

Centre's u-turn, to build Dibang Mega Dam



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Chandan Kumar Duarah 24 September 2014 Updated 24 Sept 11338 views

The Central government has decided to build to 3000 MW Dibang Hydroelectric Project in Arunachal Pradesh without any public consultation and study about probable impact and precaution measure to be taken in downstream Assam. With U-turn on mega dam construction, Modi government as the BJP leaders including Narendra Modi had assured voters of northeast India not to support mega dams in the region. But now the Modi government in power puts the Dibang Multi-purpose project for final environment and forest clearance this month before two expert bodies.

The Dibang project was put on the agenda for 77th meeting of the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) on River Valley and Hydroelectric Projects held on last 16th -17th September for reconsiderations of the environmental clearance. The EAC was asked to reconsider the project for environment clearance.

The project was put on the agenda of the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) held on last 22nd -23rd September for forest clearance. The deliberation of the EAC and FAC meetings are not in public domain it is told that both committees are pushed to write the wishes of the Modi Sarkar. Denouncing the Central government stand, anti-dam activists said the betrayal of Modi government exposes the two faces of BJP.

They find disturbing is that the 3000 MW Dibang dam was put again just few days after the MoEF issued a letter rejecting the forest clearance on 28th August, 2014. This letter had been issued based on the recommendation of the FAC where it mentioned about probable negative impact on rich biodiversity and sensitive ecosystem as well as Dibru Saikhowa National Park in Assam.

A anti-dam leader said that Modi government is going to clear all mega dams in northeast region with single window permission disregarding all expert and advisory committees to harness “green” power. So it to be recalled that in the buildup of Lok Sabha polls,

Narendra Modi held a rally on last 22nd February in Pasighat in the East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Riding on the anti-dam sentiment in parts of the Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, Modi acknowledged the concerns about these dams in his speech in Hindi. He said –“I know citizens of the region are against large power projects. I respect your sentiment in this respect. But protecting the environment, using environment technology, the hydropower can also be harnessed using smaller projects.”

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