

Dam Safety Bill 2018 - TN Opposition

Why in news?

\n\n

A recent Tamil Nadu Assembly resolution demands that the Centre keeps the Dam Safety Bill 2018 in abeyance.

\n\n

What is the Bill on?

\n\n

\n

- The objective is to help all states and Union Territories adopt uniform dam safety procedures.

\n

\n\n

\n

- The Bill is to address all issues concerning dam safety including

\n

\n\n

\n

- i. regular inspection of dams

\n

- ii. emergency action plan

\n

- iii. comprehensive dam safety review

\n

- iv. adequate repair and maintenance funds for dam safety

\n

- v. Instrumentation and Safety Manuals

\n

\n\n

\n

- It proposes a National Committee and State Committees on Dam Safety.

\n

- The National Committee will formulate policies and regulations on Dam

Safety.

\n

\n\n

What is the NDSA?

\n\n

\n

- The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) will mediate with the state organisations and dam owners.

\n

- It works for standardisation of dam safety-related data and practices.

\n

- Besides, it -

\n

\n\n

\n

- i. gives dam safety assistance

\n

- ii. maintains a national-level database of dams with records of failures

\n

- iii. looks after design or construction of new dams

\n

- iv. eliminates inter-state disputes

\n

\n\n

What is the need?

\n\n

\n

- Most dams in India are constructed and maintained by the states.

\n

- Some of the bigger ones are managed by autonomous bodies.

\n

- E.g. Damodar Valley Corporation or Bhakra Beas Management Board

\n

- There is lack of legal and institutional architecture for dam safety in India.

\n

- This has kept the dam safety an issue of concern for long.

\n

- Unsafe dams are a hazard and dam break may cause disasters.

\n

- The Centre has come up with the Bill when about 450 dams are being

constructed.

\n

\n\n

Why is Tamil Nadu opposing?

\n\n

\n

- The TN resolution proposed that the Bill had contentious clauses.
- The Bill allows the NDSA to inspect dams situated across intra-state rivers.
- This is being viewed as an attempt to encroach on the state's powers and rights.
- This is especially with respect to Dams constructed by the State Government in the neighbouring State.
- It is said to cause various problems in their maintenance and operation.
- It wants the Centre to arrive at a consensus with the states.
- Till then, it asks the Centre to keep in abeyance the process of legislating on the Bill.

\n

\n\n

What is the Mullaperiyar issue?

\n\n

\n

- Tamil Nadu owns dams in Mullaperiyar, Parambikulam, Thunakadavu and Peruvuripallam in Kerala.
- The two states have engaged in dispute over the Mullaperiyar dam.
- Tamil Nadu government wants to raise the water level to 142 feet and carry out repair.
- But Kerala has opposed it citing safety threats.

\n

\n\n



\n\n

\n

- Kerala Irrigation and Water Conservation (Amendment) Act 2006 limits the full reservoir level to 136 feet.

\n

- The Supreme Court had struck down the Act, and the order went against Kerala.

\n

- Eventually, an SC team inspected the dam and confirmed that the dam was safe.

\n

- Given this, the latest move by the Centre has made Tamil Nadu cautious about its authority and assets.

\n

- More objections are likely to follow from other states as well.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

