

Western Ghats rivers in danger

DECCAN CHRONICLE.

Published
Updated

Jan 21, 2019, 1:10 am IST
Jan 21, 2019, 1:10 am IST

0 0

Unchecked construction spree kills many waterbodies.



📷 The powerhouse of a hydel project coming up across Iruvazhinjippuzha near Kodancheri in Kozhikode which was washed off in the floods. (File pic)

KOZHIKODE: The unchecked construction spree in the name of tourism and hydel power projects in the Western Ghats region has resulted in killing many rivers originating from the Ghats and also caused a series of landslides in the high-ranges of the district during last monsoon. Six hydel projects, majority in the private sector, are coming up in a 5-kilometer distance of the river Iruvazhinjippuzha, wreaking havoc in the region, according to environmentalists.

Talking to DC on the necessity of a serious campaign against the destruction of Western Ghats region of the district, T.V. Rajan of Kerala Nadisamraskhana Samithy said that one project was completed two years back while other five projects are at different phases of construction. But in the last torrential rains and flash floods costly power generators were washed away. "In the Kodanchery panchayat the entire stretches of green cover along the river banks in the project sites were destroyed beyond restoration", he pointed out.

Hinting at the magnitude of environmental destruction, Mr Rajan said that the ecosystem of the sensitive zones was damaged as the granite for construction work in the sites was sourced from the river bed and from the banks. "Mining on the river bed violating all norms and regulations left the region prone to landslides", he added.

The environmental activists lament that even though complaints were submitted to the district collector so far no steps were taken. This is happening while there is an order of the directorate of panchayats that river banks and rivers should be surveyed and demarcated. The Supreme Court also had directed against fencing of river banks and converting them into project sites barring the entry of public.

The greens demanded a scientific study in the region with the help of Geological Survey of India and Centre for Earth Science Studies (CESS) to assess the impact of such projects on environment.

The river Chaliyar, the lifeline of the district, is under threat from the hydel projects as all are coming up in Iruvazhinjippuzha, one of its major tributaries.

The Cochin International Airports Limited (CIAL) was given rights for for running hydel power projects in the river basin for 33 years' lease. The power house of the Pathankayam Hydel project of Minar group aims at generating 4 megawatt power diverting the Iruvazhinjippuzha.

As per guidelines there should be a gap of at least 4 kilometers between two such hydel projects, which was violated here, it was pointed out.

...

Tags: [hydel power projects \(/content/tags/hydel-power-projects\)](/content/tags/hydel-power-projects), [western ghats \(/content/tags/western-ghats\)](/content/tags/western-ghats)

Location: [India \(/location/india\)](/location/india), [Kerala \(/location/india/kerala\)](/location/india/kerala), [Calicut \(Kozhikode\) \(/location/india/kerala/calicut-kozhikode\)](/location/india/kerala/calicut-kozhikode)

0 0