



Yettinahole project is not feasible, agrees Khader

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Mangaluru: The fight against the Yettinahole project and the 'resistance' by the representatives to it took a new turn on Saturday.

The people led by the Sahyadri Sanchaya and other like-minded organisations - who are fighting desperately against the project - did not get the answers they were demanding for the 10 questions about Yettinahole they had put across to the representatives. But, the Health Minister U T Khader finally agreed that the project was not feasible and that he would try to convince the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Major Irrigation Minister M B Patil of the fact.

Addressing a large gathering during the 'Yettinahole Uttara Needi' programme organised by the Sahyadri Sanchaya at the School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, on Saturday, Khader said that the project would be similar to an act of cheating the people of both Dakshina Kannada and Kolar districts. "There have been complaints that the estimation of rainfall and tender process were not conducted properly. It is my responsibility to provide water to the people of Kolar, but it should not harm Dakshina Kannada," he said and instructed the Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited (KNNL) to upload every detail of the project on their website.

Meanwhile, he promised to implement the Paschimavahini project - which involved the construction of check dams - for the benefit of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts in the coming budget.

Written answers

The minister earlier submitted answers - prepared by the technical staff members of the KNNL - for the 10 questions put across about the Yettinahole project. He admitted that he was not an expert to answer the questions, and held the right of giving replies in any form. The answers also said that the government did not seek any answer from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc). The report of Dr T V Ramachandra was his personal opinion and also claimed that the first phase of the project required only 13.93 hectares of forest and KPTCL would supply electricity for the project, said the minister.

As most of the answers given by Khader were similar to the detailed project report (DPR) of the KNNL, the expert panel did not accept them. CA Giridhar Kamath said that the answers did not have a seal or signature, and could not be taken to be the answer of the minister.

In response, Khader said that the Yettinahole project could not be stopped by keeping politician at bay. The elected representatives could act as links between the public and the government.

Nalin supports protest

MP Nalin Kumar Kateel called upon the protesters to continue the protest but requested them to keep it away from politics. "I have supported the protest right from its beginning, and have

already expressed my opinion in the government forums. The State should stop the work on Yettinahole project. I have also written letter to Union Minister for Water Resources Uma Bharti and Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar. I will raise the issue in the next Parliament session, but I cannot do anything about the decisions taken at State-level," he said, and added that as an individual and as a member of the political party, he was against the project.

MLC Capt Ganesh Karnik tried to answer all the questions on behalf of Nalin Kumar Kateel and Sullia legislator Angara. Karnik agreed that the detailed project report was wrong and the project would affect the biodiversity of the Western Ghats. "It needs 370 MW of power to lift water in three places and the project will become another Varahi project, which was also carried out by the KNNL. The excess water of River Nethravathi is needed for development of fisheries. The government should find an alternative to Kolar and rainwater harvesting should be done in the district," he said.

The expert panel was again not convinced by the answers and demanded the leaders to actively participate in protests.

Legislator Mohiuddin Bava was also present on the occasion and presented his view. The protesters, meanwhile, complained that the district administration was trying to avoid the programme by organising another programme at the same time on the same topic, at the last minute.

Activists Dinesh Holla and Somashekar among others were present.