

# SC Allows Running of IL&FS Tamil Nadu Power

## Closure of its plants in Cuddalore district could adversely impact power-deficient state

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**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court has permitted IL&FS Tamil Nadu Power Co to continue operating its plants as their closure would adversely affect the power-deficient state.

The central government-controlled company, which has been running since September 2015 in Tamil Nadu, operates two imported coal-based thermal power plants of 600MW each, which supply power to approximately 4 million households. The power plants are in Chidambaram taluk of Cuddalore district.

While IL&FS was granted environment clearance (EC) under the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification 2006, fishermen and

others had challenged it before the National Environment Appellate Authority. Later, the case was transferred to the National Green Tribunal, which upheld the validity of the

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environment clearance but directed the environment ministry (MoEF) to review the clearance based on the cumulative impact assessment study and stipulate any additional conditions. Thereafter, the expert appraisal committee (EAC), recommended additional conditions to be added to the EC, including the requirement of installing a flue gas desulfurisation (FGD) system as part of the

power plant.



power plant.

Later, the environment ministry issued a corrigendum imposing additional conditions to the EC. This was challenged by the fishermen in the green tribunal, which quashed the government's corrigendum.

It was then that IL&FS filed a plea in the top court.

IL&FS argued that the plants were running in compliance with the environment clearance and the government corrigendum and closing of the plants would adversely affect the energy deficient state and would affect its power sector. It also said that its plants use imported coal from Indonesia and already have low sulphur content. Pursuant to the ministry's corrigendum, the company had spent ₹775 crore to install an FGD system and is compliant with SO<sub>2</sub> standards, it said.

The top court's bench led by Justice MR Shah allowed the power plants to continue to operate, subject to compliance with all the conditions mentioned in the EC as well as additional conditions imposed vide the corrigendum.