Govt winds up Cauvery water tribunal

The Times of India, New Delhi Dated: 18 July, 2018

New Delhi: The Centre has dissolved the 28-year-old Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal, arguing “no further reference” in the matter would be necessary.

The move closed one of the longest-running water sharing tribunals but it has drawn attention towards four other bodies on different rivers which have been functional without any result for years.

The one on rivers Ravi and Beas (Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan) has, in fact, been in existence for even longer — 31 years. Other tribunals — Krishna (Maharashtra, Karnataka and AP); Vansadhara (Odisha and Andhra Pradesh) and Mahadayi (Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra) — too have been on the job for years.

Though the Centre has sought to end such delays by bringing a legislation for a single tribunal for all interstate water disputes across the country with a fixed timeline, the proposed law has been pending in Lok Sabha since March 2017.

Under the proposed law, there will be a single tribunal with multiple benches, unlike the present law which provides for multiple tribunals. The tribunal under the proposed law will have to give its award within three years. The decision of the tribunal will be final and binding on states and it will have the same force as an order or decree of the SC.