

# No green clearance yet for Odisha mega power project

4,000-MW plant under bidding, winner to be declared on February 26

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The Ministry of Environment and Forests has deferred the grant of environmental clearance to the 4,000-MW ultra mega power project (UMPP) at Bhedabahal in Odisha.

The delay in environmental nod would delay the commissioning of the power plant and development of the attached mine to source coal.

Nine power developers – Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL), Tata Power, NTPC, Adani Power, JSW, Sterlite Inventure, CLP India, Larsen & Toubro and NHPC – have

bid for the project. The winner is expected to be announced on February 26.

On January 21, the Expert Appraisal Committee on environmental impact assessment of thermal power and coal mine projects deferred the proposal, as details on water balance and availability as well as details of rehabilitation and resettlement were not submitted, a senior Ministry official told *Business Line*.

According to a senior official at Power Finance Corporation who is privy to the development, the Expert Appraisal Committee would take up the proposal again

this month to discuss the additional information sought by the panel.

“We are confident that the environmental clearance would be granted before the winner is announced,” he told *Business Line*.

Under the UMPP model, the Government is obliged to extend support for expeditious clearances. In fact, the zero date of contractual obligations starts with the handing over of land for the main plant area.

In the case of ultra mega projects, PFC sets up a special purpose vehicle (SPV) which secures the mandatory clearance and land.

After the competitive bidding, the SPV is transferred to the winner.

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The total land requirement for the project would be 3,245 acres, out of which the main plant area will be 1,311 acres.

The coal requirement would be 19-20 million tonnes every year at 85 per cent of the plant load factor. Coal would be obtained from Meenakshi, Meenakshi B and dip side of Meenakshi blocks.

These coal blocks are located about 40 km from the proposed power plant site.