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Expert panel to study viability of Gundia project

Special Correspondent

The project will destroy over 100 hectares of forest

Yeddyurappa laid foundation stone for the project

Bangalore: The Union Environment Ministry has decided to despatch an expert committee to assess the feasibility of setting up a 270-MW hydroelectric power plant at Gundia in Sakleshpur taluk of Hassan district.

Minister for Energy K.S. Eshwarappa told presspersons here on Tuesday that Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh had informed the State Government about sending the expert committee to study the pros and cons of the project from the environmental perspective. The establishment of the project would destroy over 100 hectares of forest in the Malnad region. A few months ago, Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa laid the foundation stone for the project. The Centre would provide environmental clearances to the hydro project only after studying the expert committee's report, Mr. Eshwarappa said. The Malnad Janapara Horata Samiti has been opposing the project on ecological grounds.

He said talks were not held between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on setting up power projects in the Cauvery Basin. The State Government wanted to augmenting power generation at Shivanasamudram. So far, there had been no talks with Tamil Nadu on the establishment of power plants at Rasimanal and Hogenakkal in Tamil Nadu, and Makedatu in Karnataka, he said.

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