

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh
South Block, Raisana Hill
New Delhi, INDIA

January 2012

Dear Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Sing,

We write with great concern regarding the proposal for raising the water level of Peppara Dam which would adversely affect the tribal people living in Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary. We note that raising the reservoir level from 104.5 meters to 110.5 meters would submerge immense forest areas, including Scheduled Areas. We were also informed that there was no proper consultation regarding the proposal with the people living in the areas that will be affected. The tribal people in these areas live with a system of common sharing of resources and self-governance. This would be tantamount to confiscating Scheduled Areas land resulting to displacement of tribes to Non-Scheduled Areas, a violation of their constitutional rights. Such action will also deprive them of their livelihood as they depend on the Sanctuary for this. Further, there is a large number of wild animals and around 2000 varieties of medicinal plants of which at least 50 are rare and endangered species used for Siddha and Ayurveda treatments in this area.

The proposed action of the Government is against the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 (FRA) which gives the forest dwellers the right to protect and manage the forest; to conserve community forest resources; and to protect wildlife. Therefore, we urge the Indian government and the Kerala state government to drop the proposal for raising the water level of Peppara reservoir.

Looking forward to your favourable response!

Yours Faithfully,

Also sent to:

Sri. Kishore Dev, Minister for Tribal Affairs;

Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of Environment & Forest;

Sri. Oommen Chandy, Chief Minister of Kerala;

Shri. P. J. Joseph, Water Resources Minister of Kerala State

C.C. to Diplomatic representative of India in my country.