Industries seek relief on the use of groundwater

More than 20,000 applications for NOCs have been put on hold due to NGT order

gireesh.p@livemint.com NEW DELHI

he policy vacuum triggered by a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order on the use of groundwater impacted businesses across sectors. In view of the regulatory uncertainty, industry bodies have now approached the Jal Shakti ministry seeking relief on the use of groundwater, considering that more than 20,000 applications for no-objection certificates (NOCs) have been put on hold by the authorities.

In January 2019, the NGT had ordered the Centre to put on hold its new norms on groundwater use.

Representatives of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) wrote to Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and NITI Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar on 16 June to resolve the regulatory uncertainty over granting NOCs.

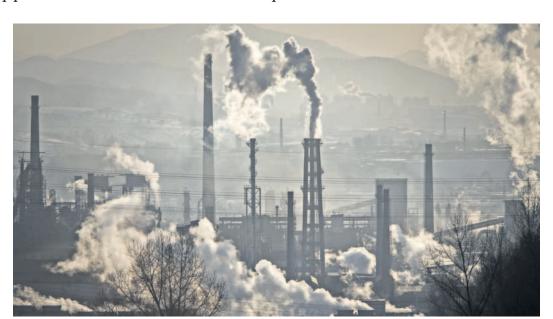
The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), which issues the NOCs, has put the process on hold for critical and

overexploited blocks since early 2019, following the NGT order involving a hospitality firm. The tribunal further

ordered in January 2020 that permission should be granted on the basis of a study of

groundwater availability and periodical report that replenishment had resulted in improvement. Non-renewal of the NOCs has

become a thorny issue for the industry as a large number of businesses may find themselves on the wrong side of the law despite com-



CII has written to the government saying the non-renewal of NOCs is leading to the closure of factories. BLOOMBERG

plying with all the riders that were part of the existing guidelines.

According to an industry executive, about 20,000 applications are pending before the CGWA. Around 800,000 companies fall in overexploited, critical and semi-critical blocks, representing 36% of 3,881 the issue by way of an 'interim extension' to the NOC applications till a clear policy is adopted.

This extension may be granted to businesses submitting an impact assessment by an external agency empanelled by the CGWA, and promise to comply with the new

> **THE** industry wants policymakers to provide an interim

extension to the

NOC applications

groundwater assessment units, he said, requesting anonymity.

NON-RENEWAL of

NOC has become a thorny issue for the

industry, affecting

many businesses

CII said in its representation that non-renewal of the certificates is causing immense hardship to the industry, resulting in closure of businesses and job losses. The industry bodies sought intervention from policymakers to address

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guidelines once they are issued. "We fully appreciate the con-

cerns expressed by the NGT on the issue of sustainable use of groundwater resource and support any action plan that may be suggested with due consultation with the industry. However, a paralysis of the approval processes needs to be

resolved immediately," said the CII representation to the government, signed off by its director general Chandrajit Banerjee. *Mint* has reviewed the contents of the letter.

NEWS

A former government official with direct knowledge of the CGWA guidelines, which were shot

> down by the NGT, said the Jal Shakti ministry had submitted three reports to the tribunal on further tightening the norms, but all were rejected. "There is merit in the industry's appeal. No industrial project is

approved without water recycling norms. Just because $someone\,breached\,the\,norms, is\,it$ fair to deny all newcomers a chance? There is no policy to that effect," he said, also requesting anonymity.

Emailed queries to the Jal Shakti ministry and CGWA remained unanswered till press time.

IGNORING CHINESE THREAT PROVES DEADLY IN LADAKH



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Maruti

new S-

rime Minister Narendra Modi, in conversation with leaders of the Opposition, clarified that none of our border posts, land or expands CNG vehicle soldiers are in possession of China. The leaders asked Modi questions at the virtual meeting. with the Whether they got the answers, and they were satisfied, we don't know. A lot is going to come out in the coming days. But right now, there is bit.ly/3emXOx nothing to reassure the common man.

Wars are fought at the behest of politicians and its manufactured narrative comes out in the form of state expression.

To explain this point, let's walk into the passage of history. To date, it has not been decided whether China attacked us in 1962 or, as Subramanian Swamy claims, Jawaharlal Nehru ordered it by ignoring reality. Whatever is the truth, the official stand is that China stabbed us in the back and our soldiers were defeated while fighting bravely. It was not just a defeat, China occupied a few thousand square kilometres of Indian land, including Aksai Chin. Our Parliament swore with one voice that we will not sit quietly until we take this land back.

The new generation may not know that the land is still in possession of China.

Bloody clashes in 1967 and 1975 may not have taken the shape of a full-blown war, but they reopened old wounds.

When Atal Bihari Vajpayee, as foreign minister during the Janata Party rule, went to Beijing, the Congress and the media reminded him of that resolve. By then, however, this notion had begun to develop in the establishment that relations with China should be normalized. That is why Indira Gandhi stepped up friendship with Beijing in 1981, and it was given further momentum by Rajiv Gandhi. Even after this, be it Narasimha Rao or Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh or Modi, all were seen singing the songs of friendship with China. Over time, the resolve of Parliament and the wounds of defeat faded away.

There is an old saying that time heals every wound, but diplomacy cannot be decided on the basis of a saying. Before Jesus was born, Chanakya, born on our own land, said that there can be no greater enemy than one's neighbour.

The only exception was George Fernandes. While holding the post of defence minister in the Vajpavee government, he gave a statement that China is our enemy No. 1. He was put under pressure to tone it down, but informally, he kept discussing it with military officers. As defence minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav also raised serious questions about India's Tibet policy.

After the Galwan Valley clashes, I remembered George many times. Why did we ignore the issues he had raised? Why did our establishment continue to call a weak country like Pakistan enemy No. I? We did not make any concrete arrangements along the border with China. On the other hand, China kept preparing. It built roads very close to the Line of Actual Control and got all the necessary infrastructure for the army. Today, we are suffering due to this.

When Pakistani soldiers entered Kargil in 1999, a number of questions were raised, but the martyrs of Galwan Valley are witness to the fact that even after that, proper arrangements were not made. The guilty must include those who want to get rid of this problem by blaming everything on Nehru. The Congress must also be blamed; it ruled the country for the longest period. Our politics has always been used to run two-and-a-half houses like a knight on a chess-

Why did we ignore the issues George **Fernandes** had raised about China?

board. Twenty years after Kargil, we are doing the same. During this period, the NDA ruled for 10 years and the Congress for the other 10. So far, India has officially fought four

wars. There are stories of each war-the result of ignoring unanswered questions-planted deep in the minds of Indians. Actually, that is how it's done all over the world. More than answering these questions, the government has to redress the issues over which China or Pakistan dares to do this.

When Modi was in conversation with the Opposition leaders, I was busy in an online conversation with General V.P. Malik, who was the army chief during the Kargil war. Let me quote some of his words, which truly reflect the expression of the common man: "National security is the biggest issue. It is a matter of great sadness that our political parties are publicly raising their fingers on the issue of national security. Of course, raising questions is your right, but instead of doing it publicly, discuss it in the meeting. It would do more good."

Shashi Shekhar is editor-in-chief, Hindustan. His Twitter handle is @shekarkahin



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THE CGWA, which

has put the process

issues the NOCs,

on hold, mainly for critical blocks

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011-49714971, Website: www.pcjeweller.com Corporate Identity Number: L36911DL2005PLC134929

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, inter-alia, to consider and approve the audited standalone and consolidated financial results of the Company for the quarter and year ended

and Report Trading by Insiders", the Trading Window for trading in the shares of the Company has already been closed w.e.f. April 1, 2020 and shall remain closed till This Notice is available on BSE Limited website (www.bseindia.com), National Stock

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Date: 22/06/2020

Amount

Cost

Rs.95.73 Lacs

Cost

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Cost

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Amount

Cost

Cost

Rs.92.70 Lacs

Cost

Rs.81.20 Lacs

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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to the provisions of Regulation 29 and 47 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that a meeting of Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, inter-alia to consider and adopt the audited financial results of the Company for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2020 and to consider recommending the dividend to be paid on equity shares, for the year ended on that date

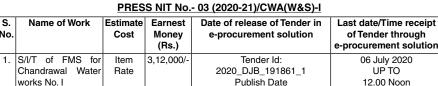
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