the conditions that the no submergence of forest land should take place in Orissa and Chhattisgarh though it would be outside the mandate of the ministry to get involved in displacement of people or diversion of non-forest land.

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**Powered by **INDIATIMES**

» About us » Advertise with us » Terms of use » Privacy policy » Feedback  
 » RSS » Newsletter » TOI Mobile » ePaper » Archives

**Other Times Group news sites**

The Economic Times | इकनॉमिक टाइम्स  
 छत्रपति संदेश | Mumbai Mirror  
 Times Now | Indiatimes  
 नवभारत टाइम्स | महाराष्ट्र टाइम्स

**Living and entertainment**

Timescity | iDiva | Bollywood | Zoom

**Network**

itimes | Dating & Chat | Email

**Hot on the Web**

Hotklix

**Services**

Book print ads | Online shopping | Business solutions | Book domains | Web hosting  
 Business email | Free SMS | Free email | Website design | CRM | Tenders | Remit  
 Cheap air tickets | Matrimonial | Ringtones | Astrology | Jobs | Property | Buy car eGreetings

Copyright © 2010 Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. All rights reserved. For reprint rights: Times Syndication Service