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Minister T B Jayachandra on Monday justified the state's decision not to

release Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu stating that the neighbouring state could still expect rains due to northeast monsoon.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Jayachandra said Karnataka was facing distress and the present water availability in the four reservoirs of Cauvery basin was barely sufficient to meet the state's drinking water needs.

### Northeast monsoon

"Tamil Nadu still can get rains in the coming months due to northeast monsoon which begins in September. Besides, there is sufficient water in Mettur dam. But, northeast monsoon do no hit Karnataka", Jayachandra said. He said there was no justification in Tamil Nadu's petition before the Supreme Court seeking a direction to Karnataka to release 50 tmcft of Cauvery water.

He said the government's first priority would be to protect the interest of farmers in the Cauvery basin. Karnataka would file its submission before the Supreme Court in a week's time, Jayachandra said.

**DH News Service**

A motorcyclist braves the rain in Gadag on Monday. DH PHOTO

## IISc to rope in students for biodiversity map project

**Bosky Khanna**

**BENGALURU:** The Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES) at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has invited students to participate in its project to prepare a biodiversity map of ecologically sensitive regions in the Western Ghats and other parts of the state.

Prof T V Ramachandra of CES told DH that, in 2012-13, they had undertaken the biodiversity mapping in Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada districts, involving students.

"The first project involving students was successful. The second mapping will coincide with the lake symposium scheduled in Moodabidri in December this year," he said.

The Karnataka Biodiversity Board and the Western Ghats Task Force have entrusted the CES with the task to undertake

the biodiversity mapping of Uttara Kannada. Under the programme 'My Village Biodiversity', the CES has also launched the Young Sahayadri Ecologist-2016 competition for students. The aim of biodiversity mapping is to know the terrain, biodiversity and conservation methods.

Ramachandra said students should be involved as they are efficient communicators and keen observers.

They will interact with other students and bring out information, he said. In the first mapping, 54 traditional varieties of rice and 12 varieties of brinjal were mapped. "This time we are hoping for more new discoveries," he said.

He said students get exposed to environmental problems and learn to come up with effective solutions in the project.

"It is also important academically as environment educa-

tion is part of the curriculum. The training programme started in January and so far, around 200 students have been trained and many students from Bengaluru are showing keen interest in this exercise. They can also be a part of the short- and long-term courses," he explained.

The involvement of students will cover traditional crop varieties and their special qualities, traditional livestock varieties, plant and animal biodiversity on land and water, wild plants consumed as food in villages, medicinal plants and their use, village-wise list of nati vaidyas (traditional medical practitioners) who treat humans and domestic animals, local methods of crop cultivation, information on sacred groves, perennial water bodies in villages and details about artisans.

**DH News Service**

## Upper Krishna Project III: Process on to acquire 55,000 acres of land

**Srinivas Sirnoorkar**

**KALABURAGI:** The Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam Limited (KBJNL), a state government undertaking responsible for implementing the mammoth third stage of the Upper Krishna Project (UKP), is all set to acquire more than 55,000 acres of land.

This is, however, less than half of the total land needed for implementing various components of the highly ambitious project which will irrigate 5.3 lakh hectares of land in six districts of North Karnataka.

In response to a DH article entitled 'Implementing UKP Stage III, a gigantic task for government' on June 13, 2016, the KBJNL has sent a detailed report on the efforts it is making,

including land acquisition, to implement the project. The report was sent to DH by Dinesh Amin Mattu, Media Advisor to the Chief Minister, as a dossier on the project.

For implementing UKP III Stage, a mind-boggling 1,33,831 acres is required. By September 2015, the KBJNL had issued notifications under various sections of the Karnataka Land Acquisition Act for acquiring 55,734 acres. But it is silent on acquiring the remaining 78,097 acres. Most of the land marked for acquisition is in rural areas and only 2,044 acres is to be acquired in urban areas for construction of rehabilitation centres for displaced families. Acquiring large swathes of land is necessary for three main purposes.

A whopping 75,630 acres will be required for submergence when the height of Almatti dam is raised from 519.60 metres full reservoir level to 524.256 metres. As per the latest survey, 188 villages in Vijayapura and Bagalkot districts will be submerged in the reservoir water after the dam's height is increased by about five metres. Out of this, notifications have been issued for acquiring 37,966 acres, including 7,906 structures, in nine villages.

The second major component is that 51,837 acres are required for nine irrigation projects. Out of this, notifications have been issued for acquiring 11,190 acres only. The nine projects, most of them pertaining to giant lift irrigation, are being

taken up to irrigate the traditionally drought-prone districts of Vijayapura, Bagalkot, Raichur, Kalaburagi, Yadgir, and Koppal. These projects are meant for utilisation of 130.9 tmcft of water allotted to Karnataka by the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II.

The last but not the least component of the project is rehabilitation. To shift the families displaced on account of submergence of 20 villages, 5,000 acres will be needed and notifications have been issued for acquiring 4,908 acres. Since Bagalkot town will also be partially submerged, 2,094 acres of land will be required to rehabilitate displaced families there.

The KBJNL has issued notifications for acquiring 1,640 acres of land.

### WORD GAME

by Jeff Knurek

This diet has the potential to work for everyone.



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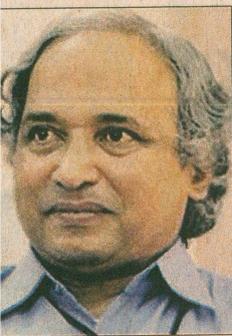
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# How to Make Harmless Idols

Over the years, Ganesha Chaturthi has turned into an environmental hazard, what with artisans switching from clay to plaster of Paris and from natural dyes to chemical ones. When the idols are immersed in water bodies, it could well be the last straw for the already woebegone lakes.

## Heavy Metals Enter the Food Chain'



**V Ramachandra**  
Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISc

Ramachandra says it is a serious issue since the practice, besides polluting the lakes, allows heavy metals from the paint to enter the food chain. "Ganesha does not want to be immersed in sewage-filled lakes and pollute it further."

### SOLUTIONS

- We need to curtail the pollution from the source: Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols and painted idols must not be produced
- Just making public announcements and conducting a few raids won't be enough. Plan well in advance and stop these from coming into the market
- Have mobile vans to collect the idols at the doorstep and dispose them off in a safe way as deemed fit by the Pollution Control Board
- Also have people posted at tanks to collect idols brought there
- Large idols should be banned as disposal becomes difficult
- Police and local administration should also work with the board in enforcing these



## 'Give Alternatives to Idol Makers'

### SOLUTIONS

- Like the plastic ban, this has to be tackled from all sides – tackling producers and consumers, from the authorities and from the public
- Large PoP idols are bought by gram panchayats, local leaders and RWAs. They must be made aware of the purpose and meaning behind the custom – how the origins were eco-friendly and how it got convoluted
- Stop it at the source. The producers are a concentrated lot and can be targeted and given alternative options
- Create awareness about alternatives such as clay, rice husk and make them easily available and cost effective
- For what is already out there – alternative to complete immersion such as dipping the idol into the waterbody using a crane can be done to satisfy religious sentiments and not cause much harm



**Sashi Rajamani**  
Lakes Activist, Whitefield Rising

Rajamani believes that awareness about the ill-effects of the practice will go a long way. "Ensuring availability of alternatives and compliance are equally important," she said.

## OFFICIAL LINE

Lakshman, chairman, State Pollution Control Board, says PoP idols that have already been manufactured will be accommodated this year. "We are taking stock of how many PoP idols are out there. They are not allowed to be immersed in water bodies and the police and city corporations will be enforcing it," he said.

## THE MOST-TALKED-ABOUT GOSSIP, ONLY IN ET

### Don't Flaunt Your Network

Bangalore's frustration with poor mobile network is only growing. A customer has compared certain service providers to Pokemon Go. Calling the Indian version of the popular augmented reality game, he said, "It involves players running and searching for the elusive 3 & 4Gs."



### Nod's Different from Clearance

At least ten mega constructions have been put on hold for lake and drain buffer zone issues by the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA). These projects were recommended environmental clearance by the State Expert Appraisal Committee. "This shows how well they go through the proposals," scoffed an officer.



### When ADGP was Stuck in Traffic

Additional DGP Bhaskar Rao was stuck on JC Road, all because of road rage. A realtor driving an Innova had touched the side-view mirror of a Fortuner driven by another realtor. Rao apparently asked them to move away and settle the dispute but they were in no mood to listen. So Rao radioed the nearest Hoysala to book cases against both men.



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