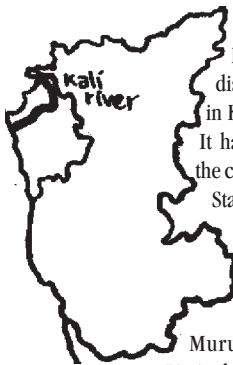


Kali – A Dying River

6 MAJOR DAMS, A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, PAPER MILL AND NOW ANOTHER DAM?

JOIN THE KALI BACHAO ANDOLAN (Save Kali River Movement)
AND HELP SAVE WHAT LITTLE IS LEFT OF THE KALI RIVER



The 184 kms. long Kali River in the Uttara Kannada district of the Western Ghats region in Karnataka is under severe threat. It has 6 major hydroelectric dams, the controversial Kaiga Nuclear Power Station (the only nuclear plant in a forest in the World), and now, there is a serious attempt at building a 7th dam on the Kali River, near Dandeli, by Murudeshwar Power Corporation Limited (MPCL). The river is also being polluted by the Dandeli Paper Mills which releases its untreated effluents directly into the river. In addition to damming and pollution, there is also the threat of further illegal sand mining that is continuing on a rampant scale in the Supa Dam area, resulting in serious disturbances to the river's ecology.

Facts

Due to the proposed dam by MPCL, the last stretch of the Kali that is flowing freely will now be lost for posterity. The dam will generate only 18 MW of electricity but at the cost of submerging 210 ha of forests along the Kali. Over 32,000 acres of forests have already been submerged in Uttara Kannada to build the six hydroelectric dams that generate over 1200 MW of electricity. Construction of this new dam is also a significant violation of the 19th May 1987 Government of Karnataka order (No. FFD 242 FGL 83) that no further projects involving diversion of forest land for other uses will be undertaken on Kali River or its tributaries. The latest Supreme Court decisions have upheld the spirit of this order.

Legally this project has to be abandoned: the proponent along with its consultants are guilty of presenting two fraudulent Environment Impact Assessments (EIAs), one by Ernst and Young, and thereafter by Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI). Environment Support Group and Parisara Samrakshana Kendra exposed both during 2000, and as per the EIA Notification, this is definitely a case fit for rejection. Based on this expose, the DC of Uttara Kannada district has recommended that the project not be allowed. The District Forest Officer has also found that the claims of MPCL that there are no forests in the submergence area are false, for this area constitutes an assemblage of moist deciduous and evergreen forests, supporting a range of wildlife, including the occasional tiger. Yet there is very high pressure to build this dam.

In addition to being indiscriminately dammed, the Kali River is being polluted by the Dandeli Paper Mills, which throws out large volumes of untreated effluents into

the river. For the communities that depend on this river, adverse impact of the accumulated pollutants has been tremendous. Losses in agriculture, dairy farming and fisheries are a common tale here, and cattle deaths are regularly reported. Farmers in direct contact with the water suffer from a variety of skin diseases caused due to pollution of the river. Very little is known of the impact on wildlife. The concerned regulatory agency, the Karnataka Pollution Control Board has done very little to contain the damage, thereby allowing the mills a free run on its polluting spree. Only recently, due to pressure from local communities under the banner of Kali Bachao Andolan, has there been some response; with the local Assistant Commissioner initiating criminal proceedings against the company. The demand is not a closure of the Dandeli Paper Mills. Rather, it is to get the mill to clean up its operations for the benefit of all - including the employees of the mill.

The people of the region, in order to end this misery, are working to build awareness on the threats to the Kali River and save it. Parisara Samrakshana Kendra (PSK), along with several local community organizations and tribal villages has formed the Kali Bachao Andolan (KBA). Panduranga Hegde, leading the KBA, and several others conducted a Padayatra (an awareness-building and protest walk along the entire course of the river) in February this year. Sunderlal Bahuguna, leader of the Chipko Andolan, launched this Padayatra. There has been overwhelming response from local communities to this effort. Environment Support Group (ESG), Bangalore, is an active support organization involved in the KBA.

Appeal to the Chief Minister of Karnataka:

We are enclosing a sample letter addressed to the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Mr. S.M.Krishna. We encourage you to endorse this letter by mailing the Chief Minister (and/or emailing the Chief Minister and marking a copy to the Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Mr. T.R.Baalu, and to ESG). Do encourage your friends and associates to sign and send many more letters.

Contribution:

There are many expenses we incur in organizing these efforts. We rely on your donations to cover part of the cost of this effort. Please do donate generously in support of the Kali Bachao Andolan. All financial contributions (Cheque/DD/MO/Cash) should be in favour of Environment Support Group, and should be sent to Environment Support Group indicating that the contribution is for Kali Bachao Andolan. All monetary contributions benefit from income tax exemptions under Sec 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Your voice in support of the Kali Bachao Andolan will go a long way in supporting the cause of this river.

An appeal to save Kali River for posterity

To
Mr. S.M.Krishna,
Chief Minister of Karnataka,
Vidhana Soudha
Bangalore 560001 INDIA
Email: cm@kar.nic.in <mailto:cm@kar.nic.in>

Honourable Chief Minister,

We appeal to you to address the concerns raised by the Kali Bachao Andolan (KBA) formed by several local community organizations and tribal villages to highlight severe threats to the Kali River and protect it for posterity.

We appeal that you should take the initiative in ensuring that the Kali is saved for posterity.

Please ensure that:

- No more dams will be allowed on the Kali.
- The serious pollution of the Kali from the Dandeli Paper Mills and other sources is ended immediately.
- Illegal sand mining on the Banks of Kali and its tributaries is stopped.

We support the aspirations of the people of Uttara Kannada who want the Kali flowing and alive with life. Not dammed, polluted and dead.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Affiliation)

(Address)

(Email ID, if any)

Email the Chief Minister
smkrishna@bangaloreit.com
cmkrishna@bangaloreit.com

Environment Support Group
S-3, Rajashree Apartments,
18/57, 1st Main Road, S.R.K.Gardens,
Jayanagar, Bannerghatta Road
Bangalore 560 041 INDIA
Telefax: 91-80-6341977/6531339/6534364
Email: esg@bgl.vsnl.net.in

Parisara Samrakshana Kendra
Hulemalgi Building, Chowkimath,
Sirsi (Uttara Kannada Dt.)
Karnataka 581401
Tel: 91-8384 425139/425039
Fax: 91-4435450/ 427839
Email: appiko@sancharnet

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