

Telangana Today- 17- July-2021

'Midnight gazette' usurps TS' rights

Govt's gazette notification empowers KRMB, GRMB to take control of all major, medium projects in State; move to come into effect from October 14

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

Sneaking in on the Telangana State government in an unprecedented and shocking midnight exercise, the BJP government at the Centre launched initiatives to take complete control of all the major and medium irrigation projects in the State.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) issued a gazette notification late on Thursday night that gave complete control of scores of projects in Telangana to the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) and the Godavari River Management Board (GRMB). The notification usurping all the rights of the State will come into effect from October 14.

According to the notification, the two water boards will have complete control over operations and maintenance of common reservoirs in both Krishna and Godavari basins. Subsequently, 36 projects in the Krishna basin and 71 projects in the Godavari basin will come under the control of KRMB and GRMB respectively from October 14.

The gazette notification



The water boards will also have control over matters pertaining to power generation, transmission and distribution. — File photo

states that both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will have to stop works at 'unapproved projects' immediately and obtain approvals within six months of the notification, failing which these projects shall cease to operate. This would adversely impact several irrigation projects in Telangana including Palamuru Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme, Dindi Lift Irriga-

tion Scheme and Srirama project that were expected to provide much-needed irrigation and drinking water facilities to the once-parched Telangana.

The notification also provides for posting officers from the Central government to the two boards within 30 days of the publication, which in other words, translates into the Centre having total com-

mand over the functioning of KRMB and GRMB.

What comes as a shock is that all the sanctioned posts in the projects will come under the jurisdiction of the two boards, besides plants, machinery, equipment, and stores too. The boards will also get to control office premises, equipment, furniture, vehicles, records and documents of the projects.

And to top it all, the two

States will also have to deposit Rs 200 crore each with the boards towards 'operation and maintenance costs.'

The boards will also have control over matters pertaining to power generation, transmission and distribution. All the major and medium projects have been notified leaving only the minor irrigation projects to the States.

(REPORTS PAGE 7)

Water row

- 36 projects in Krishna basin, 71 projects in Godavari basin to be under boards' control
- Move will impact key Telangana projects including PRLIS, DLIS, Srirama project
- Works at 'unapproved' projects to be stopped immediately, approvals to be obtained within six months
- Central officers to be appointed to both boards
- TS, AP to deposit Rs 200 cr each with the two boards for operation and maintenance costs
- All the sanctioned posts in the projects will come under the jurisdiction of the two boards

'MOVE WILL REDUCE FRICTION'

HYDERABAD: The Ministry of Jal Shakti sought to justify its gazette notifications snatching away control of irrigation projects from Telangana on grounds that the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act 2014 provided for such a move. This step, the Ministry claimed, would reduce friction between Telangana and AP on water management. Jal Shakti Joint Secretary Sanjay Awasthi said the gazette notification was issued after "many deliberations with stakeholders from Telangana and AP and officials from the CWC."

(REPORT PAGE 7)

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GNAWING AWAY AT STATES' POWERS

Centre's taking over of irrigation projects at this juncture that seems politically driven is akin to hitting below the belt

PS JAYARAM
HYDERABAD

The BJP government, which started chipping away at the federal structure of the Constitution from the day it came to power, has now brazenly switched to demolition mode, as is evident from the midnight notification that gives complete control of major and minor irrigation projects to the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) and the Godavari River Management Board (GRMB).

The notification, slipped in stealthily late on Thursday night, gives the two boards absolute control over all the projects on the Krishna and Godavari basins. The Centre cited the inter-State dispute between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on river water sharing, taking shelter under Section 87 of the AP Reorganisation Act (APRA) of 2014 and the grey areas in the Constitution on placement of water management and irrigation in the Concurrent list.

Applying the same yardstick, the BJP government can be questioned on how it cleared the pre-feasibility report of the Mekedatu project on River Cauvery in Karnataka, where the saffron party is in power, despite the decades-long stand-off between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on Cauvery water sharing.

The BJP government has been gnawing away at States' powers that are guaranteed under the Constitution, through draconian laws. Be it the demonetisation or the GST regime, new farm laws or the proposed amendment to the Central Electricity Act that have all impacted or will impact State governments, the Centre has been bulldozing its way just with the sheer brute majority it enjoys in Parliament. The Telangana government, which has always maintained it would extend issue-based support to the Centre, had the grace not to oppose certain moves though, in principle, it was opposed to them.

It is common knowledge that agriculture is at the core of Telangana's development plans, with the TRS government spending a lot of time, energy and money on ramping up the irrigation sector that led to the State's emergence as the rice bowl of India within a short span of time. Taking over irrigation projects at this juncture that seems politically driven is akin to hitting below the belt. The State has been seeking National Project status for the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme, but the Centre has consistently turned a deaf ear. It is because of projects like the KLIS that Telangana has emerged as the rice bowl of the country, something that the BJP government apparently is unable to digest.

What is appalling is that the Centre, while taking recourse to provisions in



Be it the demonetisation or the GST regime, new farm laws or the proposed amendment to the Central Electricity Act, the Union government has been bulldozing its way just with the sheer brute majority it enjoys in Parliament.

the APRA when it is convenient to it, is unwilling to take note of various provisions that should have been implemented for the progress and development of Telangana.

Setting up a railway coach factory in Kazipet, establishing a tribal university, Bayyaram Steel Plant and an Information Technology Investment Region (ITIR) in Hyderabad are among the promises made in the APRA.

Another move of the BJP government that would hit hard States like Telangana is the Electricity Amendment Bill, 2020. The Telangana Assembly, in fact, unanimously adopted a resolution last year opposing the proposed Bill. Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao, stating that the Bill would put the lives of farmers in the State at peril and destroy the agriculture economy, had described it as a dangerous move by the Centre. The Assembly resolution asked the Union government to withdraw the "draconian Bill which is against the federal spirit envisaged by the Constitution and is aimed at usurping powers of the States."

Notwithstanding the step-motherly attitude of the Central government towards Telangana, the State has made stupendous progress on all fronts in the past seven years virtually on its own, and instead of complementing the efforts of the young State through support, the BJP-led government has only been a drag on the acceleration.

First electricity and then water now smacks of a dangerous trend that may well see the complete erosion of powers of the State, something that doesn't augur well for democracy and federalism.

Centre justifies actions, cites APRA

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

The Ministry of Jal Shakti sought to justify its gazette notifications snatching away control of irrigation projects from Telangana on grounds that the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act 2014 (APRA) provided for such a move. This step, the Ministry claimed, would reduce friction between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on water management.

Jal Shakti Joint Secretary Sanjay Awasthi, addressing the media in New Delhi on Friday, said the gazette notification was issued after "many deliberations with stakeholders from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and officials from the Central Water Commission (CWC)."

Explaining the salient features of the notification, he said: "It's a super-sensitive issue. As far as the Union government is concerned, it was placed in a position where it had to function like an empire with a lot of efforts and meetings going into building a consensus. Consensus can be on major issues or minor issues like the shifting of the headquarters of Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) to AP. We need to do it keeping in mind the sentiments and aspirations of all the stakeholders."

Stating that a lot of time had gone into consensus building, he said it was because of the number of internal efforts within the Ministry along with the stakeholders concerned from the first meeting of the Apex Council to the second that the government could get some sort of agreement or clarity on the way forward, he said. "Seven years seems to be a long time, but it was essential to bring all the stakeholders on board and sit together to seek mutual co-operation in the interest of the two States," he said.

"The Apex Council meeting held in 2016 remained inconclusive while

CISF to guard projects

HYDERABAD: Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) Joint Secretary Sanjay Awasthi said they had consulted the Ministry of Home Affairs for deploying the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) at the project sites.

Awasthi said the State governments would continue to operate the projects the way they are doing it now. But directions would be taken from the KRMB and the GRMB.

The two boards would take care of the water requirements of Telangana and AP as 80 per cent of water in the multipurpose projects would be utilised for irrigation purposes while the remaining for power, drinking water and industrial needs.

the agenda in the meeting in October 2020 was simple. Decision on the jurisdiction of the KRMB and the GRMB, submission of DPRs of new projects for appraisal and sanction by the Apex Council, establishing a mechanism for determining the share of Krishna and Godavari waters between Telangana and AP and shifting of the KRMB to AP were on the agenda," Awasthi said.

Since enough powers were not given to the boards to ensure justice in sharing of river waters, a decision was taken that the Centre issue jurisdiction order during the meeting, he said, adding: "We took cognizance of projects on the Krishna and Godavari rivers in the notification and explained what exactly we mean by unapproved projects and what exactly is the position as far as Union government is concerned or

'TS plea for tribunal on Krishna under process'

HYDERABAD: Jal Shakti Joint Secretary Sanjay Awasthi on Friday said the matter pertaining to setting up of an appropriate tribunal to adjudicate on Krishna basin issues was being processed.

When his attention was drawn to the request of the Telangana government that a tribunal be constituted, he said the Ministry got information from the State government in the second week of June that it had withdrawn a case it had filed in the Supreme Court as requested by the Centre.

"We immediately sought the opinion of the Ministry of Law, which, in turn, asked us for a lot of background material and documents," he said, adding that the officials are in touch with the Law Ministry daily seeking its opinion and the matter is under process.

the boards," Awasthi said there was equal representation from the two States in the meetings. "Since it has been an on-and-off issue as far as approved and deemed-to-be-approved projects, the government brought the projects under three schedules," he said.

In a note circulated at the media briefing, the Centre said the APRA contains provisions for effective management of river waters in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. These provisions include the constitution of Godavari and Krishna River Management Boards apart from an Apex Council for supervision of the functioning of these boards.

The Union government, in exercise of powers conferred under Section 85 of the APRA, constituted the two river management boards effective from June 2, 2014, for administration, regulation, maintenance and operation of such projects on the Godavari and Krishna rivers, as may be notified by the Union government from time to time.

There had been a divergence between the two States on the issue of notification of the jurisdiction of the boards by the Centre. This was addressed in the second meeting of the Apex Council in October 2020 under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat with the Chief Ministers of Telangana and AP.

"In this meeting, it was decided that the jurisdiction of the GRMB and the KRMB will be notified by the Union government. In accordance with the provisions under Section 87 of the APRA, the Union government issued the two Gazette notifications, one for the jurisdiction of the GRMB and the other for the KRMB, for administration, regulation, maintenance and operation of projects in the Godavari and Krishna river basins, respectively, in the Telugu States," the note said.

WHILE TAKING RECOURSE TO AP REORGANISATION ACT WHEN THE SAME IS CONVENIENT TO IT, THE CENTRE IS UNWILLING TO TAKE NOTE OF ASSURANCES MADE TO TELANGANA IN THE LEGISLATION

Telangana Today- 17- July-2021

EUROPE FLOODS TURN DEADLY

Toll tops 120 as cities and towns across western Germany and Belgium worst hit; search on for hundreds still unaccounted for

AP
BERLIN

At least 120 people have died in devastating floods across parts of western Germany and Belgium, officials said Friday, as rescue operations and the search for hundreds still unaccounted for continued.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said he was "stunned" by the devastation caused by the flooding and pledged support to the families of those killed and to cities and towns facing significant damage.

"In the hour of need, our country stands together," Steinmeier said in a statement Friday afternoon. "It's important that we show solidarity for those from whom the flood has taken everything."

Authorities in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate said 60 people had died there, including at least nine residents of an assisted living facility for people with disabilities. In neighboring North Rhine-Westphalia state officials put the death toll at 43, but warned that the figure could rise further.

Rescuers were rushing Friday to help people trapped in their homes in the town of Erftstadt, southwest of Cologne. Regional authorities said several people had died after their houses collapsed due to subsidence, and aerial pictures showed



Erftstadt town in Germany is flooded following heavy rains. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier has pledged support to victims' kin. — Photo: AFP

what appeared to be a massive sinkhole.

"We managed to get 50 people out of their houses

last night," said Frank Rock, the head of the county administration. "We know of 15 people who still need to be

rescued."

Speaking to German broadcaster n-tv, Rock said that authorities had no precise number yet

for how many had died. "One has to assume that under the circumstances some people didn't manage

to escape," he said. Authorities said about 1,300 people in Germany were still listed missing.

Deccan Chronicle- 17- July-2021

Projects on Godavari, Krishna go to Centre

CISF to guard projects; Shocked TS may challenge it in SC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 16

A 'midnight gazette notification' issued by the Centre late on Thursday night, taking control of all major and medium irrigation projects on the Krishna and the Godavari rivers from October 14 came as a rude shock to the Telangana state government.

The sudden development came in the wake of the row over sharing of the Krishna waters between Telangana state and Andhra Pradesh, and both states lodging a series of complaints with the Centre against each other over the Rayalaseema lift irrigation scheme and enhancement of the capacity of the Pothireddypadu project by the AP government and hydel power generation on the Krishna river projects by the Telangana government.

The Telangana govern-

ment has been demanding all along that the Centre determine its fair share in Krishna water first before bringing the projects under the control of Krishna River Management Board (KRMB).

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Friday held an emergency meeting at Pragathi Bhavan with officials to take stock of the situation. The Telangana government is likely to move the Supreme Court against the gazette.

He also held a meeting with TRS Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members on this issue. The Chief Minister asked the MPs to strongly raise their voices in the Monsoon session of Parliament set to begin from July 19 and bring pressure on the Centre to withdraw the gazette notification.

■ **Page 2: No Telugu will head river boards: Centre**

KEY POINTS

● All major irrigation projects on both river Godavari and river Krishna will come under the control of respective river boards.

● Srisailem project, including hydel power plant where TS produced power despite AP's opposition, will go to the Krishna board.

● Nagarjunasagar will come under the board's jurisdiction. AP's Polavaram project also goes under the Centre's control.

● The Kaleshwaram and Water Grid projects, which are under Schedule 3, will be administered by Telangana state.

ORDER AS PER BIFURCATION LAW: CENTRE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 16

The Union Jal Shakti ministry on Friday said the gazette notification establishing the jurisdiction of the Krishna and the Godavari river boards was issued after much deliberation and after taking all the issues and arguments into consideration.

It rubbished reports of it taking a 'unilateral decision' and issuing the gazette notification all of a sudden. It stated that it had acted as per the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act, and there was no violation of any norms.

■ **Page 2: States will control few irrigation projects**

Deccan Chronicle- 17- July-2021

No Telugu will head river boards, declares Centre

From Page 1

The Chief Minister is learnt to have said the Centre took a unilateral decision on notifying the KRMB and GRMB (Godavari River Management Board) jurisdiction without consulting the state governments and without redressing the issue of final allocation of the Krishna water between the two states.

The Union Jal Shakti ministry issued a gazette notification establishing the jurisdiction of the KRMB and GRMB for "administration, regulation, maintenance and operation of the projects in their respective river basins, which will come into force from October 14, 2021."

A total of 36 projects of different categories stand

on the Krishna river in AP, Telangana and Karnataka, and 71 on the Godavari in the two Telugu states, Maharashtra and Odisha.

According to the notification, the projects and its components like overhead works (barrages, dams, reservoirs, regulating structures), part of canal network and transmission lines come under the purview of the Centre. The boards were given powers to perform all the functions to regulate the supply of water and power generated from the projects.

The Centre has stated that no person from Telangana and AP shall be appointed chairman, member-secretary, member and chief engineer of the KRMB and GRMB so as to make them impartial.

"Both the governments

WHAT'S IN AND WHAT'S NOT

KRISHNA RIVER		
APPROVED	UNAPPROVED	Telugu Ganga: TGC head works; Veligonda project: Head regulator, tunnel and other components; Handri Niva lift irrigation scheme (LIS); Pump house; Muchumarri LIS: Pump house; Galeru Nagar Sujala Sravanti: Head works; Siddapuram LIS; Guru Raghavendra LIS; Reconstruction of Muniyeru project;
Srisailem project located both in AP and TS; Pothireddypadu head regulator and Srisailem right main canal; N-Sagar project in AP & TS; Nagarjunasagar tail pond; Tungabhadra project; Bharavanitippa; Rajolibanda Diversion Scheme; KC Canal Project; Gajuladinne;		
GODAVARI RIVER		
Pedavegi reservoir scheme (Gummadipally) in TS and AP; Sri K.V. Rama Krishna (Surampalem) reservoir scheme; Musurumilli reservoir; Polavaram irrigation project; Sir Arthur Cotton barrage; Chagalnadu LIS; Bhupatipalem reservoir and others.		Pattiseema lift irrigation scheme (will cease to operate after Polavaram becomes operational); Purushottapatnam LIS: Pump houses as Stages I and II (will cease to operate after Polavaram becomes operational); LIS at Chinthalapudi; LIS at Venkatanagaram.

should stop all the ongoing works on unapproved projects as on the date of publication of this notification until the said projects are appraised and approved in accordance with the decisions taken in the 2nd meeting of the apex council held last October. If approvals are not obtained within six months after the publication of this notification, full or partial operation if any of the said ongoing unapproved projects shall cease to operate," the Centre said.

The notification also said within six months from the date of publication of the notification, both the governments should complete the unapproved projects appraised and approved. For smooth functioning of the boards, both the Tel-

angana and AP governments shall deposit ₹200 crore each in bank accounts within 15 days of request received from the boards.

The Centre said the principles, guidelines, directions and orders issued by the boards on matters relating to power generation, transmission and distribution should be implemented by both the states.

It said if any dispute arose as to whether the KRMB had jurisdiction under sub-section (1) of section 87 of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, over any project, the same shall be referred to the Centre and its decision would be final.

The notification said the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) would assist the boards in security aspects. Though both AP and Telangana governments are responsible for managing natural calamities, the boards shall advise them on management of disaster, drought or floods.

Financial liability of any contract before the commencement of the notification, liability arising out of any case filed in any court or tribunal shall be the responsibility of the respective state governments, it said.

The Centre had directed both the AP and Telangana governments to comply with its directions. It asked the boards to put in place appropriate organisational structure to perform functions within 30 days and appoint officers serving with the Centre in all categories of posts.

The Tribune- 17- July-2021

Heavy rain warning in J&K for July 19-21

SRINAGAR, JULY 17

The meteorological department on Saturday issued a weather warning for the UT, forecasting heavy to very heavy rain from July 19 to 21.

“Lower and middle-level tropospheric winds from the north Arabian Sea are most likely to interact with easterly winds (from the Bay of Bengal) from July 18 to 21. The system is most likely to cause widespread heavy to very heavy rain, thunder with lightning at most places of Jammu, mainly the Pir Panjal Range and plains of the Jammu division, from July 19 to 21,” it said — IANS
