

CAUVERY-THE RIVER OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY OR WAR AND VIOLENCE

Abstract

Water has become a vital resource for economic growth and sustainable development. Southern India is currently engaged in conflicts involving shared water resources. This case study focuses on the Cauvery River water sharing Dispute. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, both southern Indian states rely on the Cauvery River for their water supply. Failed monsoons in 1995 ignited old debates between the two states over water access. The dispute is still in progress as the states battle out their arguments in the Supreme Court. The issue becomes more complicated and intense due to the displacement of local farmers to depend on the water from the Cauvery River for their livelihood. Crops are withering and tempers are inflamed. Threats of violence have transformed into aggressive protest ending in death, and still there is no solution. This age old problem has taken devastating form with rising population, which has given rise to regional violence giving it shades of a civil war. In this paper a small effort has been taken to present how this situation was, and is now!

Keywords: *Urbanization, Civilization, Exhaustible, Sustenance, Industrialisation.*

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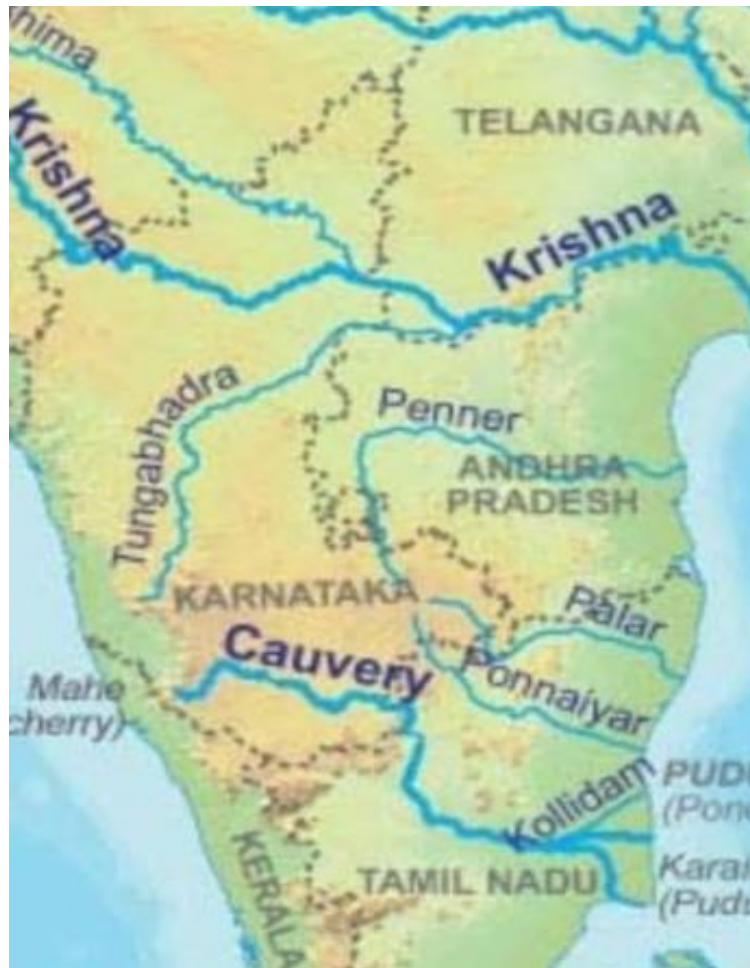
I. INTRODUCTION

Water and life have sweet relation and is inseparable pair. River water is the most significant resource, which man has exploited than any other resource for the sustenance of man's life. The regular and unconditional flow of river water resulted in many Civilizations. River water is consider to be the precious gift of Nature to mankind., which is one of the non-exhaustible resource earlier, du due to increase in population, urbanisation, industrialisation, river water has come to a situation of crisis and exhaustible resource.

II. AIMS

Water is a vital resource for economic growth and sustainable development Man has learned to fly in the sky like birds, swim under water like fish but, he lacks to learn to live on the Earth without fighting and creating differences, simply quenching the thirst without trapping a "RIVER" as it hates getting trapped but like to move freely as its water is a mirror of Nature, very soft, flexible, embraces the rhythm, finds solace, chases dreams and never go reverse. So man has to try to live like a river forgetting the past differences of opinion focus on future with always positive efforts to compromise and help others. The River Cauvery exhibits highly fluctuating region owing to the great variability of rainfall resulting in scarcity of water during the seasons of winter and summer.

The River Cauvery is the life line of South Karnataka rises in Brahmagiri Hills of Kodagu district near 'Talakavery'. The old name was 'Ponni –'The Golden Maid', Cauvery is also known as God's Garland', which is the sacred river of South India as 'Dakshina Ganga'. Cauvery literally means "one who brings abundance", as it is comparatively less seasonal compare to other rivers of south India and it is the 4th largest river system of South India, flows in south easterly direction covering a total area of about 805 Kms from its birth point-'Talakavery' is a holy place for Hindus rises at an elevation of about 1341 meters above MSL flows into the states of Karnataka 320 Kms(41.5%), Tamil Nadu 416 Kms(55%), Kerala and Union Territory of Pudduchery together cover 64 Kms(04%) with a total catchment area of about 87900 km² and drains into Bay of Bengal near(Kaveripattanam) Poompuhar,in Mayiladuthurai district of Tami Nadu. The main tributaries of the River Cauvery are Hemavati, Lokapavani, Shimsa, Harangi, and Arkavati at its left bank and at its right bank Kabbini, Suvarnavati, Amravati, Laksmithirtha and Nuau, faming a delta stretches from Trichiurapalli to the sea coast, at this point the River Cauvery bifurcated into two channels, the north channel flows by name Coleroon, where as the south channel as the Cauvery, The districts of Kodagu,Chikkamagluru and Hassan in Karnataka forms a major portion of catchment area 82% and remaining 18% cover the other districts of Karnataka- Mysuru, Chamrajnagar, Mandya, Tumkuru, Ramanagr, Bengaluru Rural and Bangalore Urban districts etc.



The water is a priceless natural gift but is not an unlimited but constant. Human history has evolved around conflicts over water and many civilizations have dwindled for mismanaging this prime natural resource. A minor variation in the process of hydrological cycle like evaporation, condensation and precipitation led to destruction of human progression as man has already made substantial changes mainly reduction and over utilisation of water vapour in the Atmosphere and other water resources but, needs serious attentiveness for this simple but most important substance.

There are a number of rapids, waterfalls in the Cauvery River bed and forms three important islands- Shivasaudram, Srirangam and Srirangapatana .The first major hydro-electricity project constructed in Asia in 1902, at upstream of it, the Krishnarajsagar Dam with the colourful and attractive Brindavan Garden is located at its downstream. The River Cauvery has three chanting waterfalls along its course- the Chunchunakatte falls, the Hogenakal falls and the Shivasaudram falls. The Shivamsaudram has two branches, each branch has a fall of 100 meters-the eastern fall known as Barachukki, and western fall as Gaganachukki, and these two branches meet to pass through Mekedatu before forming a common boundary between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, for 60 Kms where Cauvery flows in a deep gorge.

Urbanisation is an universal phenomena for which India is not exception and Karnataka has more than 38.5% of urban settlements which require large amount of

resources, known as urban foot print to get water. In 1960's Bangalore city use to full fill water requirements from Tipugundanahalli reservoir, then from Shimsa and in 1990 from Hemavathi tributaries of Cauvery. Now, the scarcity of water is increasing day by day in the 5th largest city of India with a population of 84.9 lakhs, which is growing fast at an alarming rate leads to water scarcity.

Two states of South India Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are currently engaged in conflicts involving in Cauvery River water-sharing dispute, as the states battle out their arguments in the Supreme Court. The oldest and highly debated issue became more complicated intense due to the displacement and sufferings of local farmers who depend on the water from the River Cauvery for their livelihood. Crops withered and tempers are inflamed. Threats of violence transformed into aggressive protests ending in deaths, suicides, and still no solution. This age-old problem has taken devastating regional violence with rising population giving it shades of a civil war.

The River Cauvery issue has taken a crucial decisive angle a correspondent of the British paper "Sunday Observer" described some eyewitnesses accounts where many women have been targeted, some leaders of the ruling parties, local politicians, police personals were attacked, properties were looted, educational institutions were closed etc.,

The Apex Court directed The Central Government to set up The Cauvery Water Management Board and monitoring Authority to ensure monthly release of water. Recently under the Government of India the Ministry Of Water Resource has established the Cauvery Water Management Authority has fixed the quantum of water released by Karnataka Government from June-May to Tamil Nadu is measured at Biligundilu gauging station located at the borders of Karnataka-Tamil Nadu. Mr. Masud Husain was appointed as the first chair person of Cauvery Water. Management Authority (CWMA).

III. EFFECTS

1. The Cauvery disputes have resulted in adverse effects like the burning of effigies of political leaders, destruction and demolition of public properties and public transportation in sensitive areas of both the states.
2. The farmers who sow their crops depending on the discussions of both the states are left at odds, as the farmer is the back bone of the country face tough time which makes the life of people more difficult as it has become a National, political agenda has taken International status, and shows the weakness and loopholes of democratic country.
3. The capital intensive collaboration of the state Government and the Central Government for the construction of Mekedatu Balancing Reservoir or a Mini KRS for supplying potable water to Bangalore and also parts of Mysuru to meet the drinking water requirements of these cities.
4. Now it is a right time to nationalise the river waters of the whole country to put an end to the regional conflict.
5. In accordance with the principles adopted at the International conference on Water and Environment (Dublin, January, 1992).it was agreed that" Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource very essential to sustain life, economic development and for conservation of environment."

6. Regrettably, the statistics' regarding the availability of Fresh water in the World is Staggering. It is estimated that more than 1million people do not have access to fresh and clean water, and more than 1.7 million do not have sanitation.

IV. SUGGESTIONS

1. Dasara Festival is celebrated in different parts of India but, Mysuru Dasara has a wide scope in all over the World because of historical perspectives, the 10th of Mysuru Dasara is called as Jumbo Savari along with a number of attractive activities like flower shows, sports, games ,wrestling, pet shows, exhibitions, theatre festivals, youva dasara for youth, air shows, dance & drama ,which attract people not only from the sub-continent but, around the world, which requires large quantity of water in the southern districts of Karnataka especially Bengaluru and Mysuru, hence Cauvery is the chief source of water.
2. To fulfil the water requirements, there are two projects envisaging Ethinahole project and by constructing a reservoir and a hydal power generating station across the river Cauvery near Makedattu in Kanakapura taluk, which was strongly objected by Tamil Nadu Government. But the state Government has planned to establish a Balancing Reservoir or Mini KRS near Makedattu to supply potable water to Bengaluru and Mysuru.
3. The Government of India has a proposal plan and has asked the United Nations team to help in linking Ganga - Cauvery Link Canal from the river of Ganga to Narmada and Godavari rivers ,which wi fulfil the water needs of not only Karnataka but also Other states – Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu
4. As the southern districts of Karnataka have witnessed noticeable improvement in socio-economic infrastructure by harnessing the waters of river Cauvery and its tributaries. When the water requirements get disturb, due to release of water to the neighbouring state- Tamil Nadu, the southern districts of Karnataka- Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mandya etc.,lead to transformation in land use pattern, cropping pattern and intensity and irrigation, hinders the socio- economic, Politico-cultural and over all development.
5. By proper planning measures of using river Cauvery water and the related geomorphological facets will help both the Cauvery-water-disputed states in controlling the rivers and to develop other water resource projects to utilise the water keeping in mind the geomorphology and availability of water and planning results in multi-faceted development in the River Cauvery catchment area.

V. CONCLUSION

The geographical distribution of water wealth in Karnataka State has largely pronounced disparities but flows with flash flood occasionally. The surface of the Earth is a complex of rivers, the main themes of study is to trace out the differences among the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. From observations and secondary data, the evidences show that there is a close relation between the origin point to the merging point or mouth of River Cauvery.

The limited nature of natural resources and the infinite nature of human demand of Cauvery water is contradictory feature of human life and threatens not only the environment but also the very existence of human society

The situation in India is a primary example and the most significant Environmental problem in India today is inadequate water supplies for sanitation and drinking. Almost 85% of the urban population and 82% of the rural population have no clean drinking water facility, then how would the irrigational need for agriculture are going to be met? May be nationalization of river water with proper knowledge of utilising this essential resource would help in undoing the hard feelings of two states.

“Be like a river, without banks, flow openly, and don’t go reverse. So try to live like a river forget the past unpropitious differences, focus on your future and always be positive as the river accepts the new water in the basin driving away the old water”.

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