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Title : Need to review the decision to construct a dam on Paalar river in Andhra Pradesh by the State Government.

SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (TIRUPPATTUR): The ancient perennial rivers of Tamil Nadu glorified by Mahakavi Subramania Bharati, like Kaveri, Thenpennai, Paalar, are not having enough water these days. River Paalar which originates in Karnataka and passes through Andhra Pradesh for just 21 kilometres and flows into Tamil Nadu crossing a stretch of about 200 kilometres is a Tamil Nadu river traditionally. Wherever it flows, it remains to be the primary water resource for both drinking and irrigation purposes. Vellore, the Northern district in Tamil Nadu and places like Thiruvannamalai and Thiruppathur that come under my Lok Sabha constituency are fully dependent on Paalar. This river passes through three different States. In Andhra Pradesh, the stretch of river Paalar is very short, but still the Government of Andhra Pradesh has planned to construct a dam across river Paalar near Kuppam in the Tamil Nadu-Andhra border. The area that has been identified by the Andhra Pradesh Government comes under Reserve Forest Area that is well within the jurisdiction of the Union Government. The unilateral decision of the Andhra Pradesh Government to construct a dam across the river Paalar causing damage to environment and ground water potential is a wrong measure. This also violates the River Water Agreement signed as early as in 1892. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to stop the venture by the Government of Andhra Pradesh that will cause a serious impact on the agricultural activities in Northern districts of Tamil Nadu. I reiterate that this calls for negotiations, agreement and formal permission.