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# Yettinahole project: Activists to meet Regional Empowered Committee team

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**M**ANGALURU: Activists and experts, who are fighting against Yettinahole project, have decided to meet the team of Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of Ministry of environment and forest (MoEF) that will visit the project area in Sakleshpur.

Former MLA Vijayakumar Shetty, deputy Mayor Purushotham Chithrapur and National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK) former professor S G Mayya told reporters that REC team is expected visit Yettinahole project area on December 26. REC had decided in its seventh meeting held in Bengaluru on December 18 that "it was considered necessary to visit the project site (Yettinahole) and hold a meeting of the REC in the office of CCF, Hassan to consider the proposal submitted by KNNL."

Prof Mayya said that experts and activists will have to convince the REC team that Yettinahole project will damage the ecology of Western Ghats. Mayya said that National Green Tribunal (NGT) Southern Zone bench has on Monday directed the Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited (KNNL) to maintain status quo by not carrying out work of Yettinahole project till next hearing to be held on January 8.

"REC member A N Yellappa Reddy has expressed concerns about Yettinahole project. Reddy has pointed before the REC that the water yield calculation and forest area requirement mentioned in Yettinahole project report prepared by the KNNL are wrong. The project report does not make mention about disaster mitigation measures to be taken in case of a possible burst in any one of the eight weirs to be constructed in Yettinahole. KNNL is not clear about measures to be adopted to take care of the biodiversity of Western Ghats. There is no mention of alternative solutions to compensate the possible damage to the Western Ghats. Further, Reddy also has informed the REC that the project is not suitable for the ecosystem. He also has insisted on

alternative proposals to provide drinking water to parched districts instead of Yettinahole project," Mayya said.

Vijayakumar Shetty said that the government is giving more emphasis on Yettinahole project just to appease people of Kolar and Chikkaballapur, who held bandh on Monday demanding permanent solution for drinking water scarcity. "Advocate general Madhusudhan R Naik himself along with a team of advocates have represented in the NGT hearing on Yettinahole project held today (Monday). It is an eyewash technique on part of the government to satisfy agitating people of Kolar and Chikkaballapur. We are sure that our legal fight in NGT against Yettinahole project will see victory. In the meantime, we will continue our fight against the project outside too," he added.