Memorandum to the Parliamentary Team

Society of Activists & Volunteers for Environment (SAVE)
'PURBAPATH', Malugram, Silchar-788 002, Assam

Date: 01-8-09

To
The Chairman
Parliamentary Team, Bangladesh
(Constituted to visit the proposed Tipaimukh Dam site)

Sub:- Memorandum opposing construction of Tipaimukh Dam in view of the devastating environmental impact on downstream of Barak basin in general and Barak Valley in particular.



Sir,
At the very outset, we offer you and all your team members a warm and hearty welcome to our land and thank you for your deep concern about the impact on environment emanating from the construction of Tipaimukh Dam at the upstream of Barak river.

With deep anguish, we have observed that during recent days, there is a lot of hue and cry, all opposing the construction of a 'water bomb' at Tipaimukh. A handful of protests have been witnessed in Manipur, Barak Valley of Assam, besides a lot from your native country, Bangladesh. We look at all these protests from the environmental and human point of view, and sincerely believe that any force, that lacks in feeling for the environmental impact of the proposed dam should be opposed. The words 'Think globally - Act locally' has been our guiding force and keeping these words in the back of mind, we sincerely like to draw your kind attention on the facts mentioned hereunder;

(I) That Sir, We sincerely believe that an extensive downstream environmental impact study from the proposed dam site up to sea-mouth should be jointly conducted at the initiative of the Government of India and Bangladesh where experts from Non Government Organisations particularly from the environmental outfits, IITs and Universities must be included to assess the possible detrimental impact on the environment and life of inhabitants in the catchment areas at large. Without downstream impact study, if a clean-chit to the project is given it would be detrimental for both environment and people at large of both in India and Bangladesh in particular.

(II) That Sir, the proposed dam falls at the confluence of Indo-Burma, Indo-Malayan and Indo-Chinese Biodiversity hotspot zone. These areas are characterised by the presence of a large number plant and animal species, many of which are not seen or seldom witnessed in the rest of the world. A large number of them have been categorised as per endangered and threatened as per the IUCN Red Data book and the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Once the dam is constructed, these innocent endangered and threatened species would have no other alternative, but to perish! Under such a situation, does the construction of a dam in the proposed site speak quite well in favour of biodiversity conservation?

(III) We strongly believe and observe with deep concern that this rock filled 500 m. long and 162.8 m. high dam to be constructed at the earthquake zone-V, Wherein there will be constant pressure of water, if for any reason cracks, the entire civilisation of the whole of downstream will be washed down in no time. The age old Barak-Surma culture will live in history only. Can any force or technology prevent this and ensure against such catastrophic mishap?

(IV) Besides the above mentioned burning issues, other important impacts such as water scarcity, crop cultivation, navigation, siltation, ecological imbalance, river pollution, extinction of aquatic life forms and the like deserve careful and serious attention, before construction of the dam.

Keeping all these in view, we sincerely believe that your good office will consider all the matters seriously and looking at the entire issue from the pro-environment and pro-human point of view, would strongly oppose the construction of the Tipaimuk dam, life time curse for the inhabitants of Barak Surma basin.

With warm regards,
Sincerely Yours

(Dr. Parthankar Choudhury)
President, SAVE

(Pijush Kanti Das)
Secretary, SAVE

NB: This memorandum was prepared to be handed over to the visiting team but as they could not arrive at Silchar we could not submit it to them. We therefore request you to hand over the same using your best source, for which we will remain grateful.