Telangana Today- 06- November-2021

'Do not transfer hydel stations to KRMB'

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Telangana State Electricity Assistant Engineers' Association has urged the State government not to issue orders to transfer hydel power generation stations, its offices and staff to Krishna River Management Board (KRMB).

As per gazette notification issued by the Central government a few months ago, the Krishna River Management Board will take control of administration, operation, maintenance and regulation over the head works of barrages, dams, reservoirs, regulating structures and part of canal network of the projects or components and transmission lines of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

In a memorandum submitted to Special Chief Secretary, Energy Department, Association General Secretary M Anil Kumar appealed to the Ministry of Jal Shakti to make amendments to the notification to transfer all hydel power generation stations so that the State government would be entrusted to perform functions as per provisions of the AP State Reorganization Act (APRA)-2014.

Kumar said the notification's intention was to implement water allocation between Telangana and AP. To manage water usage at all outlets, proper water measuring mechanism was required. All the hydel power generation stations were equipped with the water measuring mechanism.

"To manage water usage, there is no necessity for Krishna River Management Board to involve in administration, operation, maintenance of hydel power stations," he said.

With permanent absorption of sanction posts from Telangana and AP, service matter issues such as seniority, promotions, transfers and wages would crop up. Telangana will lose local employment opportunities as the subsequent recruitments will be handled by the Central government.

Deccan Chronicle- 06- November-2021

AIADMK leaders know nothing about dam, says min

Duraimurugan visits Mullaiperiyar dam

G BABU JAYAKUMAR & D SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, NOV. 5

State Water Resources Minister Duriamurugan visited the Mullaiperiyar dam, located in Kerala's Idukki district, and reviewed the water storage there in the backdrop of the opposition AIADMK calling for a massive agitation on Tuesday, November 9, in all the five districts fed by the water from the dam.

Duraimurugan, accompanied by a few State Ministers, including PWD Minister EV Velu, DMK leaders and officials, reached the dam by boat from Thekkadi in Tamil Nadu on Friday and took stock of the situation there in view of the heavy inflow of water due to rains in the catchment areas.

"The Minister who held the PWD portfolio during the previous AIADMK regime had never visited the dam in the last 10 years," he told the media on his return. The AIADMK had no moral authority to call for a protest relating to an issue on Mullaiperiyar, he added.

State Water Resources Minister Duriamurugan inspects the Mullaiperiyar dam, located in Kerala's Idukki district on Friday.

Stating that the AIADMK leaders knew nothing about the dam or the issues connected with it, Duraimurugan, who as PWD Minister in the government led by M Karunanidhi had dealt with the Kerala government when disputes had risen in the past over the dam, said he would resolve the issue through talks.

A final solution to the decades-long dispute with Kerala over the storage level of water in the dam would be found during the tenure of Pinayari Vijayan as Chief Minister, the Minister said.

Since the water from the dam, built at the confluence of the Mullaiyar and Periyar rivers by British engineer John Pennycuick, is meant for the use of the people in Theni, Madurai, Dindigul, Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram districts, the AIADMK has called for protests in all the district headquarters.

The AIADMK's allegation is that the DMK government had failed to protect the rights of the State vis-a-vis Mullaipeiyar as it brought down the level in the dam much below the 142 feet.

In the statement calling for the protest, AIADMK leaders, O Panneerselvam and Edappadi K Palaniswami, claimed that the needs of five districts could be met only if the water was stored at 152 feet. They said former Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa had striven for maintaining the water level at 152 feet through legal means and accused the DMK government-led by M K Stalin of giving in to the demands of Kerala and letting out water even before the level reached 142 feet.

They had also directly attacked Duraimurugan for covering up facts relating to the water release, which some media reports said was done by Kerala. They accused the government of not countering the rumours spread by Kerala over the safety of the dam.

Water from the Mullaiperiyar dam was crucial for the 7 lakh farmers in the five districts to irrigate their crops and to meet the drinking water needs of 80 lakh people, the AIADMK said.

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Mullaperiyar row will be resolved amicably: Duraimurugan

Tamil Nadu will strengthen baby dam: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THEKKADI/IDUKKI

Tamil Nadu's Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan on Friday assured Kerala that it need not have any apprehension about the Mullaperiyar dam's safety.

He said the work to strengthen the main dam had already been done in compliance with the Supreme Court's direction. To strengthen the baby dam, it was necessary to remove three trees near it, he said. "After strengthening the baby dam, we will approach the Supreme Court and then the water level will be raised to 152 feet," he said, after inspecting the dam.

Minister Duraimurugan inspecting the dam at Thekkady on Friday.

The Minister said the relationship between Tamil Nadu and Kerala was good, and the row would be resolved amicably. He was accompanied by Ministers I. Periasami, P. Moorthy and R. Sakkarapani, MLAs and officials. Irrigation Secretary Sandeep Saxena, Theni Collector K.V. Muralidharan, PWD Mullaperiyar dam chief engineer Krishnan, R. Subramanian of the Cauvery Technical Cell and senior officers of the Public Works and Revenue Departments.

Mr. Duraimurugan told reporters that Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan had a special relationship and the issue would be sorted out soon. He said Mr. Vijayan is a seasoned politician and would be aware of the farmers' problems in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu.

"I couldn't visit the dam earlier owing to COVID-19 restrictions... I have planned to visit all major dams soon," he said.

The Minister said AIADMK leader O. Panneerselvam had no right to talk about the issue. "Neither he nor any other AIADMK Minister had ever visited the dam in the last 10 years. Now, they are faulting the functioning of the DMK government."

Water level

To a question on water withdrawal by Kerala, Mr. Duraimurugan said the Central Water Commission had recently introduced the 'rule curve' theory. Taking the measurement of storage over the last 30 years, engineers would implement it month on month, depending on the inflow and the rainfall.

He said the authorities would keep a tab on the level and release or store water accordingly. For instance, the level on Friday was 138.80 feet. In the event of a steady inflow, the PWD engineers could store 139.50 feet on November 10 and 142 feet on November 30, he clarified.

He said the government would consider the demands of farmers of the five districts, who have announced a 'padayatra'. He also ruled out Kerala's demand for the construction of a new dam. The Supreme Court and various government agencies had acknowledged that the dam was safe.

Earlier, DMK workers, accompanying the Minister, were stopped by the police at Lower Camp.

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ST(E)PS for a cleaner Yamuna

A major cause of pollution in the river is the 22 drains dumping sewage and industrial effluents into it, prompting the authorities to build more sewage treatment plants in the city

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

1. Water in the Delhi Gate drain is dark, polluted, and has a stench. This water is taken to the STP through an underground tunnel, which is about 90-metre long

2. The water passes through two screens: a medium screen, which traps materials above 20 mm, and then through a fine screen, which traps all materials above 5 mm

3. Suspended particles are removed by adding ferric alum and polyelectrolyte in two different stages. As suspended particles become heavy, they settle down due to gravity

4. Dissolved particles are removed in aeration tanks, which have specific bacteria that eat the dissolved particles. Air is pumped into these tanks

5. Samples of water before and after being treated at the STP. This water is used for other purposes or released back to the drains from where it flows into the Yamuna

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Pollution in the Yamuna rises as the river enters deeper into the national capital. Once considered the lifeline of the city, the river currently carries fecal coliform (microbes from human and animal excreta) beyond prescribed levels at all points except Palla village, where the river enters Delhi.

A major cause of pollution in the Yamuna is the 22 drains dumping sewage and industrial effluents into the river. Illegal industries also add to the effluents ending up in the river. Because of this, the role of sewage treatment plants (STPs) becomes most important in depolluting the river water.

According to Government estimates, 14% of all sewage generated in the city is not being treated at present due to lack of facilities and the authorities are building more STPs to address this problem.

How does an STP work?

Stormwater drains are supposed to carry rainwater to a waterbody, which in case of Delhi is the Yamuna. Apart from this, there is supposed to be a separate sewage network, which is not connected to the stormwater drains, and the sewage from it is to be treated at the STPs.

In Delhi, however, the sewage flows into the stormwater drains at many points, polluting the water. So, in most cases, the STPs take water directly from the drains, clean it, and use it for other purposes (not drinking) or release it back to the drains from where the water flows into the Yamuna.

Primary stage

At Delhi Gate STP, water from the Delhi Gate drain is taken in through an underground tunnel, which is about 90-metre long. There is a coarse filter at the entrance of the tunnel to trap large floating waste and water from the drain flows under the effect of gravity to a storage sump inside the plant.

At this point, the water still has a lot of smaller floating bits. This water is then pumped up to a large overhead tank from where it flows through a slightly sloping path to different chambers.

Here it passes through two screens: a medium screen, which traps all waste bits above 20 mm in size and then through a fine screen, which traps all bits above 5 mm. At this point, the water is still blackish and has a stench. It then goes to a grit chamber (another tank) where heavy particles settle down due to gravity, and then through an aeration chamber where oil, grease etc. are removed from the water by adding air and mixing it. Oil and grease froths to the surface of the water and goes to a separate chamber.

Secondary stage

Now, whatever pollutants are present in the water are either dissolved or suspended in it.

Suspended particles are extremely tiny and light pollutants floating in the water. They have to be made heavy to settle them at the bottom and remove them.

For this, first ferric alum is added to the water in a chamber and then the water is pumped to another chamber where polyelectrolyte is added.

This water is then introduced from one chamber to another through an opening at the bottom of a wall separating the two chambers.

As the water flows from the bottom to the top of the second chamber, heavy particles settle down due to gravity.

At this point, the biological oxygen demand (BOD) of the water is reduced by 75% and the colour of the water also improves. BOD is the amount of dissolved oxygen consumed by microorganisms to decompose organic matter present in the water. So, a higher value of BOD implies lower quality of water.

The heavy particles removed from the water form a sludge and it is removed to another tank. It is then passed through a filter press to drain off excess water before it falls through a pipe from the top into a dumper waiting near the gate. This sludge is used in landfills.

After the suspended particles are removed, only dissolved particles are left in the water.

The water now goes to aeration tanks, which have specific bacteria that eat the dissolved particles and air is also supplied to these tanks.

The water then flows into another tank, where a different type of bacteria eats up the ammonia present in the water. The BOD value of the water at the end of the process is 6.47 mg/l, which is better than the National Green Tribunal-recommended standard of 10 mg/l. The cleaned water is then supplied to Pragati Power Corporation Limited, where it is used for power generation.

According to the Delhi Pollution Control Committee, 22 out of the 33 STPs in the city do not comply with their standards. "At some STPs, the BOD of water after the process is more than 10 mg/l. But to reduce the BOD further, we need more tanks for various processes and many STPs do not have space for more construction," a Delhi Jal Board official said.

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Water released from Cholavaram reservoir

Level being closely monitored at two major reservoirs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

After the Poondi reservoir, the Water Resources Department (WRD) has started releasing water from Cholavaram reservoir that is used as a buffer source for the city's water supply.

The department is monitoring the water-level at Chembarambakkam and Red Hills reservoirs that are nearly 80% and 84% full respectively. Officials said the Cholavaram reservoir gets inflow from Tamaraipakkam anicut through lower supply channel. As the water level had to be kept at one foot below the full reservoir level, nearly 215 cusecs (cubic feet per second) was released into a 1.5-km long Poochikaal channel that joins the Kosasthalaiyar river.

"We decided to release some amount of water into the channel instead of diverting it to Red Hills reservoir as the water level is nearly 18.75 feet against its full reservoir level of 21.20 ft. The tanks upstream of the waterbody are yet to fill up and the shutters may be opened only when the water level crosses 19.2 ft. A spell of rain of 80 mm-90 mm will be needed for the storage to increase," said an official.

Similarly, the water level at Chembarambakkam reservoir is closely monitored. At present, water level stands at 21.18 ft against its maximum level of 24 ft. Once the level touches 22 ft, the department plans to discharge water into the Adyar river to maintain the minimum gap of 600 million cubic feet in the reservoir.

Some of the major tanks in Sriperumbudur and Pillaipakkam, which are located upstream of Chembarambakkam, are yet to reach their maximum level, the officials said.

Meanwhile, a temporary causeway on Melanoor-Meyyur Road across the river and downstream of Poondi reservoir was damaged as the Kosasthalaiyar continues to carry about 1,000 cusecs of surplus water released from Poondi. The river has a carrying capacity of about 80,000 cusecs of water.

Residents said they had to take a detour of at least 10 km to reach Meyyur now. Girija Pushparaj of Eraiyur village said people now had to travel by bus via Vengal and Periyapalayam to reach Meyyur as the causeway had been damaged.

Minister for Milk and Dairy Development S.M. Nasar and officials of Tiruvallur district administration inspected the site on Friday. As the water discharge may be decreased from Poondi on weekend, steps were being taken to repair the causeway. Moreover, work to build a ₹ 14.95-crore bridge across the river proposed during the previous regime would be accelerated, the Minister said in a press release.

Risky venture: People trying to cross the Kosasthalaiyar near Meiyur in Uthukottai taluk where a causeway was damaged.
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