

## Chief Minister urged to stop Yettinahole project

- [Raghava M.](#)

Ahead of the proposed meeting with Chief Minister to discuss about the Yettinahole project, Indian Institute of Science Scientist T.V. Ramachandra has urged the Chief Minister to stop the project as it was “ecologically and economically unviable.”

In his letter to Mr. Siddaramaiah, Mr. Ramachandra, who headed a team of hydrologists to study the project, has asked him to take note of the “deliberate attempt in indicating higher water yield and drop the proposal [Yettinahole project]”. By dropping the project, the State government “would save the State from spending unnecessarily on the project which is bound to fail due to lack of water.”

Prof. Ramachandra said Yettinahole and other catchment areas for part of the ecologically sensitive zones of the Western Ghats that needed to be conserved.

“Any anthropogenic activities involving large scale land cover changes would affect the hydrology of the river basin affecting the dependent biota,” he said.

### Inflated figures

Quoting the Department of Statistics, he said that the catchment areas receive annual rainfall between 3,000 mm and 4,500 mm. An empirical study by the IISc. researchers have shown the total runoff yield of water at 9.55 tmcft, of which only around 0.8 tmcft was available for diversion.

Prof. Ramachandra said, yield of 24 tmcft (mentioned in a detailed project report by Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Ltd.) and 22 tmcft (according to Karnataka Power Corporation) were “inflated figures”.

“The inflated values of water yield in the catchment would only lead to the failure of water diversion scheme similar to Telugu Ganga Project (meant to provide drinking water to Chennai and irrigate drought prone areas of Kurnool, Chittoor and Kadapa districts and uplands of Nellore districts in undivided Andhra Pradesh state).

The Yettinahole project would neither help the arid regions or those in the catchment areas of Hassan and Dakshina Kannada districts. “Residents of Yettinahole catchment would be deprived of their right for water, while people in the arid regions would only get to see dry canals,” he said.

The arid regions of Kolar and Chickballapur districts receive more than 50 tmcft of water. With integrated management of natural resources this water was sufficient to meet the demand of the regions, he said.

Following protests against the Yettinahole project in several parts of Dakshina Kannada, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had called a meeting of legislators from Dakshina Kannada, officials and activists in Bengaluru to discuss about the Rs. 13,000 crore project on October 19.

Government claims the project would provide drinking water to arid regions of Tumakuru, Chikkaballapura, Kolar and Bengaluru Rural districts.

The meeting was, however, postponed due to Dasara celebrations and is expected to be held in a few days.

The project was cleared by the State Legislature to divert 24 tmcft of excess rainwater from Yettinahole and other streams that join the Nethravati.