

No clearance to power plants if they don't follow norms: MoEF

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New Delhi, Jan 17 (PTI) The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) today assured the National Green Tribunal that it would not grant clearance to any new thermal power plant until they comply with the standards set by it, after a plea alleged that many plants were flouting norms and causing pollution.

The Environment Ministry in December 2015 had issued a notification revising the standards for coal-based thermal power plants across the country which aimed to reduce emissions like sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, besides water consumption.

These power plants were given a deadline of December 2017 to install appropriate mechanism and technologies to cut emissions.

The lawyer appearing for the ministry told a bench headed by acting Chairperson Justice U D Salvi that a plea seeking extension of time for implementing the MoEF's notification was pending in the Supreme Court.

However, the submission was opposed by the counsel for petitioner Sunil Dahiya, who said the apex court has not granted any extension in the matter. The issue will now come up for hearing on March 7.

The tribunal had earlier directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to clarify its stand on coal-based thermal power plants which were causing emission beyond permissible limits resulting in air pollution.

The NGT had earlier rapped the MoEF for not abiding by its directions on implementation of a notification on air pollution emission standards and water consumption for coal-based thermal power plants.

The tribunal was hearing Dahiya's plea seeking a direction to the environment ministry and the environmental impact assessment authorities of all the states to ensure that all new approvals comply with the standards provided in the December 7, 2015 notification.

According to the plea, the ministry had promulgated the notification to bring about a reduction in air pollution and water consumption by thermal power plants across the country.

The petitioner had also said that according to the notification, coal thermal power plants installed after January 1 this year should adhere to stricter air pollution norms and the ones installed before December 31, 2016 were given time till December 7, 2017 for compliance. PTI PKS ARC .

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