

The Morning Standard- 03- September-2022

## ZONAL MEET

# Pinarayi, Stalin discuss dam, sharing of water

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @  
T'Puram

CHIEF Minister Pinarayi Vijayan held discussions with his Tamil Nadu counterpart M K Stalin on various issues on Friday ahead of the 30th Southern Zonal Council meeting in Kovalam on Saturday. Issues relating to the Mullaperiyar dam are also understood to have figured in the discussions.

According to a note from the CMO, Pinarayi suggested that chief minister-level talks can be held after conducting preliminary discussions on various issues between the chief secretaries of both states.

Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu IT Minister Mano Thangaraj praised Kerala's IT-related development initiatives. He said a high-level team from Tamil Nadu will visit Kerala to study more about the state's digital university and other educational initiatives. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, chief ministers and ministers of southern states and administrators from the Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands will participate in the meeting.

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# 'Execution of Polavaram project unconstitutional'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @  
Hyderabad

FORMER Supreme Court Judge Jasti Chelameswar on Friday found fault with the Centre for making the Andhra Pradesh State government 'execute' the Polavaram irrigation project at the recommendation of the Niti Aayog without at least amending the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014 through which the project was given national status.

The retired judge said that the AP Reorganisation Act should have been amended to help the government function constitutionally.

Speaking at the launch of a book titled 'Jalayagnam - Polavaram, Oka Sahasi Prayatnam', written by former Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy's close advisor KVP Ramachandra Rao, Justice Chelameswar told the audience, which comprised demagogues and former bureaucrats, that: "The Polavaram project was declared as a project of national importance under Section 90 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, formulated by the Parliament of India. Even when the government wants to implement the recommendations of Niti Aayog or any other body, they should have amended the said Act to give constitutional validity."

Expressing suspicion over the constitutional validity of allowing the State government to execute the national



project, he said that it was done without following the constitutional procedures.

Interpreting the connotation of the word "execute", Justice Chelameswar said, "The word 'execute' doesn't necessarily mean to give funds but to boss over the ongoing works."

"Why did none of the Members of Parliament question it when the Centre made the State execute the project, flouting the Act made in the very Parliament? The leaders should question themselves whether it is important to work as per the Constitution or the party line they are affiliated with. Constitution and democracy will survive if the leaders think along those lines," the retired Supreme Court judge said.

He said that in 75 years of Independent India, the people in general have arrived at a notion that 'whatever the person heading the ruling dispensation does is democracy'.