

Big dam is suicidal



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Jyotirmoy Talukdar 29 April 2015 6968 views

Just as the Centre has renewed its mission of completing the Lower Subansiri Dam and also making many more Big Dams in Arunachal Pradesh by even extending the draconian [AFSPA](#) 1958 to Arunachal to militarily quell any possible protest from the public, Pooberun, an intellectual and literary body of students from the North Eastern Region in Delhi and Assam Study Circle, JNU jointly organized a public meeting on the Brahmaputra and its tributaries on Monday. The meeting sought to understand the environmental and social history of the Brahmaputra and other rivers flowing through the region and in light of that, to understand the recent developments and large-scale technological interventions on the rivers.

Speaking on the occasion, renowned historian and the head of the Department of Humanities and [Social](#) Sciences at Indian Institute of [Technology](#), Guwahati, Dr Arupjyoti Saikia explained to the audience the geological history and evolution of the rivers and how supporting huge gravity dams as the one on Subansiri can be suicidal for the region. He also regretted that most policymakers do not possess a good historical and geological knowledge of the Eastern Himalayas, the rivers and their changing behaviour. One being asked, he informed the gathering that he will complete a book on these issues soon.

Archana Deka and Bikram [Bora](#), organizers of the event, opined that the large turnout in the meeting in a short notice proves that people are highly concerned and anxious about the new developments. Ramanuj Hazarika, founding member of Krantikari Naujawan Sabha commented that if in the name of progress and prosperity, mega dams multiply in the region, no government will be able to save lives in the event of an 1897 or 1950-like earthquake revisiting the place, since we all know that it falls under the Seismic Zone V which is the most quake-prone. “Despite this history and non recommendation by many environmentalists and experts, Indian government has been building “mega dams” in seismically very active Assam and Arunachal Pradesh under the rhetoric of “development”. If any major earthquake happens in Northeast, these dams may collapse and a large part of the Brahmaputra valley may be wiped out. The Central government and the people who are not voicing their concern right now, then wouldn’t have any moral right to come for our rescue and relief. If you are concerned about the region, show your concern right now. Don’t come with some bottles of water and packets of food after everything gets over,” said the international politics analyst angrily. Pankaj Saikia, Pooberun gave the people food for thought with his pictorial representations of displacement, land acquisition, ecological balance, corporate-state collusion and similar burning issues.

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BY JYOTIRMOY TALUKDAR

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