Cauvery Water Management Authority Meeting

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Why in news?

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The first meeting of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) took place recently.

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What is CWMA?

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- The CWMA has been formed by the Centre.
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- This is to implement the water-sharing award of the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal.
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- The water sharing will be as modified by the Supreme Court earlier this year.
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- The CWMA is expected to meet once every 10 days during the monsoon months.
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What is the outcome of the recent meet?

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- At its meeting, CWMA asked Karnataka to release 31.24 tmcft (thousand million cubic feet) of water in July.
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- The quantum is based on the monthly schedule drawn up by the Tribunal.
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- It excludes the surplus realised on the Tamil Nadu side in June.
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- Karnataka is planning to challenge in the SC, the Centre’s notification constituting CWMA.
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Is Karnataka's claim valid?

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- Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956 makes clear the Centre’s duty to notify a scheme to implement a Tribunal's award.
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- Parliament has the power to modify the scheme, or leave it as it stands.
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- But Karnataka’s claim that the scheme requires parliamentary approval before it is implemented is questionable.
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- Further, the Supreme Court also approved the draft scheme.
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- This was only after finding it to be in consonance with the Award and the 1956 Act.
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- It will be unfortunate if this dispute gets into another round of litigation.
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What lies ahead for CWMA?

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- CWMA needs the cooperation of the States to successfully perform its role.
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- This involves gathering data on rainfall, inflows and outflows, cropping patterns and periodic withdrawals from reservoirs.
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- Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry should thus approach the issue in a spirit of cooperation.
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- The first meeting augurs well for a sustained phase of constructive cooperation among the States concerned.
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- With favourable monsoon this year, CWMA may not face any major problem.
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- As long as the inflows into Karnataka’s major reservoirs are substantial, it

has had no problem releasing its surplus water.
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- It is only in a distress year that the CWMA will face a significant challenge.
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- Determining the extent of distress, and dividing the shortfall among the States can be challenging tasks.
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Source: The Hindu

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