

The Hindu- 04- December-2021

INTERVIEW | B.R.K. PILLAI

'Dam Safety Act will bring in unified policies'

Best means of finding solution to Mullaperiyar row is perhaps in the Bill, says Jal Shakti Ministry official

JACOB KOSHY

The Rajya Sabha passed the Dam Safety Bill, 2019 on Thursday. The Bill prompted a four-hour debate in the Upper House as several members voiced opposition to the key aspects of the legislation. B.R.K. Pillai, who is Member, Krishna River Management Board, and a senior official of the Jal Shakti Ministry, explains its significance. Excerpts:

The most significant flashpoint regarding dams is

States' apprehension over interference by the Centre? How does the Bill address this?

The Bill will lead to the establishment of the National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS) and the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA). The NCDS, with expert representations from both Central and State agencies, will evolve unified dam safety policies and protocols for the entire country. The NDSA will act as a regulatory body for ensuring the implementation of policy, guide-



lines and standards evolved by the NCDS. The focus of the two national institutions will be thus mostly on such

dam safety issues that are generic in nature and of nationwide relevance.

Dam safety issues that are specific to an individual State will be essentially addressed by the concerned State Committee on Dam Safety (SCDS).

Each SCDS will also have representations from both upstream and downstream States, so as to provide amicable solutions.

Among the most controversial dam safety disputes involves the

Mullaperiyar dam? Does this Bill have a solution?

The best possible means of finding a permanent solution for the Mullaperiyar dam is perhaps laid down by the Dam Safety Bill. With the NDSA performing the role of a neutral dam safety organisation, it will be possible to bring transparency in dam safety data and mitigation measures – an essential requirement for confidence building between the two States.

(For full interview, log on to bit.ly/DamLaw)

The Pioneer- 04- December-2021

Fear engulfs Keralites as water level in Mullaperiyar Dam rises

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI:

About 4 million people staying in the districts of Idukki, Kottayam, Ernakulam and Alappuzha in Kerala live in perpetual fear as the possibilities of the 126 year old Mullaperiyar Dam bursting any time became stronger with the north east monsoon of 2021 bringing in bountiful rain.

Wednesday night saw Tamil Nadu Government which owns and operates the dam situated in Kerala opening seven shutters without any warning and this led to unexpected raise in water level in Periyar River that flows through Idukki, Kottayam, Ernakulam districts.

"The Central Government should immediately intervene and save the people of Kerala from a deluge. It is time Mullaperiyar Dam is either demolished or decommissioned," seven-time MLA of Kerala Legislative Assembly P C George told The Pioneer. George, a veteran farmers' leader in the State said that the Dam is a ticking time bomb and people like him who reside downstream live in perpetual fear.

"I as the chairman of the petition committee of Kerala Legislature had recommended thrice the decommission of this dam and cancellation of the 1886 Mullaperiyar Agreement signed between the then British Government and the Travancore Maharaja. The agreement has become null and void as all agreements signed between the British colonial masters and the princely States in India got cancelled by the night of August 14, 1947 with the implementation of the India Independence Act 1947," said George.

The controversial dam, built with lime and surki (before cement and concrete mixture came into vogue) is 53.66 meter (176 ft) high, 1200 ft in length and has a depth of 142 ft. "Though Tamil Nadu claims that its Kallanai Dam in Thanjavur was built during the 2nd century AD, the truth is that it is a dwarf of a dam compared to Mullaperiyar. Its



height is just 5.4 meters and there are no structural defects detected in it unlike Mullaperiyar Dam which has many flaws in its construction," said George.

M M Mani CPI(M) MLA who is the former power minister and P J Joseph, MLA and former minister for revenue too expressed their fear and concerns about the safety of the dam and called for immediate action from the Government of Tamil Nadu. "Water level in the dam should be brought down so that people could sleep peacefully," said Mani.

Tamil Nadu opened the shutters of the dam on Wednesday late night without any warning that led to the flooding of Periyar River flowing through Kerala. Since the people staying on the river banks were did not sleep because of heavy rains, they could alert their brethren and save them from getting washed away, said Joseph.

George said Kerala has identified land for building a new dam in place of Mullaperiyar. "We will continue giving Tamil Nadu whatever water it is taking from Mullaperiyar. Our only mission is to save the people of Kerala from getting washed away while ensuring water for Tamil Nadu," said George.

Economics Times- 04- December-2021

Inter-State Worry Down, Dam Safety Up

The Dam Safety Act 2021 has been in the making for 34 years, and will put an end to inter-state squabbles over whether one state's population is at risk from another state's deficient up-keep of a dam, as also make for deployment of uniform norms and advanced technology for dam surveillance and maintenance. It also enhances water security.

As per 2019 figures, India has 5,745 large dams, nearly 300 of them more than 100 years old, and at least another 1,000 such structures of 50-100 years' vintage. Hence the pressing need for mechanism design for their structural rehabilitation and operational safety. It is true that 18 states and five dam-owning bodies have their own Dam Safety Organisation (DSO), but in



the absence of a central law, dam safety norms have tended to vary from state to state. Water is in the State List as per the Constitution, but Entry 56 in the Union List does enable the Centre to bring forth legislation for regulation of inter-state river waters and river valleys.

The Dam Safety Act calls for oversight of 'surveillance, inspection, operations and maintenance' of all large dams. A national committee on dam safety is to be set up, together with a National Dam Safety Authority. Further, each state is to form its committee on dam safety, along with a state dam safety organisation. We need modern information technology tools for 24×7 surveillance of large dams, by installing sensors and by purposefully leveraging our satellite communications infrastructure.

In tandem, we need to have in place an advanced forecasting network to better manage sluice gates. Global warming and rising variability in rainfall call for heightened capacity for storage reservoirs, focused watershed management and regular maintenance.

The Times of India- 04- December-2021

Wazirabad barrage to be upgraded to be flood-ready

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi government announced that it would upgrade the Wazirabad barrage on the Yamuna river for better alertness in flood-like situations.

Water minister Satyendar Jain held a meeting with the government's irrigation and flood control department and Delhi Jal Board officials over the issue. The new gates at the barrage will also help wash away excess ammonia and other contaminants when required.

"Upgrading these barrages is the need of the hour. Every year, lakhs of cusecs of water flows in the river. It is important to have the latest technology to regulate the barrage system," said Jain.

The Wazirabad barrage was built in 1959 across the Yamuna in north Delhi, one among six across the river.

According to the government, new barrage gates will be built using the latest technology with a flood alarm system for quick response during the rainy season when the flow of water in the river is high.

"During monsoon, up to 4 to 5 lakh million gallons of water flows all at once through these barrages. The reconstruction of these new barrage gates will increase its strength so that they can withstand the high water pressure," said a statement from the government.

A barrage is a type of diversion dam that consists of many large gates that can be opened or closed to control the amount of water passing through. This allows the structure to regulate and stabilize river water elevation upstream for irrigation and other systems. This new barrage upgrade will also help to hold more water during the non-rainy season, leading to more water percolation, which will further help increase the city's groundwater levels.

Millennium Post- 04- December-2021

TO TOUCH COAST AROUND PURI ON DEC 5; NDRF EARMARKS 64 TEAMS

Odisha, Andhra, Bengal brace for cyclone 'Jawad'

OUR CORRESPONDENT

BHUBANESWAR/ NEW DELHI/ KOLKATA: As cyclonic storm 'Jawad' rolled towards the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh coast on Friday, a day before landfall in Odisha's Puri district, the NDRF kept in readiness its 64 teams to meet any eventuality in the aftermath of the tempest which is likely to also affect Bengal.

The cyclonic storm is likely to reach the west-central Bay of Bengal off the coast of north Andhra Pradesh and Odisha by Saturday morning, the India Meteorological Department said.

It will then move north-northeastward along the coast of Odisha and adjoining Andhra Pradesh and touch the coast



An earthmover is used to pull fishing boats ashore in view of the Cyclone Jawad, in Visakhapatnam, on Friday

PTI

around Puri by December 5 noon, according to the weather department.

Going by the projected trajectory of cyclone, as issued by

the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the system may strike the Puri coast and return to the sea, the state's Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena

According to the deployment map shared by him at the press conference, out of the 46 teams, 19 are based in Bengal, 17 in Odisha, 19 in Andhra Pradesh, apart from seven in Tamil Nadu and two in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

told reporters in Bhubaneswar, adding winds gusting at 90-100 kmph will likely impact the district at landfall.

The speed may gradually

decrease after touching the Odisha coast, he said.

"There's also a possibility of the cyclonic system changing its course avoiding landfall in Odisha. It could just pass along the coastline, with Puri experiencing a rub-off effect," he said.

NDRF Director General (DG) Atul Karwal told reporters in New Delhi while 46 teams have been deployed or pre-positioned in the vulnerable states, 18 teams have been kept in reserve.

According to the deployment map shared by him at the press conference, out of the 46 teams, 19 are based in Bengal, 17 in Odisha, 19 in Andhra Pradesh, apart from seven in Tamil Nadu and two in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

All teams have been made available as desired by the various state governments and they will be deployed in consultation with local authorities, the NDRF DG said.

A single NDRF team has about 30 personnel who are equipped with pole cutters, electric saws to clear uprooted trees, inflatable boats and some other relief and rescue gadgets.

"We are confident of taking care of the situation in the best possible manner," Karwal said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Thursday reviewed the preparedness to deal with the situation and directed officials to take every possible measure to ensure people are safely evacuated.

Continued on P8

Telanagana Today- 04- December-2021

KTR seeks national project status to KLIS or PRLIS

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

TRS working president KT Rama Rao appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to grant national project status to either Kalesh-

waram or Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme. In a tweet, he said, "Humble appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Telangana CM KCR had appealed to you several times to grant national

project status to either Kaleshwaram project or Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme."

"While Polavaram in AP and Upper Bhadra in Karnataka are being recognised as national projects,

kindly ensure that the world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project Kaleshwaram or Palamuru Lift Irrigation Scheme are considered with equal importance. Request you sir to direct the high powered

steering committee to take up Telangana projects on 6th Dec," he tweeted.

He also shared a newspaper clipping in which the Jal Shakti Ministry gave nod for national project status to Upper Bhadra project.

He also shared another newspaper clipping quoting the then Union Minister Nitin Gadkari informing the LS that the Centre had decided not to give any such concession to irrigation projects after Polavaram.

Jansatta- 04- December-2021

सुरक्षा के बांध

नदियों पर बांध बना कर जगह-जगह पानी रोकने की व्यवस्था इसलिए की गई कि उससे पानी की बर्बादी रुकेगी, उस पानी का उपयोग खेती-किसानी और उद्योगों आदि में हो सकेगा। बड़े बांधों पर बिजली संयंत्र भी लगाए गए। मगर ज्यादातर जगहों पर बांधों के रखरखाव में लापरवाही देखी जाती है, जिसके चलते भारी बरसात के समय उनके टूट कर आसपास के गांवों-कस्बों को जलमग्न कर देने की अशंका बनी रहती है। अक्सर बरसात में कहीं न कहीं बांध के टूटने और तबाही मचाने की खबरें आती रहती हैं। इसके अलावा बांधों के जलसंग्रहण क्षेत्र में गाद भर जाने की वजह से उनकी क्षमता काफी कम हो गई है, जिसके चलते अक्सर भारी बारिश के वक्त उन्हें अचानक खोल दिया जाता है, जिससे शहरों में तबाही मचनी शुरू हो जाती है। इन स्थितियों से बचने और बांधों को सुरक्षित बनाने के लिए उनसे संबंधी कानून बनाने की मांग लंबे समय से की जा रही थी। अब वह कानून बन जाने से इस दिशा में बेहतर नतीजों की उम्मीद स्वाभाविक है। हालांकि इस कानून का मसौदा करीब बीस साल पहले ही बन गया था, मगर उसे संसद में पेश नहीं किया जा सका। दो साल पहले इसे लोकसभा ने पास कर दिया था। राज्यसभा के पटल पर चालू सत्र में रखा जा सका और अंततः उसे मंजूरी मिल गई।

हालांकि इस विधेयक को लेकर राज्यसभा में विपक्षी दलों ने विरोध किया था। उनकी मांग थी कि इसे प्रवर समिति के समक्ष रखा जाना चाहिए। मगर सरकार ने उनकी मांग मानने से इनकार कर दिया और विधेयक ध्वनिमत से पारित हो गया। अगर इसे प्रवर समिति को सौंपा जाता तो जाहिर है, इसे कानून का रूप लेने में अभी और वक्त लगता। इस कानून के बनने के बाद सरकार का दावा है कि बांधों की सुरक्षा और उन्हें लेकर राज्य सरकारों की जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित हो सकेगी। देश के कुल बांधों में से करीब बानबे फीसद दो राज्यों की सीमाओं पर स्थित हैं। उन्हें लेकर राज्य सरकारों में विवाद की स्थिति भी देखी जाती है। बांधों का रखरखाव संवेदनशील मसला है। इसमें किसी भी प्रकार की लापरवाही या कोताही लाखों लोगों की जान के साथ खिलवाड़ साबित हो सकती है। इसलिए राज्य सरकारों की जवाबदेही तय करने वाले कानून की जरूरत से इनकार नहीं किया जा सकता। इनमें से ज्यादातर बांधों को बने हुए काफी समय बीत चुका है, उनकी मरम्मत, सफाई आदि पर विशेष रूप से ध्यान देने की आवश्यकता है।

हालांकि बांधों की अवधारणा को कई लोग ठीक नहीं मानते। उनका कहना है कि बांध हमेशा बरसात के वक्त तबाही का कारण बनते हैं। मगर इस बात से इनकार नहीं किया जा सकता कि इससे खेती और उद्योग समूहों को पानी उपलब्ध कराने में जो मदद मिलती है, वह किसी और साधन से मुमकिन न होता। नदी जोड़ योजना का प्रस्ताव भी इसी दृष्टि से रखा गया था। बांध तभी खतरनाक साबित होते हैं, जब उनका उचित रखरखाव न हो। बांधों की मजबूती बनाए रखने के अलावा उनकी जलसंग्रहण क्षमता को भी बनाए रखना एक बड़ी चुनौती है। इसके लिए आधुनिक तकनीकों के इस्तेमाल की दरकार है। बांधों की सुरक्षा से जुड़ा कानून बन जाने के बाद यह उम्मीद जगी है कि बांधों से संबंधित शिकायतों और उनसे संभावित खतरों का व्यावहारिक आकलन करते हुए उन सब पर पारदर्शी ढंग से काम हो सकेगा।

Hindustan- 04- December-2021

उत्तराखंड में हर घर जल के तहत मल्टी विलेज स्कीम को मंजूरी

जागरण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली : जल जीवन मिशन के नेशनल कमेटी की बैठक में उत्तराखंड के लिए मल्टी विलेज स्कीम को मंजूरी दी गई, जिसमें एक दर्जन से अधिक जलापूर्ति योजनाएं शामिल हैं। इस स्कीम में राज्य के लिए कुल 267 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की मंजूरी दी गई है। राज्य के कुल छह जिलों के 2,300 से अधिक गांवों में नल से जल की आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित करने का लक्ष्य है। जल शक्ति मंत्रालय के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि उत्तराखंड वर्ष 2022 तक 15.18 लाख ग्रामीण घरों तक नल से जलापूर्ति करने लगेगा।

मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, उत्तराखंड को 2020-21 के लिए जल जीवन मिशन के तहत 1,443.80 करोड़ रुपये की केंद्रीय मदद दी गई थी। राज्य स्तर पर मंजूरी कमेटी का गठन करने का प्रविधान किया गया है, जिससे प्रदेश के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में जलापूर्ति सुनिश्चित की जा सके। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की मंशा के अनुरूप देश के गांवों के हर घर तक नल से जल की आपूर्ति करना है, जिसके लिए सरकार का जल जीवन

जल जीवन मिशन

- राज्य के छह जिलों में 2,300 गांवों को होने लगेगी जलापूर्ति
- 2022 तक 15 लाख घरों को मिल जाएगा पानी का कनेक्शन

मिशन काम कर रहा है।

केंद्रीय जल शक्ति मंत्री गजेंद्र शेखावत ने बताया कि उत्तराखंड को जल जीवन मिशन के लिए पिछले साल के मुकाबले चार गुना अधिक धनराशि का आवंटन किया गया है। नेशनल जल जीवन मिशन ने राज्य सरकार से कहा है कि इस साल तक प्रदेश के कुल 2.64 लाख घरों को पानी का कनेक्शन दे दिया जाए। इस साल के लिए जहां केंद्रीय आवंटन 1,443.80 करोड़ रुपये किया गया है, वहीं ओपनिंग बैलेंस 111.22 करोड़ रुपये है। इसमें राज्य का मैचिंग ग्रांट जोड़कर कुल 1733 करोड़ रुपये हो जाएगा। केंद्र सरकार ने राज्य सरकार को स्पष्ट कर दिया है कि उत्तराखंड में जल जीवन मिशन के लिए धनराशि की कोई कमी नहीं होने दी जाएगी।