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DECODING POLITICS

The irrigation project at heart of Telangana election heat

Political row was sparked off by the discovery on Oct 21 of damage to piers of a barrage that is part of Kaleshwaram project

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HYDERABAD, NOVEMBER 6

A MAJOR controversy has erupted in poll-bound Telangana over alleged engineering lapses in the Rs 1.5 lakh crore Kaleshwaram project, with the Opposition parties, including the Congress and BJP, accusing the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government led by Chief Minister K Chandrababtu Naidu of corruption.

The Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project on the Godavari river is being cited by the government as one of the world's largest multi-purpose projects. It is envisaged to provide water for irrigation and drinking across about 45 lakh acres in 20 out of 31 districts in Telangana, apart from Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

The first phase was inaugurated by KCR in June 2019.

What sparked off the political row was the discovery on October 21 of damage to several piers of the Medigadda barrage in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district under the project. The assistant executive engineer on duty that day filed a complaint that he had heard a loud sound and, on inspection, found at least three piers had suffered damages and sunk.

The BJP and Congress have seized on the issue in the run-up to the Assembly polls.

While the state BJP urged Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat to send a Central team to examine the damage, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and state Congress chief A Revanth Reddy visited



Rahul at the damaged barrage of Kaleshwaram Project, cited as one of the world's largest multi-purpose projects, on Nov 2

the Medigadda barrage on November 2.

A team from the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) visited

the site and submitted a report on November 3, blaming faults in the planning and design. The team said that a combination of issues

involving planning, design, quality control, and operation and maintenance led to the damage. It suggested that the reconstruction of the piers under block 7 of the barrage should be taken up from its foundation level.

The KCR government has rejected the NDSA report, charging that it was prepared in haste without considering all the information submitted.

Telangana Irrigation Department Additional Chief Secretary Rajat Kumar wrote to NDSA chairman Sanjay Kumar Sibal, stating that comments made in the report were "unsubstantiated". Kumar stated that the panel criticised the project without a thorough investigation into causes of the damage.

State BJP president and Union minister G Kishan Reddy

has demanded a CBI probe into the project.

Kishan Reddy said the entire Kaleshwaram project should be investigated. "The project was constructed spending over Rs 1 lakh crore and the state government borrowed heavily," he said.

Rahul Gandhi called the Kaleshwaram project the "ATM of KCR family".

In their election speeches, Congress leaders, including Revanth Reddy and Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, and BJP leaders, including Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar, have been targeting KCR over the project.

The BRS has maintained that the damage was "not as serious" as being projected. L&T, which built the barrage, has stated that it is working on the repairs.

Deccan Chronicle- 07- November-2023

Reservoirs have water to quench city for 9 months

DC CORRESPONDENT
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The reservoirs providing drinking water to Chennai have sufficient water to meet the needs of nine months and it is likely to increase since more rains are expected during the monsoon season. The present storage of water in these reservoirs is 9 tmcft which is 68 percent of their total capacity. At

the same time last year, the storage was 8.3 tmcft. Chennai city needs one tmcft of water for a month.

The Poondi reservoir, which has a capacity of 3,300 million cubic feet, receives 90 cubic feet of water from the Krishna river every day. The present water level in the reservoir is 1,833 million cubic feet (1.8 tmc). The Sholavaram lake, which

has a total capacity of 1,081 million cubic feet, gets an inflow of 104 cubic feet and the present storage level is 613 million cubic feet.

The full capacity of Puzhal lake is 3,300 cubic feet and its current storage level is 2,726 million cubic feet. The Kannankottai-Thervoy Kandigai lake has a storage of 438 million cubic feet against its total capac-

ity of 500 million cubic feet.

The Chembarambakkam lake has reached a near-total capacity even before the onset of the north-east monsoon. It has a storage of 3,132 million cubic feet against the total capacity of 3,645 million cubic feet. The city is also getting water supply from Veeranam lake and the present storage of the lake is 318 cubic feet.