

The Hindu- 17- November-2021

STATE OF PLAY

Back to square one

Controversy over the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam has erupted yet again

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

The Mullaperiyar dam, which has been a cause of bickering between Tamil Nadu and Kerala for decades, is again in the limelight with two developments kicking up a storm. One is the circumstances under which the release of excess water through two spillway gates began on October 29 and the second is the Kerala government's decision to retract the permission it had earlier granted to Tamil Nadu to fell 15 trees.

Concerns

The 126-year-old Mullaperiyar dam, in the Idukki district of Kerala, is an outcome of the 1886 lease agreement between the then Travancore princely state and the British government. It diverts the west-flowing rivers to the east through a tunnel in order to irrigate about 58,650 hectares in the dry southern districts of Tamil Nadu, which owns, operates and maintains the dam.

Concerns over the safety of the dam were first raised in 1979, leading to the Centre's intervention. In November that year, the dam's water level was lowered to 136 feet from its full level of 152 ft. Since the mid-1990s, Tamil Nadu has been demanding the restoration of the water level on the ground that it had completed most of the strengthening work. The Supreme Court, in February 2006, allowed water to be stored up to 142 ft and asked Tamil Nadu to carry out the balance work. When Kerala enacted a law in March 2006 against raising the water level beyond 136 ft, the matter again went to the Supreme Court, which, in May 2014, reiterated its previous ruling and held the Kerala law unconstitutional. This time, the Court relied on a number of studies undertaken by different agencies such as the Central Water and Power Research Station and the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.

Between July 2014 and March 2018, the Centre, in response to the Court's orders, formed two committees: a Supervisory Committee for inspecting the dam periodically, keeping a close watch on its safety and

recommending measures; and a sub-committee under the National Disaster Management Authority for monitoring the measures to ensure high level of preparedness to face any disaster in relation to the dam.

Recent developments

But the controversies did not die down. A month ago, during the torrential rains and landslides in Kerala, the safety of the dam again became a matter of concern. It was under these circumstances that the excess water was released from the dam through the spillway gates. The presence of Kerala Ministers Roshy Augustine and K. Rajan during the water release inauguration was viewed by the AIADMK and sections of farmers of the Vaigai basin as unacceptable.

Even as the AIADMK planned to hold demonstrations on November 9 and Water Resources Minister Durai Murugan fiercely refuted the AIADMK coordinator O. Panneerselvam's criticism of the DMK regime's approach came the news that Kerala's chief wildlife warden Bennichan Thomas had given his nod for cutting 15 trees as a prerequisite to take up the remaining work. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin swiftly thanked his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan for the clearance. But this was short-lived relief for Tamil Nadu as the Kerala government on November 7 decided to freeze the clearance. Kerala's Forest Minister A.K. Saseendran later told the Assembly that the development had caught the government unawares. Mr. Thomas has since been placed under suspension.

On November 13, when the Supreme Court heard the case, Tamil Nadu, in its written reply to issues raised by Kerala, informed the Court of the developments. There is a talk in certain quarters that the Chief Ministers of the two States may meet soon. It remains to be seen whether the leaders will come up with any solution to the dispute over the water level in the dam.

ramakrishnan.t@thehindu.co.in



The Hindu- 17- November-2021

Heavy rain fills check dams across Cooum

A minimum of 130 million cubic feet of water is being stored in five check dams

K. LAKSHMI
CHENNAI

Abundant rainfall this month has brought heavy flow in Cooum river and also filled check dams across its unpolluted portion. Considerable flow in the river has also helped flush out stagnant sewage in the urban stretches.

Officials of the Water Resources Department (WRD) said surplus water from Kosasthalaiyar river was transferred to the Cooum through a link canal running from the Poondi reservoir. This generated a flow in the river, most of whose stretches were otherwise dry till early this month. Floodwater from the Kesavaram anicut and Cooum tank augmented the flow.

The recently-renovated Korattur anicut, which was a British-era storage structure built with regulator arrangements, has become full and



Almost brimming: Water level at Chembarambakkam now stands at 22 feet against the full reservoir level of 24 feet. • B. VELANKANNI RAJ

is surplusing since Sunday. Five check dams across the river, including in Pudumavilangai and Putlur, are now full, and a minimum of 130 million cubic feet (mcf) of water has been stored so far.

The river would have carried about 2,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) out of its capacity of 25,000 cusecs in

its suburban portion. There will be inflow in the check dams at least till February.

Cleansing flow

This would ensure groundwater recharge in at least 50 villages along its course and help in irrigation, officials said.

Moreover, it diluted the

stagnant sewage and cleaned the river in some parts of Putlur and downstream of Thiruverkadu up to city limits.

Officials noted that once the proposal to build another check dam across the river at Sorancheri is implemented, additional floodwater can be stored in

the Cooum. Meanwhile, discharge from three city reservoirs, including Chembarambakkam, was increased again on Tuesday. Officials said the amount released had increased as the water levels had reached close to full, and in anticipation of more inflow because of a heavy rain forecast.

About 1,000 cusecs were let out from the Red Hills and Chembarambakkam reservoirs on Tuesday.

Water level at Chembarambakkam now stands at 22 feet against its full capacity of 24 ft. Moreover, surplus water released into the Kosasthalaiyar from the Poondi reservoir has also been increased from 6,000 cusecs to 7,000 cusecs as its level is one foot lower than its capacity of 35 ft.

The fifth reservoir created at Thervoy Kandigai Kannankottai is also full this monsoon.

The Hindu- 17- November-2021

'DMK, AIADMK won't permit new dam at Mullaperiyar'

Efforts will be made to construct dam at Rasimanal: Minister

STAFF REPORTER
SALEM/DHARMAPURI

Neither the DMK nor the AIADMK will permit the construction of a new dam at Mullaperiyar, Minister for Water Resources Duraimurugan said in Salem on Tuesday.

Mr. Duraimurugan told reporters that despite talks, the Kerala Government continued to oppose measures to strengthen the Mullaperiyar dam. In 1979, chairperson of the Central Water Commission K.C. Thomas had visited the dam, after reports said the structure was weak. Mr. Thomas had said that it was strong and that there was no need for fear.

However, authorities were asked to visit Thiruvananthapuram, and the next day, the water level was asked to be maintained at 136 feet. Authorities were given three technical advices – immediate, short-term and long-term – to strengthen the dam.



Duraimurugan

Mr. Duraimurugan said the reduction in the storage level could not have been possible without the consent of the then Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran. Ministers concerned had not signed on the file, he said.

He added that two of the dam strengthening works were completed during his tenure as PWD Minister in 1989. Despite this, Kerala had refused to increase the water level then. He added that neither the DMK nor the AIADMK would permit the construction of a new dam at Mullaperiyar.

Mr. Duraimurugan, along with Department Secretary Sandeep Saxena, Collector S. Karmegham, senior officials, legislators and an MP, visited the Mettur dam premises, and interacted with officials on the release of surplus water from the dam. The Minister also launched the Mettur Surplus Water Scheme, and switched on the motors at the Thippampatti lift irrigation pump house. .

Dam at Rasimanal

Efforts will be made to construct a dam at Rasimanal, across the Cauvery in Hogenakkal, once "issues" surrounding the project are resolved, he said later in the day at Hogenakkal.

On Karnataka's claims of a favourable judgment from the Supreme Court on a petition filed by Tamil Nadu, seeking a halt to the dam project at Mekadatu, he said it was natural for every party to presume victory.

Telangana Today- 17- November-2021

[Cloudy Skies]

Light showers forecast for city

Owing to low pressure area in Bay of Bengal, some districts could also receive rainfall in next two days



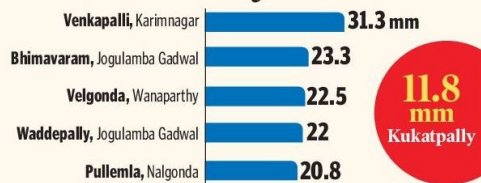
Hyderabad is likely to experience moderate showers for the next three days, according to the data recorded by TS Development Planning Society. — Photo: Anand Dharmana

CITY BUREAU HYDERABAD

Hyderabad might receive light to moderate showers for the next three days, due to a low pressure in the southeastern Bay of Bengal. The low pressure area is likely to reach the southern coast of Andhra Pradesh on November 18.

On Tuesday, a few areas in the city including Bowenpally, Secunderabad, Khairatabad and Banjara Hills received light drizzle in the morning, and the min-

Statewide Rainfall



imum temperature recorded was 22.9 degree Celsius. Kukatpally received the highest rainfall of 11.8 mm. However, the city

enjoyed a breezy and sunny afternoon.

According to the data recorded at various Automatic Weather Stations

(AWS) by Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS), most parts of Hyderabad might receive rainfall up to 2.5 mm on Wednesday and Thursday. The maximum temperature in the city is likely to be between 30 degree Celsius to 32 degree Celsius, whereas the minimum temperature will be in the range of 21 to 23 degree Celsius.

As per India Meteorological Department, Hyderabad (IMD-H), the city will enjoy a cloudy sky for the rest of the week. Mean-

while, many districts, such as Jogulamba Gadwal, Wanaparthy, Suryapet, Nalgonda and Nagarkurnool received light to moderate rainfall on Tuesday. Venkepalli in Karimnagar received the highest rainfall of 31.3 mm.

Due to the low pressure in the Bay of Bengal, it is likely that districts, including Yadadri Bhongir, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Wanaparthy, Rangareddy, Sangareddy and Karimnagar could receive more rainfall during the next couple of days.

Rajatshan Patrika- 17- November-2021

विकास का अवसर

एक्सप्रेस वे निर्माण के तहत गांवों में बनाए जा रहे तालाब

एक्सप्रेस-वे से दूर होगा राजस्थान के कई गांवों का जलसंकट



खास खबर

के. आर. मुण्डियार
patrika.com

कोटा. देश का सबसे बड़ा दिल्ली-मुम्बई एक्सप्रेस-वे कई राज्यों के गांवों की तकदीर बदल देगा। एक्सप्रेस-वे से विकास के नए अवसर मिलेंगे। इसके बनने से गांवों को जलसंकट से निजात मिलेगी। एक्सप्रेस-वे के निर्माण के दौरान लगभग 35 करोड़ घन मीटर मिट्टी को स्थानांतरित किया जाना है। गांवों से मिट्टी खोद तालाबों का भी निर्माण किया जा रहा है। एक्सप्रेस-वे बनाने के लिए बड़ी मात्रा में मिट्टी



आवश्यकता है। ऐसे में मिट्टी खुदाई इस तरह से की जा रही कि जहां से मिट्टी ली जाए, वहां जल संरचना बन जाए। खुदाई करते हुए चारों ओर पाल भी बनाई गई है। पुराने तालाबों को भी गहरा किया गया है। कोटा में डूंगरज्या में कमल सरोवर के पास नया तालाब विकसित किया गया है।

बदलेगी हाड़ौती की तस्वीर

परियोजना के तहत हाड़ौती क्षेत्र से गुजर रहे एक्सप्रेस-वे के आस-पास के गांवों में तालाबों से बड़े स्तर पर मिट्टी उठाई गई है। कोटा जिले में दीगोद, सीमलिया और डूंगरज्या गांव में तालाब बनाए गए हैं। मंडोला और

कुराड़िया में तालाब गहरे किए गए हैं। विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार, यदि रास्ते में पड़ने वाले सभी गांवों में ठीक से तालाब बनाए जाएं तो जलक्रांति आ सकती है। सवाईमाधोपुर जिले में कई जगह तालाब बनाए हैं।

सबसे लम्बा एक्सप्रेस-वे

करीब 98000 करोड़ रुपये की लागत से 1380 किमी लंबा दिल्ली-मुम्बई एक्सप्रेस-वे भारत में सबसे लंबा होगा। यह राष्ट्रीय राजधानी-दिल्ली और वित्तीय राजधानी-मुम्बई के बीच कनेक्टिविटी को बढ़ाएगा।

बिरला को बताया था

मिट्टी खुदाई को लेकर किसानों ने लोकसभा अध्यक्ष ओम बिरला को अवगत कराया था। इसके बाद एक्सप्रेस वे निर्माण कंपनी ने गांवों में व्यवस्थित तरीके से खुदाई कर तालाबों की संरचना तैयार की।

मिट्टी खुदाई करके सीमलिया में तालाब को काफी गहरा कर दिया गया है। यह बहुत ही उपयोगी साबित होगा।

-मुकुल, सीमलिया, कोटा

तालाब ज्यादा गहरा खोद दिया गया है। उनकी पाल को और मजबूत करना होगा और खुदाई संतुलित की जाए।

-रामप्रसाद नागर, डूंगरज्या ग्राम पंचायत, कोटा

दौरान सवाई माधोपुर जिले में काफी तलाब बने हैं, पानी भरने से किसान खुश हैं। पानी का उपयोग सिंचाई के लिए भी होगा।

-मनोज कुमार शर्मा, परियोजना निदेशक, सवाई माधोपुर