

## For T.N., verdict has its share of positive aspects

Vegetables from Karnataka are being loaded onto trucks of Tamil Nadu at the border in Kakanallah.m. sathyamoorthy

The Supreme Court's verdict on the Cauvery dispute has its share of positive features for Tamil Nadu, despite the State's allocation being cut by 14.75 thousand million cubic feet (tmc).

From the State's point of view, the most important aspect of the court order is the recognition of the plea for the establishment of the Cauvery Management Board.

The words of the court — "We direct that a scheme shall be framed by the Central Government within a span of six weeks from today..." and "no extension shall be granted for framing of the scheme on any ground" — carry enormous meaning for Tamil Nadu as it is for the creation of an implementation mechanism that a scheme has to be formulated.

Ever since the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) gave its interim order in June 1991 and final order in February 2007, the State had sought the creation of a body to ensure effective implementation of the order. After the publication of the final order in the gazette of the Central government in February 2013, the demand had grown louder.

The other aspect that has gone in favour of the State is the court's unambiguous message with regard to the schedule of release of water. By stating that "we also categorically convey that the need-based monthly release has to be respected," the court has appreciated the position of the Tamil Nadu government, which had, over the years, complained that Karnataka was not adhering to the schedule of water release, as worked out by the tribunal in the interim order or final order.

Another feature in T.N.'s favour is the assertion by the court on the issue of irrigated area. It not only left intact the extent of irrigated area (24.71 lakh acres), as permitted by the tribunal in the final order, but also emphatically made it clear that "the final determination of irrigated area arrived at by the Tribunal for Tamil Nadu cannot be declared incorrect or fallacious."

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