

# 2,394 ft & rising... Idukki reservoir water may be released on test basis

## At a glance

If the shutters of Cheruthony Dam are opened, the gushing water will flow through the Cheruthony River towards Periyar, a major lifeline of Kerala, stretching up to Aluva near Kochi.

As per the data available with the district disaster management department, 4,500 buildings are there on the dam's downstream.

The Idukki district administration works out a contingency plan

1924

These were the years when Kerala saw the worst three floods in history. *Express* compiles the view of expert James Wilson, who compares the rising reservoir level at Idukki with the past floods

1961

2005

P6



## Touring a dam site? It's not the ideal time

T'Puram: In view of the situation at the Idukki dam, the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) on Sunday requested people not to panic.

People from other districts are asked not to travel to Idukki as tourists to watch the shutter operations.

The SDMA has also urged the people not to panic and avoid spreading fake messages.

Travelling to Vazhathope, Mariyapuram, Kanjikkuzhi, Vattikudy and Konnaathi to witness the shutter operations should be avoided

## EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ T'Puram

AFTER the water level in Idukki reservoir touched 2,394.36 ft on Sunday, the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) made it clear water will be released on a test basis if the level goes up by another three feet.

"At 2,397 ft, water will be discharged in a controlled manner — at 50 cubic metres per second — for four hours. This is to assess the condition of the channels and impact on their banks," said KSEB chairman N S Pillai. The Board will issue 'Orange Alert' if the water level touches 2,395 ft and 'Red Alert' at 2,398 ft. Water will be released 24 hours after the alert is sounded.

The 'full level' of the Idukki dam,

the reservoir for the 780 MW Moolamattam power station, is 2,403 ft and the maximum level 2,408 ft. However, KSEB will not wait for the water level to touch it.

On Friday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan convened a meeting in which it was decided to hold a joint survey by the KSEB, Revenue and Water Resources Department to ascertain the number of people who would be affected by the release of water and the condition of the channels. Water from the Idukki dam was last released in 1992. This is also the first time since then that such high level has been recorded.

KSEB had issued the first alert regarding rising water level in the dam when the levels touched 2,390 ft.

## Panic grips the people residing downstream

NEJMA SULAIMAN @ Idukki

The rising water level in the Idukki dam (it was 2,394.36 feet on Sunday) has triggered fear among the people in the downstream areas. Once it reaches 2,395 ft, an orange alert will be issued to the local people, who then will have to find refuge at a relative's house or at a relief camp until the flood water recedes. P6