

Murkier water woes in Peren Town



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In Gajanan Mishra's Poem, 'There is no place'; perhaps a place like Peren must have been the reference when the Indian [Poet](#) wrote:

There is no place
Where there is no water
Water water and water
Here we are dying
Without water.

Water affect people's lives in so many ways beginning with access and affordability including issues like how poor water-quality affects health and how young children, including [girls](#), are more affected [as](#) often they are burdened with walking long distances to fetch water. Young children in age [group](#) of 0-[6](#) constitutes 16.84% of Peren Town's total population and children aged 4-[6](#) are among the vulnerable lot having to sacrifice their time in fetching water for domestic use.

On another [level](#), lack of water can break down social harmony and even cause [wars](#) between communities [as](#) is vividly seen in the case of the present Peren [crisis](#). Water is not an easy subject to [deal](#) with and if statistics are to be believed, 1.[2](#) billion people across the globe do not have access to [clean](#) drinking water and presuming that some odd 1,027 houses in Peren Town are suffering because of the endless water [crisis](#), one can conclude that Peren Town has earned a spot in the infamous 1.[2](#) billion category of the world's population.

It is without [doubt](#) that the progress on the part of PHED Department on environmental sustainability in the face of the increasing water [crisis](#) in Peren Town is invisible. And during a time when the entire world [celebrated](#) World [Environment](#) Day, the public of Peren Town continued to struggle for basic amenity like water for drinking and cooking.

Come winter and the sight of denizens flocking Teipui River, river separating [Nagaland](#) and [Manipur](#) some [10](#) Kms away, speak volumes of the situation. Mini-trucks, pick-ups, dumpers etc belonging to private water suppliers, [Assam Rifles](#), Police and GREF are usually lined up on

the way to Teipuiki [as](#) early [as](#) 2am. By 4 am, young boys and [girls](#) aged [as](#) young [as](#) 4-5 years, are seen heading for ponds and springs to collect water for their domestic use.

In semi-urban areas like Peren, Tening and Nsong where water [crisis](#) is at its worst, exploitation of ground-water by the Department of Geology & Mining can play an instrumental role. At 1445 meters above sea [level](#), ring-wells and hand-pumps may not be the final solution for the local population in Peren Town while constructions of Tube-wells do not seem to be making the situation any better. There are around 14 Tube-wells in Peren District out of which one each at Tening and Peren constructed by a private firm, Global Tube well, have gone dry while two more Tube Wells constructed by the same firm at Police New Reserve, Peren are operational. Constructed by Geology & Mining Department, one each is located at All Saints's Hr. Secondary School, Peren Town Baptist Church (PTBC), Government High School, [SDO](#) PHED office and [Assam Rifles](#) Helipad. The remaining six Tube-wells constructed by the same Department are at Jalukie valley, four in Town area and two at New HQ area.

Whether the Public of Peren Town is benefitting from the Tube-wells constructed in Peren Town is something worth pondering upon. Only two tube-wells are being utilised and planned to be piped for Public consumption [as](#) the rest are either unfit for consumption or belongs to the Church, [Schools](#) or the Para-military force. Not to mention of the scanty distribution, providing basic water supply from the [2](#) Tube wells which do not undergo any iron or chlorine treatment says a lot about the dangerous health hazards being faced by the Public. Supplying water

from these tube-wells is only an added measure to strengthen the existing water supply system in the Town and is absolutely not a solution to the chronic water scarcity faced by the Public.

It is genuinely felt that Government's focus on water supply should not be only on Peren New HQ alone [as](#) Head Offices and HODs may be shifted to the new site but there will still be inhabitants at Peren Town. [As](#) for Peren Town, the Department does not seem to be in a hurry to neither enforce the standards of conserving water nor look into the existing [crisis](#) with sincerity. [One](#) major concern about growing water scarcity in Peren Town may perhaps be the Government's sole-focus on drinking water availability at Peren New HQ. For instance, [one](#) may look into the funding pattern of Rs. 372.38 Lakhs (2012-13), Rs. 155.20 Lakhs (2013-14) under NLCPR for providing water supply to Peren New HQ where Public Land Allotment has not yet been done and Public habitation is zero, leaving aside Government servants and nearby villages like Kejanglwa and New Peren where population is below 450 each. Whereas on the other hand, population of Peren Town [as](#) per 2011 census is 5,084 with [2,538](#) males and [2,546](#) females and yet the Town continues to be ignored for reasons best known to the Government. [One](#) cannot deny the rapid development taking place in Peren New HQ which is praiseworthy but what [one](#) fails to understand is [as](#) to why the Department still continues to ignore the acute water scarcity of Peren Town with [over](#) 5,000 people who are very much alive in flesh and bone and requires access to air, water food and shelter. Though the Public of Peren Town appreciates and acknowledge the massive growth and development in Peren New HQ, one cannot help wondering [as](#) to why basic necessities for a full-fledged Town like Peren continues to be sidelined every successive year though fulsome sanctions are being made for Peren New HQ like Electricity up-gradation to 66KV line from

Ganeshnagar and augmentation of water supply despite zero public inhabitation.

The Government has been giving the same excuse since the past several years that the existing Pipeline from Tesangki source were installed in the 1970s and has outlived its design period. The water coming from these pipes may have turned unfit for human consumption by now, afterall having attained a rather ripe age of [over](#) 40 years, the rusted metal pipelines have chances of emitting poisonous toxins. The Department had slept [over](#) the issue for the last more than 40 years and it's high time, the Department wakes up from its deep slumber and address the issue of the day given the fact that Tesangki River has more than enough water to supply the entire Town; if not for the negligence and holier-than-thou attitude of the PHED Department. The Public of Peren Town also fails to grasp the logic [as](#) to why the State Government has made Peren District the 'EE, PHED DUMPING DISTRICT OF NAGALAND'. How many retirements of PHED E.Es on superannuation are the people of Peren District going to allow? Isn't the continuous retirement of 5 PHEDs E.Es from Peren without a single break, enough for the people of Peren District? Enough is enough.

The need of the day is to construct concrete RCC Dam with water-filtration Reservoirs at the mouth of the source and install new water pipelines right from Tesangki River with proper pressure valves and RCC posts every 100 to 200 metres and where ever applicable. Proper Water Treatment Plants and Reservoirs for storing the piped water at Peren Town are equally important. The approach has to be a long term initiative with the genuine motive to ensure regular drinking water for

all people residing in Peren Town. Otherwise, temporary repair works and arrangements, [as](#) witnessed at present, will not solve the present imbroglio where water scarcity has become a part of everyday life for the public of Peren Town.

And [as](#) for the Land dispute between Peren and Tesen Villages, whether Tesangki River falls under Peren Village or Tesen Village jurisdiction for that matter, the people of Peren Town, for no fault of theirs, must not suffer. In the present context, the Public of the Town is facing untold pain and hardship simply because of the negligence of the Department which has been putting the blame on thing or the other. The boundary issue is a long drawn issue spanning for decades and is best left to the competent authorities but PHED may clarify [as](#) to whether the Department's staffs were harassed for undertaking any developmental work in the said area.

If PHED feels that it has a stake in the dispute than they may feel free to become a party to the case and seek legal recourse. While the Public of Peren Town had walked an extra mile to avoid compounding on the animosity between the stakeholder villages and had walked a very tight rope [over](#) this sensitive issue, unwarranted reasoning and effort to divert the blemish of the Department and shift the blame on Land Dispute, only reflects the callous and ill-motivated intent of the Department. This mentality of PHE Department smack of mala-fide intention, with no sincerity to solve the problem at hand but only add [fuel](#) to the fire. This irresponsible attitude of PHED [over](#) a dispute involving the sentiments of the stakeholder concerned is under judicial consideration and therefore is inappropriate for the PHED to jump into

conclusion, [as](#) it is presently in the Court of the Deputy Commissioner, Peren. Instead of putting the blame on the ongoing Land dispute, if at all the Department is serious to address the genuine grievances of the Public of Peren Town; augmentation of water supply can also be done from Teipuiki River.

The ongoing imbroglio between the public of Peren Town and PHED has nothing to do with party-politics, religions or communities. The demand for permanent restoration of water-supply in Peren Town is the united voice of the public irrespective of political party affiliation, religion, denomination, [community](#), age, sex, creed etc. Moreover, the public of Peren Town have no personal grudge or enmity towards the Minister of PHED and the rumours of antagonism towards the said Minister who has been in office for only [over](#) a year is uncalled for. Water [crisis](#) was there even before the said Minister came into the picture but being the concerned head of PHE, the 15 days Ultimatum was addressed to him likewise. It is important to note here that PHED had done nothing to book the culprits who had damaged the pipelines at Tesangki source when on numerous instances, PHED had forcefully imposed penalty for recovering the cost of even unintended damages done to PHE pipelines. This favouritism and bias attitude of PHED to safeguard the personal interests of a particular officer and his [community](#) is a stark reality of preferential treatment and discrimination which the concerned Minister may like to look into.

People today are more focussed on protection, conservation and judicious use of water [as](#) water is used in several ways-[as](#) a raw material, solvent, coolant, transport agent, energy source, for producing

metals, wood, paper, chemicals, gasoline, oils, glass, plastic, fabric components, etc. Peren Town has witnessed several [Seminar](#), Campaigns and programmes based on protection, conservation and judicious use of water but unfortunate it may sound, the irony in Peren Town is that when the Public talk of water, it is still acute scarcity of drinking water for mere survival and not water for production, commercial or industrial use. The lines of American Poetess Emily Dickinson is very true when she wrote, 'Water is Taught by Thirst'. [One](#) needs to feel it, to really know it. [As](#) the Public of the Town continue to face acute water [crisis](#) since the past several years, it is really unfortunate that PHED seems to be in no hurry coming up with one excuses or the other.

It is the urgent need of the day that Policy makers, the Government, development agencies, civil societies and the public in Peren District come together to work for areas which do not have access to proper water supply, particularly Peren Town. Likewise, a strong mechanism needs to be worked out on making the [UN](#) General Assembly resolution on the right to [clean](#) water and sanitation, a reality. To transform this right into a reality at [policy](#) and ground levels, direct focus needs to be initiated on the local population of the affected areas instead of making it a political gimmick every General [Election](#). [As](#) for the Third-phase and Fourth-phase Campaign for permanent restoration of water supply to Peren Town, the Public of Peren Town will go ahead [as](#) planned and any untoward incidents arriving out of the situation will be the sole responsibility of the Department of PHE, Government of [Nagaland](#).

1. IPETRANGBE NDANG

9402416671

[2.](#) H AISUI LUNGALANG

7085969573

3. AZEU NAMCYN HAU

9436802130

4. DEUSOYI RANGKAU

9402287784

5. LUNGRAHEI HEIRIE

9436075011

[6.](#) KEDI THOU

8974508311

[7.](#) NDUZEU HERIE

9436849398

[8.](#) DACHUYI PAME

9856292918

9. SAMLAMYISING

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[10.](#) RALUNG NZA

9862304595

11. HAIDEUTAD

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12. KENGIMPEUDING HEGUI

9856790982

13. ITEISILUNG IRANBE

9862265988

14. RAMPAUYI NDANG

9436642281

15. PEIHAU HAISOB

8014367966

16. IGONG IPUING

8794269057

17. NAMNAHEI NZA

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18. HAIDOLIANG IKIE

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19. K.S NGUHIE

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