

Indian thermal plants pollute most

Budge Budge Scores On Green Norms

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A first-ever environmental rating of coal-based power plants has found that India's thermal power generating units figure among the world's "most inefficient" in terms of compliance to pollution norms, use of resources and overall operation efficiency.

Though private sector thermal plants in the country perform better than government-owned ones, there is "immense scope for improvement" in almost all units so that they can pollute less and generate more electricity with efficient use of available resources.

The study was released jointly by father of the green revolution M S Swaminathan, environment secretary

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Top three in terms of overall environmental performance

- CESC — Budge Budge (West Bengal)
- JSWEL — Toranagallu (Karnataka)
- Tata Power — Trombay (Maharashtra)

▶ Tata Power in Mundra (Gujarat) is at the top in terms of energy efficiency

▶ Stated-owned Gujarat Industries Power Company Ltd is the best performer in terms water use

Worst three in terms of overall environmental performance

- PTPS, Patratu of Jharkhand State Electricity Board
- UP Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited's plant, Obra
- Damodar Valley Corporation, Bokaro 'B'

Ashok Lavasa and chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian at a function here, organized to award the greenest power plants.

The three top power plants (Budge Budge, JSWEL-Toranagallu and Tata-Trombay) were awarded for overall environmental performance, while two others received awards for their efficient use of resources such as energy and water.

The study behind the ratings, done by experts at Centre for Science and Environ-

ment, also noted that Delhi is home to one of the most polluting power plants in the country—NTPC's Badarpur Thermal Power Plant — which has contributed in turning the capital into the world's most polluted city.

The study, done under CSE's Green Rating Project (GRP), analyzed and rated 47 coal-based thermal power plants from across the country on a variety of environmental and energy parameters. About half of all plants operating in 2011-12 were se-



The CESC plant at Budge Budge

lected for the rating.

"The objective of the study was to give a clear picture of the environmental performance of the sector. Our finding is that in India, where demand for power is increasing, power plants are performing way below the global benchmark," CSE director general Sunita Narain said ahead of the release of the study on Saturday.

She said: "Given the rapid increase in coal-based power projected by the government, stress on precious re-

sources like water and land will increase and air and water pollution will worsen unless corrective measures are taken by the industry and policy-makers."

CSE deputy director general Chandra Bhushan said: "The Green Rating Project is one of the very few public-disclosure projects in the world in which a non-governmental, non-industry organization rates the environmental performance of industries and makes the results public. We follow a robust, transparent process and the outcomes of our ratings (of other sectors) have been used by companies and policymakers to improve policies and practices."

The study found that the country's thermal power plants are estimated to draw around 22 billion cu m of water, which is over half of India's domestic need. It also noted that 55% of the units violated already-lax air pollution standards.

For full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com