



# Water Level in Mullaperiyar Dam

## Why in News

Recently, the [Supreme Court](#) has **directed the Supervisory Committee** to take an immediate and firm decision on the **maximum water level** that can be maintained at [Mullaperiyar dam](#) amidst torrential rains in Kerala.

- The [Ministry of Jal Shakti](#) has constituted a **three-member Supervisory Committee** to settle the issue of Mullaperiyar dam between Kerala and Tamil Nadu.



## Key Points

- **About:**
  - **Centre of a Decades-old Dispute:**
    - **For Kerala**, where it is situated, the dam presents a **threat to lakhs living downstream**,
    - **For Tamil Nadu**, which controls the dam, the water it provides is the **lifeline of people in five districts**.
  - **Reasons for Recent Revival of the Dispute:**
    - Recently, **heavy rains have increased water flow** in Mullaperiyar dam. The excess water from Mullaperiyar **can flow to downstream Idukki reservoir**, which **can lead to floods**.
    - The **SC in 2018** had agreed that the **water level in the Mullaperiyar reservoir should be maintained two or three feet below the permissible limit of 142**

**feet** as an immediate precaution to guard against floods or other disasters.

▪ **Mullaperiyar Dam:**

- It is located on the **confluence of the Mullayar and Periyar rivers** in Kerala's Idukki district.
  - The reservoir is **within the [Periyar Tiger Reserve](#)**.
- It is **operated and maintained by Tamil Nadu** for meeting the drinking water and irrigation requirements of five of its southern districts.
  - According to a 999-year lease agreement made during British rule the operational rights were handed over to Tamil Nadu.
- The water diverted from the reservoir is first used for **power generation in lower Periyar (by Tamil Nadu)** before **flowing into the Suruliyar, a tributary of [Vaigai river](#)**, and then for **irrigating nearly 2.08 lakh hectares in Theni and four other districts** farther away.

### Periyar River

- The Periyar River is the **longest river in the state of Kerala** with a length of 244 km.
- It is also known as '**Lifeline of Kerala**' as it is one of the few perennial rivers in the state.
- Periyar River **originates from Sivagiri hills of [Western Ghats](#), in Tamil Nadu** and flows through the Periyar National Park.
- The main **tributaries of Periyar** are **Muthirapuzha, Mullayar, Cheruthoni, Perinjankutti**.

### Idukki Dam

- It is **located in Kerala** (168.91 m). The dam stands **between the two mountains - Kuravanmala (839 m) and Kurathimala (925 m)**.
- It is **one of the highest arch dams in Asia** and **third tallest arch dam**.
- It is **built on the Periyar River**, in the **ravine between the Kuravan and Kurathi Hills** in Kerala.
- It was constructed and is **owned by the Kerala State Electricity Board**. It supports a 780 MW hydroelectric power station.

[Source: TH](#)

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