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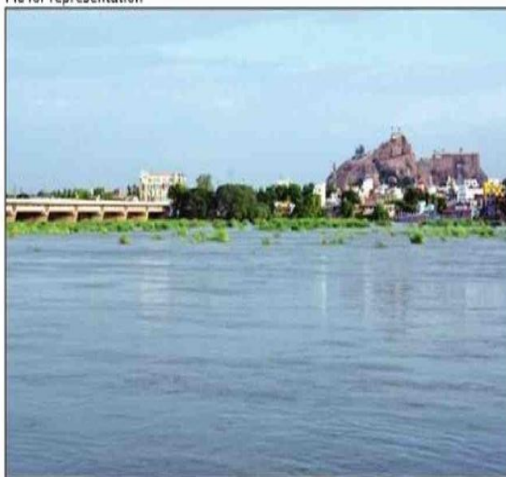
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Weak monsoon sparks tension between K'taka, TN over water

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: With the monsoon slowing considerably over Karnataka in the past week, tension between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu appears set to escalate over sharing of Cauvery river water. A hint of this emerged at a Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) meeting late on Tuesday, with both the states sticking to their stands on the issue.

Pic for representation



POLITICS & POLICY

At the meeting, Karnataka, the upper riparian state, citing low inflow into the four reservoirs in the Cauvery river basin, expressed its inability to release water to its neighbour as per the month-wise schedule prescribed by Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal.

Inflow down to a trickle

Karnataka said its reser-

BREWING CRISIS: Due to low storage, Karnataka released 5.3Tmcft less than the prescribed quantity to Tamil Nadu till June 24

voirs cumulatively received a measly 7.3Tmcft of water from June 1 to June 24 against a 30-year average of about 24.4Tmcft in the same period. Karnataka also said it would consider releasing water depending on how the monsoon behaves and inflows into its reservoirs.

Tamil Nadu vehemently objected, while demanding the authority direct Karnataka to release water as per the schedule. But Karnataka

also suggested Tamil Nadu was wasting water.

Saving water for drinking

In a submission before CWMA, Karnataka said: "Despite prevailing 70% distress conditions at four reservoirs of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu has been making large releases into the river from its reservoirs amounting to 3.9Tmcft to date. Karnataka has not released water into its canals [for irrigation] to

DEFICIT RAIN IN MOST DISTRICTS

Barring Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, Kolar, Chikkaballapur and Tumakuru districts, all other districts in the state have recorded deficit rainfall over the past seven days. The situation is far grimmer in North Karnataka compared to other regions as

average deficit over normal rainfall in these districts is as high as 47%. The deficit has touched over 60% in districts like Raichur, Kalaburagi, Bidar, Ballari and Vijayapura. Even Malnad districts of Shivamogga, Hassan, Chikkamagaluru and Kodagu have received below normal rainfall.

conserve water for drinking purposes. The authority is requested to watch the evolving situation up to the end of July. By taking stock of the hydrological scenario, a considered decision could be taken (sic)."

Since levels were low in its reservoirs, Karnataka released 5.3Tmcft less than the prescribed quantity to Tamil Nadu till June 24. CWMA has also previously directed Karnataka to release 31.2Tmcft for the month of July. At the meeting, Tamil Nadu demanded that Karnataka make up for the deficit in June, besides

meeting the July quota.

Though the authority decided to wait till July 27 to review the hydrological situation before taking a call, it is highly likely that both the states will be at loggerheads if the monsoon does not pick up in the next one week. In some relief, rain fell in catchment areas on Wednesday, bringing some relief.

Last year, when Karnataka witnessed one of the worst droughts in more than 100 years, tension prevailed between the two states for almost four months from Nov to Feb.