Seeking its rightful share for the State in water allocation as part of river inter-linking, Water Resources Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday said that the State had been facing water stress for decades on account of demands for drinking water and irrigation.

Speaking during the 15th meeting of the Special Committee for Inter Linking of Rivers held in New Delhi, he said that the State had been denied of its rightful share from the transferred water — from surplus basins under the Inter Linking of Rivers Scheme. He pointed out that the State had a large Drought-prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) areas which have been facing water stress for decades. “The situation had risen because demand is more than the allocations to the State by various river water tribunals,” he said.

He cited examples of how the State got lower allocations, including from the Krishna basin, where it got 907 tmcft against the 1,012 tmcft it demanded, Cauvery basin (284.75 tmcft against a demand of 465 tmcft) and Mahadayi basin (13.42 tmcft against a demand of 36.55 tmcft).

Mr. Shivakumar said that to the government’s surprise, the State was completely left out in the 2010 report on assessment of surplus water for transfer to deficit river basin under Peninsular River Development by National Water Development Agency.

“The State government in several letters to Ministry of Water Resources and National Water Development Agency has been persistently urging them to restore its share in the diverted/transferred water from links under the Peninsular River Development. In the modified link proposal of the Mahanadi-Godavari-Krishna-Cauvery-Vaigai-Gundar river, the State was again not considered for allocation. The allocation made by National Water Development Agency without consulting all basin states of the Cauvery and the Krishna is arbitrary,” he said.

The State would be forced to approach the Union government for the constitution of a tribunal if its interests were not taken care of by the National Water Development Agency in deciding water share under the river inter-linking proposals, he said.