

Union Power Minister discusses issues relating to power scenario with Assam Chief Minister

Dispur, April 10: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy, Piyush Goyal met Chief Minister Sri Tarun Gogoi at his residence today and discussed ways and means for improving the power scenario in the state of Assam. During the meeting Sri Goyal mentioned that the Ministry of Power will extend its support to the efforts of the State Government to ensure the supply of power in a reliable manner to all residents of the state. He also mentioned that the Union government has taken up a programme to ensure 24X7 power supply in the country which is to be completed by 2019.

The Chief Minister said that the state of Assam will take all required steps to improve the power condition in the state. In this connection, the Union Power Minister assured that his ministry would examine on priority the proposal of the State Government for setting up of a 660 MW Super Critical Thermal Power Project at Margherita which would use the large, untapped reserve of coal available with the North Eastern Coal Fields. At present only one million metric ton of coal from Margherita Coalfields has been linked with various projects. The Union Minister mentioned that he would send a team from his Ministry and Coal India Limited to take the proposal forward.

The Union Minister also stated that he would speed up action on the pending proposals of Assam for increasing the supply of gas to the state owned generating stations at Lakwa and Namrup by taking up the matter with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. He has also mentioned he would look into the proposal for the final clearance of the pending Kopili Hydro Electric Project.

With regard to the Lower Subansiri Hydro Electric Project the Chief Minister mentioned that the Government of Assam will provide technical assistance for the project including the security of the equipment and man power and would also support all efforts of the Government of India in implementation of the project while keeping in mind the effects of the project on environment, ecology and people in the down-stream areas. The Union Power Minister mentioned that they are waiting for the report of the Expert Committee which has been appointed to examine the project and would take a decision shortly after receipt of the same. Meanwhile the NHPC, which is the implementing agency, has kept aside funds for mitigating the down-stream impact. Under this fund they have constructed toilets for the schools in

Dhemaji, Sonitpur and Lakhimpur districts as well as have taken measures to prevent river erosion.

The Union Minister emphasized exploiting the renewable energy potential in the state. The Chief Minister mentioned that the State Government is keen to set up a Solar Power Project with the assistance of the Government of India at Amguri in Sivasagar District.

The Chief Minister also requested Union Minister to expedite the commissioning of Bongaigaon Thermal Power Project under the NTPC and also to increase the share of Assam from the project.

The meeting was also attended by Shri V.B. Pyarelal, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary Power Department, Shri K.V. Eapen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Planning and Development Department and Chairman APGCL, AEGCL and APDCL and Sri MGVK Bhanu, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister. In addition it was attended by the Joint Secretary, (Coal linkage) from the Ministry of Coal, Joint Secretary (Hydro) from the Ministry of Power and the other Govt. of India officials.