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# Greens see red over continuation of Yettinahole water project

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A file photo of the Yettinahole project underway near Sakleshpur

The project has become a perpetual 'ATM' for successive governments, says activist

Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's proposal to set apart 1,500 crore for the Yettinahole Integrated Drinking Water Project in the State Budget on Thursday has not gone well with the environmentalists in Dakshina Kannada, who have termed the project a perpetual 'ATM' for governments irrespective of political dispensation.

Sahyadri Sanchaya that has been in the forefront opposing the project said both Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Ltd., which earlier commenced the project, and Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Ltd., which is currently executing the project, have admitted that there was no surplus water at Yettinahole that could be diverted for potable use. Even people in the beneficiary regions have realised this and opposed the project, said Dinesh Holla, convener of Sahyadri Sanchaya, a body of activists. "The project would go on for 25 years with no end result," he said.

While people from Karavali, Malnad and Bayaluseeme have opposed the project, successive governments have consistently shown the 'monetary' usefulness of the project, Mr. Holla rued. In such a situation, one must wonder why and for whom the governments were striving.

By allocating funds, Mr. Yediyurappa, just as Siddaramaiah and H.D. Kumaraswamy, has consistently shown the 'monetary' usefulness of the project, he said. When people of Bayaluseeme, Malnad and even Karavali (coast) have all opposed the project, one should wonder why and for whom the project was for.

Mr. Holla challenged VJNL to show availability of water in the catchment areas of the project — Kadagaravalli, Hiradanahalli, Hebbasale, Heggade, and Maranahalli — as the project had crossed six years. Land in these regions witnessed blasts for the project implementation severely impairing water sources and impacting the Western Ghats.

Extensive landslips in the Western Ghats last Monsoon was the result of the massive damage in the region. With lack of water, plans were on to divert waters of the Kapila through a tunnel, Mr. Holla alleged, adding the entire project was an elaborate scheme to kill the Nethravathi.

Mr. Holla noted that increased human activities in areas of originating spots for Aniyoor and Mruthyunjaya rivulets, tributaries of the Nethravathi, opening of home stay resorts, mushrooming coffee estates have only added to the ecological imbalance. There have been growing instances of forest fires in these regions, he said, adding that unless there was immediate rethink on the project, Dakshina Kannada would suffer.