

AFFECTED CITIZENS OF TEESTA

North Sikkim

PRESS RELEASE

National Green Tribunal overrules the attempt of Sikkim Govt., NHPC and MoEF to dismiss the case filed by the people of Sikkim to cancel the environmental clearances issued to NHPC for construction of Teesta Hydro Electric Power Project Stage IV in North Sikkim.

In the hearing held on the 29th of August 2014 in the Eastern Zone bench of the National Green Tribunal at Kolkatta, West Bengal, pertaining to matter of Tenzing Lepcha and others vs. the Union of India and others, the Hon'ble Judge (judicial member) and the Expert Member of the NGT overturned the appeal by the respondents NHPC, Govt. of Sikkim and the Ministry of Environment & Forests (GOI) to technically dismiss the petition by the people of Sikkim on technical ground and not on merit.

The respondents had challenged the maintainability of the litigation on the issue of time period and had requested that the case may be dismissed without further hearing on the merit. The Hon'ble Judge and the Hon'ble Expert Member of the Tribunal condoned (pardoned/overlook) the delay and instead passed orders for hearing the case on merit.

However, the NGT also dismissed the appeal by the appellant for a stay on all proceedings in the Teesta HEP Stage IV on the ground submitted by NHPC that no work has been started so far and the tribunal has given the appellant the right to appeal if any work is started.

With the order it now paves way for hearing on merit of case wherein it has been requested that the Environmental Clearance issued by MoEF to NHPC for the construction a mega project, the Teesta HEP Stage IV over Teesta in North Sikkim, be cancelled.

All the details of the proceedings of the NGT are enclosed for further reference and for broad publicity.

Tseten Lepcha

Working President

Affected Citizens of Teesta

Dated: Gangtok, September 19, 2014