

इंडियन सेंटर फॉर चाइल्ड एंड ह्यूमन राइट्स
Indian Centre for Child and Human Rights (ICCHR)

L-AN/C/017/Apr/2023

Dated: 02.04.2023

To,

1. All Office Bearers, Members, Authorities Concern
2. All UN Millennium Fellows, NUSRL Ranchi
3. Public Notice

Sub: Project Jal Mitra: Perceive, Protect & Preserve

This is to notify that Indian Centre for Child and Human Rights (ICCHR) along with the UN Millennium Fellows of National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi Campus have initiated 'Project Jal Mitra: Perceive, Protect & Preserve', a community driven initiative focused on preserving and protecting Kanke Dam, located in Ranchi, Jharkhand, India. The project aims to raise awareness about the ecological and social importance of the dam and to mobilise local residents and stakeholders to take action to ensure its sustainable management.

The Project is aligned with our commitment to promoting sustainable development and safeguarding the environment. The initiative will be community driven, and we encourage all interested individuals and organisations to participate actively. We recognise that the sustainable management of Kanke Dam requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders, including the government, civil society, and local residents. The project will focus on raising awareness about the ecological and social significance of the dam, and it will aim to encourage sustainable practices in the surrounding area.

More details of the Project are provided below.

'Project Jal Mitra: Perceive, Protect & Preserve' is a community driven initiative focused on preserving and protecting Kanke Dam, which is located in Ranchi, Jharkhand, India. Kanke Dam is an important source of water for the city of Ranchi as it supplies potable water to nearly half the city's population in the adjoining areas. Further, it is also an important water reservoir for irrigation and other agricultural purposes in the surrounding region. The dam also supports a diverse range of flora and fauna, including several species of fish, birds, and other wildlife. The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the ecological and social importance of the dam,

and to mobilise local residents and stakeholders to take action to ensure its sustainable management.

Kanke Dam Pollution: Threat to Ranchi

The Kanke Dam has been facing severe pollution and encroachment, leading to a man-made water crisis that could have significant ecological, economic, and social repercussions. Despite numerous attempts to resolve the issue through government channels, no effective action has been taken to clean up the waterbody or stop the flow of drainage water into the reservoir.

There are several key problems in detail related to pollution in the Kanke Dam that are threatening the long-term health and sustainability to Ranchi city:

1. **Domestic Waste Disposal:** Improper disposal of domestic waste, including sewage and solid waste, is a major contributor to pollution in Kanke Dam. This waste can contain harmful bacteria and chemicals that can pose a threat to human health as well as the environment.
2. **Agricultural Runoff:** The use of fertilisers, pesticides, and other chemicals in agriculture contributes significantly to water pollution in the region. These chemicals can seep into the dam through runoff, causing serious damage to the aquatic ecosystem.
3. **Loss of Habitat:** Pollution from various sources is damaging the natural habitats of aquatic animals and plants. This can lead to a decline in populations and even extinction of some species over time.
4. **Poor Water Quality:** Chemicals and pollutants in the water are harming aquatic life, making it difficult for fish and other organisms to survive. This can also impact the quality of the water, making it unsuitable for human consumption or irrigation purposes.
5. **Bioaccumulation of Toxins:** Some pollutants are accumulating in the tissues of fish and other organisms over time. This can lead to an increase in toxin levels within the food chain, which can pose a threat to human health if contaminated fish are consumed.
6. **Reduced Biodiversity:** Pollution is leading to a decrease in the number and variety of species present in the ecosystem. This can have a ripple effect throughout the food web, potentially altering the entire ecosystem.
7. **Economic Impact:** Fisheries and related industries may suffer due to the decline or loss of fish populations. This can have a negative impact on local economies and livelihoods.

8. **Lack of Awareness:** Many people living in the vicinity of the Kanke Dam are not aware of the impacts of their actions on the environment and the dam itself. This lack of awareness has contributed to the ongoing pollution problem.

To address these challenges, *Project Jal Mitra* is initiated by the *Indian Centre for Child and Human Rights (ICCHR)* along with the *UN Millennium Fellows* of *National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi Campus* with the objective to engage a wide range of stakeholders, including local residents, government officials, environmental organisations, and others. The project is focused on promoting sustainable practices and policies that can help to preserve the dam and ensure its continued vitality for generations to come.

Through community outreach, advocacy, and education, *Project Jal Mitra* is striving to build a strong and resilient movement around the protection and preservation of this vital natural resource. By working together, we and all stakeholders can help to safeguard Kanke Dam.

Our Goals & Objectives

We have mainly 4 Primary Goals for our Project.

Goal 1: Reduce pollution in Kanke Dam by 50% within the next two years.

- **Objective:** Mobilise stakeholders to adopt best practices for waste disposal and chemical use, resulting in a 50% reduction in pollution levels.
- **Measures:** Conduct regular water quality testing, track the number of households and industries adopting best practices, monitor the amount of waste generated and properly disposed of.
- **Attainable target:** Reduce pollution levels from the current average of 10 mg/litre to 5 mg/litre within 2 years.
- **Relevance:** Addressing pollution is a critical step in protecting the ecological and social value of Kanke Dam as a source of water for Ranchi city and surrounding areas.
- **Time bound deadline:** 2 years from the start of the campaign.

Goal 2: Establish a community led committee for Kanke Dam within 6 months.

- **Objective:** Form a committee composed of local residents, experts, and stakeholders to oversee the management and conservation of Kanke Dam.
- **Measures:** Identify and invite potential committee members, conduct meetings and consultations to discuss committee structure and responsibilities, establish a system for regular reporting and accountability.

- **Attainable target:** Form a committee consisting of at least 10 members representing different sectors within 6 months.
- **Relevance:** Establishing a community-led committee can promote local ownership and engagement in decision-making and implementation for the sustainable management of Kanke Dam.
- **Time bound deadline:** 6 months from the start of the campaign.

Goal 3: Increase public awareness of Kanke Dam's ecological and social importance by 75% within one year.

- **Objective:** Raise public awareness of Kanke Dam's value as a source of water and its vulnerability to pollution and encroachment.
- **Measures:** Conduct community meetings, distribute educational materials, engage with media outlets, organise public events and activities.
- **Attainable target:** Increase public awareness of Kanke Dam's importance from the current level of 25% to 100% within one year.
- **Relevance:** Increasing public awareness is crucial for building support for the conservation of Kanke Dam and encouraging local residents to take action to protect it.
- **Time bound deadline:** 1 year from the start of the campaign.

Goal 4: Advocate for government action to address the issues facing Kanke Dam within a year.

- **Objective:** Engage with policymakers and other influential actors to raise awareness about the situation at Kanke Dam and advocate for comprehensive and effective action to address the problems.
- **Measures:** Conduct meetings with government officials, engage with media outlets to generate coverage of the issue, organise public events and campaigns to build public support for action.
- **Attainable target:** Secure a commitment from the government to take action on Kanke Dam within two years.
- **Relevance:** Advocating for government action is critical for achieving sustainable solutions to the problems facing Kanke Dam.
- **Time bound deadline:** 1 year from the start of the campaign.

Engagement & Strategies

1. **Raising Awareness:** The campaign aims to raise awareness among local residents and stakeholders about the ecological and social importance of the dam. This includes educating people about the impacts of pollution on the environment and the dam itself, as well as highlighting its role as a source of water for Ranchi city and surrounding areas.
2. **Mobilising Stakeholders:** The campaign seeks to mobilise stakeholders to take effective action to clean up the waterbody and prevent further pollution. This includes engaging with local industries, farmers, and households to promote best practices for waste disposal and reduce the use of harmful chemicals that can pollute the water.
3. **Creating a Community led Committee:** The project aims to establish a community-led committee to oversee the management and conservation of the dam, promoting local ownership and engagement in decision-making and implementation.
4. **Advocacy:** The campaign is also involved in advocacy efforts to put pressure on the government to take more comprehensive and effective action to address the issues facing Kanke Dam. This includes engaging with policymakers, media outlets, and other influential actors to raise awareness about the situation and advocate for change.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Finally, the campaign seeks to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its interventions, using data and feedback from stakeholders to make adjustments and improvements over time.


Following are the list of registered members for the Project from the UN Millennium Fellows of NUSRL Ranchi Campus:

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We look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure the success of this project and the sustainable management of Kanke Dam.

Regards,


02/04/28

(DIPENDU DAS)

Convener, ICCHR