

Assam likely to face serious flood situation in 2012



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Daya Nath Singh 26 December 2011 7647 views

The people of Assam are likely to face serious flood and erosion during the new-year 2012 due to reluctance of state governments to take necessary steps to tackle the situation, despite the demand of All Assam Water Resource Contractors' Association (AAWRCA). Speaking to the media people recently, Muhi Bargohain, President of AAWRCA, alleged that the state's water resource department has not taken any step to get last year's damaged embankments repaired till now. It is learnt that Assam's Revenue and Finance departments have not approved the schemes related to it. It is well known fact that the northern districts of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh and Shivsagar etc, get rains from February and due to change in climatic conditions rains affect the entire state from the month of March itself. Even if the dyke repairing work is started now, its completion is impossible before rainy season, he said.

The Association's chief reiterated that even after getting the approval, calling tender notification and placing work order etc; would take time, but the Revenue department has not taken up any step, which indicates the seriousness of floods in the state in 2012. He pointed out that on 15th August 2011 in Dhemaji district six innocent people were washed away in the serious floods in broad daylight. After the incident several ministers including the Chief Minister and bureaucrats visited the flood affected areas and a Rs.100 crore special relief package was announced. Besides, several longtime schemes for flood control were declared. In addition to these measures five schemes of Rs 107 crore were submitted to the Government by water resource department. All these schemes and amount remained in papers only, Bargohain alleged.

Overlooking the advice given by the Chief Minister during his visit to the area Railways constructed defective guide dykes of bridge over Gai Nadi, which is likely to repeat its earlier course. The Chief Minister had declared during his visit that the Railway bridge would be widened, which did not come true.

The Association regretted that even after the completion of the works the contractors do not get the payment in time, which not only affects the economic condition of the contractors, but also badly affects the implementation of schemes too. According to the Association the contractors have to deposit Earnest money at the rate of 2 percent along with the tender, which is also a burden on them. Further, different subdivisions enforce different rules from time to time without the knowledge of the contractors, which creates more difficulties for them.

The AAWRCA made it clear that in case the implementation of schemes before rainy season was possible then only it should be arranged, otherwise late approval should not be given as in earlier years. Assam Government's water resources department, National Highways and Railway should jointly reconstruct the Railway and National Highway bridges, otherwise stop the work. The contractors' dues under different heads should also be cleared without further delay. The Association has appealed to the government to discuss the Earnest money deposit system with it and then enforce.

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