

Date : 16/10/2014

**4 HOUR GENERATION DAMS OF UTTARAKHAND**

**Ministry of Environment does a volte face about**

**Environmental Norms of Uttarakhand HEPs**

**Indian Express 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

The NDA Govt plans to link hydro-electro projects (HER) with its ambitious Ganga rejuvenations plan, for which it has proposed **a new set of norms** that all projects proponents will have to comply with, before procuring environmental clearances.

In its affidavit to the Supreme Court on 8/10/14, the MoEF stated that it wanted to make sure the clearances to HEPs donot obstruct or hamper the Ganga clean up in any manner since **“they (new set of norms) hold the key to the successful rejuvenation and restoration of the wholesomeness of the river”**

The Govt. proposed a new set of 3 imperatives conditions :

- **Maintenance of a minimum quantity of environmental flow**
- **Longitudinal river connectivity**
- **Aviral dhara ( continuous flow)**

The 3 conditions are required,

**to maintain ecological integrity and biodiversity of the river and for non disruptive biota movement and sediment transportation.** 24 of the 39 projects of the state are now stalled. Supreme Court held they were significantly impacting biodiversity in two sub basin of Alakananda and Bhagitelhi rivers. **These aspects of environmental flow was not adequately addressed.**

The MoEF said it proposed to conduct a full fledged carrying capacity and **cumulative impact assessment study of all sub basin of Ganga in Uttarakhand to get a holistic and integrated view on impact of the project.**

Admitting that the aspect of environmental flow was **“unfortunately not adequately addressed”** while granting environmental clearances for the **HEPs** in Uttarakhand the MoEF said it would make such clearances mandatory for the projects below 25mw capacity also.

MoEF said, the issue of ‘aviral dhara’ and longitudinal connectivity shall also apply **for all HEPs, regardless of the capacity and size, since they are essential for rejuvenation of Ganga.”** *(Compiled from Indian Express 9 Oct’14)*

#### **MoEF’s volt face in of Arunachal Dams : a comment by Editor P.K. Bhuyan**

It is now clear that the policy of Hydro Electric Projects by GOI, through MoEF was one of ‘exploitation’ of the resources of sub-Himalayan region of the country **inhabited** mostly by our rural and simple tribals, - through its 4 Hr. Generation Dams of **arbitrary** level of power generation for maximisation of profit for the Developer, **at the total destruction of ecology, safety and livelihood of the riparian people,- be it in Himachal, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal.**

One should feel happy at what’s happening in Uttarakhand, but, MoEF cannot **have one set of guidelines for Uttarakhand** because it is linked now to Ganga rejuvenation plan and **another for Arunachal and other regions.** Maintenance of **Environmental flow, Longitudinal connectivity and Aviral dhara** (continuous flow), – these 3 are **birthrights** of the riparian people and all the people of regions affected by these 4 Hr Generation Dams.

**All ‘Development’ must be ‘sustainable’. All dams of Arunachal including SLHEP must be converted to 24x7 continuous generation dam cum weir**

**where water will flow naturally over the dams.** Developing India needs sustainable power 24x7 and not for just 4 Hours.

The Chinese are completing the 510 MW Zangmu Dam over Brahmaputra. 2 more dams up stream of Zangmu Dam – 640 MW Dagu and 560 MW Jiexu are planned to be constructed within 18km of Zangmu. Another dam is planned downstream of Zangmu, - 320 MW Jiacha Dam. These 4 dams will generate 2020 MW of electricity. These are true Run of the River dams with water flowing naturally over the dams generating **sustainable power, unlike the 4 Hr Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project which will generate an arbitrary level of 2000MW at total destruction of the ecology and the livelihood of the riparian people.** The same is the story of Siang, Dibang and Lohit Dams.

Compilation and comment by  
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