

To
Shri Jairam Ramesh,
Honorable Union Minister of Environment and Forests, (Independent)
New Delhi.

Subject: Mega Dams in NE India

Dear Shri Rameshji,

Namaskar from the people of Assam! This is in continuation of public interaction with you in Guwahati on 10th September 2011. We have already submitted to you memorandums expressing our concerns on impacts of mega dams. These memorandums highlight our overall concerns regarding dams in the Northeast, particularly Arunachal Pradesh.

Our demands are follow up of three recent developments which have also endorsed our stand on mega dams in NE India: a) the submission of report of an expert committee of IIT Guwahati, Gauhati University and Dibrugarh University, set up to study the downstream impacts of the 2000 MW Lower Subansiri project, where, June 2010 this committee has recommended that: *"...The selected site for the mega dam of the present dimension was not appropriate in such a geologically and seismologically sensitive location...Therefore, it is recommended not to construct the mega dam in the present site..."*. b) A House Committee set up by the Assam Legislative Assembly to investigate the impacts of dams in its final report submitted in July 2010 supported the Expert Committee recommendations on Lower Subansiri. c) a recent public consultation in Guwahati on 10th September, 2010, which widely articulated peoples' concerns about mega dams in NE India. You have yourself attended the occasion, listened to the public concerns. There was wide-spread media coverage of your public commitments made in the public consultations which included

- **A review of existing dams in Assam to understand their environmental impacts.**
- **Comprehensive river basin studies to be preceded before any clearance to be given to hydro-power projects.**
- **A temporary halt into the construction works of Lower Subansiri Hydro-power project**

Subsequently, we came to know from the Indian Express that you have submitted a report to the PMO on the larger issues raised by the downstream people. Effectively the PMO failed to deliver action on any of the assurance made by you.

- On the other hand, **the recent EIA submission for Lower Siang Hydro-Power project** and notice for public hearing blatantly ignore for it also failed to accommodate these concerns.

In the light of these we, the **KMSS**, immediately ask for:

- A complete moratorium on all clearances (including pre-construction clearances) by the MoEF to large dams/hydropower projects in Northeast India.
- Immediate withdrawal of clearances granted to the 2000 MW Lower Subansiri project, 1750 MW Demwe Lower and 1500 MW Tipaimukh which were granted environmental clearance without downstream impact assessment and public consent.
- Commission of a special study group consisting of Independent Reviewers (including scientists, social scientist, people's representative) to study the environmental and social impact of all the existing dams in Assam, Arunachal and Bhutan.
- Future steps on hydropower projects (the people of Assam will only endorse micro and small dams where community's rights will be fully ensured) and dams to be taken only after full, prior and informed consent of the people of the Brahmaputra & Barak river basins.
- The Brahmaputra River and its tributaries to be protected as a cultural and ecological endowment of the people of the region and the country as a whole. Development plans will need to respect the environmental and cultural sensitivity of the region.

We expect you to give these critical issues the importance it deserves. The Brahmaputra & Barak river basins are our lifeline and addressing these

issues is essential to ensure the long-term social and environmental security of Assam.

Thanking you,

Sincerely,

(Mulan Laskar)

President

(Akhil Gogoi)

Gen. Secretary

Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, Assam