
Protectors Of Teghut Forest Demand From RA Government To Cancel Contract With ACP Company

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A group of protectors of the Teghut forest in Armenia's Lori region sent a regular letter to all the nine RA presidential contenders urging them, in their election programmes, to stop development of the Teghut copper-molybdenum deposit.

Earlier, a similar letter was sent by 40 public organizations with an appeal to revise intensive development of the country's resources, as well as include provisions on their rational use, in their election programmes. The letter emphasizes importance of solving the ecological problems which directly concerns the country's citizens. In particular, the authors of the letter, with reference to the data of the World Health Organization, mark that Armenia takes the second place after Kyrgyzstan by the number of children born with pathological anomalies. The authors of the letter also emphasize that 600 ha of a unique virgin forest will be destroyed during development of the Teghut deposit that, for its part, will negatively affect the flora and fauna of the region. The group of protectors of the Teghut forest also said that the agreement, signed by Armenia's government with the "Armenian Copper Project" Company (ACP), to which the right for the deposit exploitation has been conveyed, is not up-to-date.

To recall, development of the copper-molybdenum deposit in Teghut, Lori region, Armenia started without the conclusion of Armler (Armforest) CJSC on possible damage to Lalvar's forestry. The forest in Teghut is under Armler's control. At the same time, according to the assessment of specialists of Armler, 50 000c/m of the forest will be cut down for the development of the deposit on 357ha lot of Teghut.

At the same time, ecologists assert that in case of development of the copper- molybdenum deposit in Teghut all the lands adjacent to it will turn into a "dead zone" and ACP company has no ecological conclusion with the proposals of all the interested departments. Up to now the project doesn't include any conclusion on possible damage to archeological monuments, dating to ancient era. At the same time, in the government they only speak about economic gain of the project, and Director of ACP Gagik Arzumanyan said in his talk with journalists that the ore concentrate will not be fused at Alaverdi's melting plant, as it was supposed to be, but will exceptionally be exported. The company made this decision taking into consideration unprofitability and the possible closure of Alaverdi's copper- molybdenum plant in connection with the fact that the term of fulfillment of environmental obligations by ACP company expires in 2009. The National Assembly didn't extend this term.
