

Conservation of rivers



Comments 0



Daya Nath Singh 12 February 2014 17559 views

The Society for Socio-Economic-Development in the Region (SSEDR), a city based NGO, has raised a question mark on the initiative taken by the Assam Government with Pollution Control Board (PCB), Assam for conservation of Bharalu and Kalang rivers. It said that the State holder consultation workshop held on December 18, 2013, was mainly attended by the officers of various level of State and Central governments and representatives of Louis Berger Group (LBG) and DHI (India). The draft minutes of meeting has shown very unsatisfactory presence of non-biased technical expert and public representatives. This has raised a question regarding the sincerity and transparency of the whole process.

The SSEDR president Abdul Wahed and Secretary, Samar Jyoti Bezbaruah jointly addressing the media persons in Guwahati recently said although regarding the sewerage it has been mentioned in the draft DPR that railway colonies, refinery colonies and defense establishment in the city have their own sewerage treatment facilities, the actual field survey shows a very different picture. It is alleged that in paperwork the treatment facilities and sanitation system exists and are working, but in actual sense they are either outdated or due to lack of technical knowledge or fund they are not working properly. Has there been any field specific survey done by the authorized agencies regarding this particular aspect while preparing this particular draft DPR, it should have been mentioned.

Further, they added that the length of river Bharalu according to the draft DPR prepared by LBG and DHI (India) Water and Environment Pvt Ltd, is seven (7) kms, that starts at Junali bridge and ends at Bharalumukh. In an answer to a RTI question to SSEDR, the water resource department, Guwahati East has mentioned its length as 6,315 meter. It has also mentioned that this river starts at Junali bridge and ends at Bharalumukh. The Mechanical Division, West Region, Guwahati, has mentioned the length of the same river as 5,500 meters. In both these cases the length mentioned in the draft DPR is contradictory. The organization has demanded clarification regarding the correct length of the river.

The draft DPR further adds that Guwahati is one of the major industrial centers of Assam and the Northeast region and major type of factories are chemical, fertilizer, petroleum and refineries, most of which fall under the guidelines of hazardous wastes and produce highly toxic wastes that may cause water, air and soil pollution. They feel that there was lack of proper field survey regarding this particular matter in the draft DPR. It is clear because there is no data provided regarding the actual scenario. No specific number of industries and their contribution of pollution has been mentioned thoroughly in the draft DPR, they added.

They mentioned the example of the refinery drain that comes out from the refinery campus Noonmati and flows through the New Guwahati railway campus as shown in the above pictures where it meets with various kinds of waste like engine lubricants and byproducts that are drained off in the same refinery drain. People from neighboring areas also use this particular drain for disposal of human excreta as shown in the above pictures. After that the drain flows and eventually falls into the Bharalu river at Junali. The refinery and railway establishments try to justify their stand by showing treatment plant, but in reality the provided pictures show another scenario. Slug and chemical waste from both refinery and railways are allegedly disposed in the drain without proper treatment. They wanted to know if any field specific survey has been done by the respective authority regarding this?.

They further mentioned that in the draft it has been mentioned that excavated sediment would be placed in dump trucks and transported to a series of central processing area. The exact location of the temporary and permanent disposal areas has not been mentioned exactly by name of the location. The amount of waste that will be generated in this process is 2,98,416 cubic meter as mentioned in the draft DPR. In a city like Guwahati where there is already a scarcity of solid and liquid waste disposal areas, such a huge quantity of waste will definitely create a problem. Already the solid waste disposal grounds of GMC like Borgaon area, which also falls under greater Deeporbill area is alleged to be completely polluted due to untreated garbage disposal. Such matters are already raising the eyebrows of the concerned citizens of Guwahati. It is very important to look into this matter very seriously. Hence, the NGO demanded to mention the name of location projected for disposal in details. They further added that similar irregularities can also be seen in Kolong river draft DPR too. Many doubtful loopholes which can lead to future problems can be spotted in both documents, they added.

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