T.N.’s outreach to neighbours raises river-linking expectations

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Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami’s outreach to his Andhra Pradesh and Telangana counterparts over the linking of Cauvery and Godavari rivers has raised expectations of the project taking off soon.

Speaking at an event in Salem on Wednesday, Mr. Palaniswami said he was keen on arriving at a consensus with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and Telangana CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao on the details regarding the sharing of water resources at the earliest. His task may turn out to be easy, given the fact that Mr. Reddy and Mr. Rao had, during a six-hour-long meeting in Hyderabad in mid-January, already arrived at an understanding on the diversion of Godavari water to Krishna river, according to an official of the National Water Development Agency (NWDA), a Central government organisation entrusted with the task of preparing proposals for linking rivers.

As per NWDA’s draft detailed project report (DPR), Tamil Nadu will get 83 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) at its border with Andhra Pradesh. The quantum will be 57 tmc ft at the Grand Anicut — a major regulator on the Cauvery. The State government would prefer the Kattalai barrage in Mayanur to the Grand Anicut, as it feels it can optimise the benefit of water transfer.

The NWDA’s draft report talks of diverting, through a canal-cum-pipeline, the surplus water of the Godavari, either from the Inchampalli barrage or the Janampet barrage, from where water will be conveyed to the Nagarjuna Sagar on the Krishna and then to the Somasila dam on the Pennar. The proposed alignment will also pass through Swarnamukhi, Araniar, Palar and Pennaiyar rivers before terminating at the Grand Anicut on the Cauvery.

Initially, a total of 247 tmc ft will be drawn from the Godavari. If the drawal point is near Inchampalli, Andhra Pradesh will get 81 tmc ft, Telangana 66 tmc ft and Tamil Nadu 83 tmc ft. If it is Janampet, the three States will get 108 tmc ft, 39 tmc ft and 83 tmc ft, respectively.

Four other States – Karnataka, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh – are also involved in the river-linking project.