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Title : Issue of raising the Water Level in Mullai Periyar Dam in Kerala.

DR. C. KRISHNAN (POLLACHI): Sir, I am speaking on behalf of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam headed by Shri Vaiko of Tamil Nadu. Mulla Periyar Dam, which is situated in Idukki, was built by the Government of Tamil Nadu in the year 1886 by an agreement with His Highness, the Prince of Travancore[reporter67].

The dam, when it was built, was meant to maintain the water level of 152 feet, but now the water is being maintained only at a level of 136 feet. This was done because of a fear due to a disruption in the wall of the dam. Thereafter, that wall was repaired and reinforcement was done.

Further, experts have also given their opinion that water can be raised up to a level of 145 feet. This Expert Committee was headed by Shri S. S. Brar and Shri T. K. Mittal.

My leader Shri Vaiko also led a delegation to Kerala to meet the hon. Chief Minister of Kerala, Shri Oommen Chandy, and presented a memorandum stating that the level of water should be raised to 145 feet. As per the opinion of the experts ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please raise a matter which is within the control of the Central Government.

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Yes, Sir. I have also raised this point in the first week of August 2005 during the heavy rains in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Water was overflowing, and it was getting wasted as it was going into the sea. At that time, â€* who is very much interested in ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Krishnan, you need not mention these names. It is to be deleted.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY (CHIDAMBARAM): The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has not taken any step ...(*Interruptions*)

*Not Recorded

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): Sir, it is the Supreme Court judgement ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (PERIYAKULAM): Sir, this should not be allowed. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Unfortunately, you are not the Speaker. I am the Speaker, and I shall decide what to do and what not to do.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It has been deleted. The name will not be there. Dr. Krishnan, please conclude now.

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Sir, the Tamil Nadu Government filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Can we not discuss an important issue?

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Sir, the Tamil Nadu Government filed a writ petition on this matter in the Supreme Court. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am on my legs. Therefore, please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ponnuswamy, please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Krishnan, you will have only one more minute to conclude.

...(Interruptions)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : The Chief Minister of ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. You can go on shouting.

...(Interruptions)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : The Government of Tamil Nadu filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court has given the direction to raise the water level up to 142 feet. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The people of your constituency have not sent you to be unruly here.

DR. C. KRISHNAN : The Supreme Court has given the verdict that the water level may be raised up to 142 feet. Now, I request the ...(Interruptions)

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Sir, it is a very important matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Manoj, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

DR. C. KRISHNAN : Sir, I would request the Central Government to intervene in this matter and help to raise the water level in the Mullai Periyar Dam up to 142 feet. ...(Interruptions) I am saying this because it will help the farmers of Madurai, Ramnad, Theni, Sivagangai, etc.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (MADRAS NORTH): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise a very urgent matter of public importance, which affects the farmers who are in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. As the House may recall Mullai Periyar Dam is irrigating about 216 lakh acres of paddy growing land in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, which is being controlled by the Kerala Government. â€¦ (Interruptions)

DR. K.S. MANOJ : Sir, it is an important issue. He is also raising it. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What are you talking? Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Though it is an old dam, in the name of safety of the dam, about 5 years back the Kerala Government unilaterally reduced the height of the dam from the existing 152 feet to 136 feet. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not make any comments on any other Government. You raise the issue. This is the trouble.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Protesting against this move, the Tamil Nadu Government approached the Central Government. Petitions were also filed by our people in the Supreme Court. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You forget that this is a national Parliament, and we are concerned with the Government of India.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : At the instance of the apex court, the Centre had appointed an expert committee that recommended raising the water level initially to 142 feet. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): Sir, it is a very important issue. I also wish to raise this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Then I will ask you to come and sit in the Chair.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I am raising it only because the Kerala Legislative Assembly passed a unanimous resolution and it has come into force. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : The expert committee after taking into consideration the stability of the dam, stress and strength analysis and every other aspect, had refuted the apprehension of the Kerala Government about the safety of the dam. The Supreme Court has accordingly passed orders for raising the water level from 136 feet to 142 feet[ak68].

From 2001 onwards, Tamil Nadu is also deprived of benefits of power generation at about 171 million units.

About two days back, to frustrate the orders of the Supreme Court, the Kerala Legislative Assembly passed a resolution not to raise the water level from 136 feet to 142 feet. ...(Interruptions) To oppose this move, our leader Dr. Kalaiganar Karunanidhi, wrote a letter to

the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh to see that the Supreme Court order is implemented by the Kerala State Government, since the move of the Kerala State would lead to inter-State dispute. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: So far as I am concerned, both Tamil Nadu and Kerala are very dear to me.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Already farmers in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, that is, Madurai, Coimbatore, Theni, are agitated over the move of the Kerala State in not raising the water level.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Central Government, especially the hon. Prime Minister and also Prof. Saifuddin Soz, hon. Minister of Water Resources, to intervene in the matter and issue direction to the State Government of Kerala to respect and implement the orders of the Supreme Court forthwith by raising the water level up to 142 feet. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I give the floor to Shri S.K. Kharventhan. Only Shri Kharventhan's submission will go on record and nothing else. The same thing need not be quoted again and again.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): Sir, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Sir, I am concluding. I would request the Government to make a statement in the House on this issue because the situation is already explosive and if it is allowed to continue, then it may lead to a serious crisis.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kuppusami.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Sir, Mullai Periyar Dam is one of the oldest dams in Tamil Nadu. The Dam was constructed to safeguard the interests of the farmers in southern Tamil Nadu at the Western Ghats. Originally, the Dam was having the capacity to store water up to 152 feet and, presently, the water is stored only up to 136 feet. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, my name was listed after Dr. Krishnan's.

MR. SPEAKER: Who has given this information to you? I will decide whom to call, please sit down. I would not accept what you are saying.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Since it was alleged in some corners that the Dam would leak if more water is stored, the Tamil Nadu Government spent a huge amount of money and thoroughly strengthened the Dam. After that, the Dam is having the capacity to store water up to 152 feet. Since the Kerala Government has not allowed us to store water beyond 132 feet, a Public Interest Litigation was filed in the hon. Supreme Court. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will decide whom to call. You are not even supposed to look at the list. You have looked into the list unauthorisedly. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : I must know as to what is the reason for which you are not calling me. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : The Supreme Court sent a Committee to check the Dam, and the Committee filed a report stating that the Dam is in good condition and having the capacity to store water up to 152 feet. After hearing both the States, both the parties, the hon. Supreme Court, very recently, directed that the water which can be stored should be raised from the present level of 136 feet to 142 feet. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The interruptions will not be recorded. Well, I will adjourn the House, unless you control your Members.

*(Interruptions)**

MD. SALIM (CALCUTTA – NORTH EAST): Sir, do not take it seriously. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I totally repudiate your allegations, Mr. Swain.

...*(Interruptions)*

*Not Recorded

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : However, instead of following the Supreme Court judgment, the Kerala Government illegally passed a Resolution in the Assembly which will affect the interests of the farmers of southern Tamil Nadu.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to intervene and direct the Kerala Government to raise the water level from 136 feet to 142 feet for the welfare of the farmers of Tamil Nadu. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is always subject to my decision, Mr. Swain. Your attitude is very reprehensible. Is this the way your Members behave? I have not said that I would not call him.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH (BHILWARA): Sir, please give him a chance. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to advise me. Who has said that I will not give him a chance?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are dictating to the Chair. Those days have gone, Mr. Swain. You cannot dictate to the Chair.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You sit down. You do not have to advise me. I will not allow super-Speakers in this House. Now, I give the floor to Shri N.S.V. Chittan.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (DINDIGUL): Sir, the backward Districts of Tamil Nadu, such as Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Virudhnagar, Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram, are benefited by the Mullai Periyar Dam. In the year 1979, the storage level was reduced from 152 feet to 136 feet, and as a result of this, 256.23 TMC water had gone waste into Arabian Sea. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Only Mr. Chitthan's observations will be recorded.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Crop loss was estimated at Rs. 2,436 crore. Thousands of people have fled to northern districts and also to foreign countries to earn their livelihood. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate, I can only say that. I have never said that I will not call any particular Member. Even without notice, I am trying to accommodate the Members. Even if you have given the notice at 5 o'clock, it does not matter to me.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : The hon. Supreme Court observed that though the Dam was constructed in 1874, the structure of the Dam is sound and safe. There is no leakage of water in any part of the Dam. The Government of Tamil Nadu has already taken all the necessary steps to strengthen the Dam, and the storage level can be raised from 136 feet to 142 feet at present. By raising the storage level, Kerala State will not be affected in any manner. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Why is this list being shown? I want an answer on this.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : If the storage level is raised, 16,000 acres of land will be irrigated further. As the storage load of water in the Mullai Periyar Dam was restricted to 136 feet, thousands of agriculturists whose lifeline was the water from Dam have fled to other States and other countries to earn their livelihood. Now, the hon. Supreme Court has given verdict to raise the water level to 142 feet. Instead of accepting this verdict, the Kerala Assembly has passed a legislation to keep the water level up to 136 feet [\[R69\]](#).

I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to examine this serious matter and if necessary, to take over the administration of the dam under Central supervision and to increase the water storage level to 142 feet as directed by the hon. Supreme Court of India. Such a step only can meet the ends of justice.