

Yettinahole: IISc professor shoots off letter to Siddaramaiah

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Work on Yettinahole project is in progress near Sakleshpur

MANGALURU: In an open letter addressed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Dr T V Ramachandra of Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has described Yettinahole drinking water project as ecologically disastrous and economically unviable, and would not be able to quench the thirst of those living in parched regions.

Pointing out that his previous letter to Mr Siddaramaiah did not elicit any response or result in meaningful scientific discussion, the scientist has complained in his 10-page letter that authorities of Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited (KNNL) have launched a negative campaign against his colleagues and himself.

“This letter is to assert again that the proposed Yettinaholé project is ecologically disastrous and economically unviable as the purpose of supplying to water parched region would not materialize as there is insufficient water yield in the catchment,” he said adding that the detailed project report (DPR)’s estimation of 24 TMC feet in Yettinahole catchment area was erroneous.

Dr Ramachandra said “Any anthropogenic activities involving large scale land cover changes would affect the hydrology of the river basin affecting the dependent biota. Yettinaholé and its immediate neighboring catchments fall under ecological sensitive (zone 1), and as per recommendations of the working group there shall be strictly no developmental activities. The region is vulnerable and prone to frequent elephant-human conflict as per Karnataka Elephant Task Force, and any alteration in elephant corridors would enhance human animal conflicts threatening the survival of elephants,” he added. He said “The assumption of scanty rainfall in Kolar and Chikballapur district and water scarcity is due to poor rainfall is neither factual nor scientific.

Water Scarcity is due to mismanagement of watersheds in the region and removal of lakes and streams.” Besides, Kolar and Chikballapur districts have sufficient yield (more than 50 TMC feet each) which meets the demands of the region provided techniques of integrated management of natural resources are introduced.

In the letter, Dr Ramachandra has replied to comments of officials of KNNL, and some politicians.