Tirupati may run out of water in a month

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Tirumala-Tirupati is in for a severe shock, as the temple city will run out of water in a month, if the monsoon continues to remain elusive.

At present, the denizens receive water in their taps once in three days. With Kalyani dam reaching the dead storage level, the city’s western parts are also supplied the Telugu Ganga water, which is made available for the eastern and southern parts, as well.

Dwindling fast

Water is currently drawn from the dead storage in Kandaleru reservoir (Nellore district) and pumped into Kailasagiri storage tank near Srikalahasti, from where it is pumped to Tirupati. There is an off-take point near Gudur from where water is also shared to Gudur town, making things worse for Tirupati. Since the Gudur off-take point is nearly 80 km away, laying a full-fledged pipeline to Kailasagiri not only comes at an exorbitant cost, but also does not serve the immediate purpose.

Apart from the requirements of the residents, it is the steady flow of pilgrims that necessitates special attention on dedicated water supply to the city. Water storage in projects atop Tirumala hills is also dwindling fast, leaving no option but to pump water from downhill. The demand for allocation of Srisailam water exclusively for Tirupati, as a special case, has been in the air for quite some time, but never taken forward.

Unless the government takes a serious view of the situation, Tirupati is likely to be in deep trouble.

Borewells being dug

On its part, the Municipal Corporation of Tirupati (MCT) has written to the State government, seeking release of additional water from Srisailam and also additional pumping from the Gudur off-take point.

“We are sinking more borewells to address the urgent issue and are keeping our fingers crossed for the monsoon to set in,” MCT Commissioner P.S. Girisha has told The Hindu.

There appears to be no initiative to take forward the Mallimadugu and Balaji reservoir projects. Mallimadugu is almost ready, while the Balaji project is mired in forest clearance hitch.