

Traffic on the Kalamankuzhy bridge near Valara on the busy National Highway is blocked after a crater developed on the approach road on Wednesday | EXPRESS

## Traffic towards Munnar affected as road caves in

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

TRAFFIC on the busy Kochi-Dhanushkodi National Highway was blocked on Wednesday after a section of the road overlooking a deep gorge caved in at Valara, posing threat to vehicles.

The incident occurred on Tuesday. Though cars and other small vehicles were allowed to pass on Tuesday, the PWD NH wing decided to divert all vehicular traffic on Wednesday as rain continued to lash the area, heightening the possibility of the rest of the road caving in.

"Vehicles have been diverted from Neriampalam through Panamkuttu-Pambala-Adimali Road. Only two-wheelers are allowed to pass through the NH," said executive engineer Soumya.

"Since heavy rain is continuing, we cannot undertake road restoration work. On Thursday, the Chief

### Relief camp inmate dies



Girija

Alappuzha: An inmate of a relief camp in flood-hit Kuttanad died after collapsing in the camp while preparing food on Wednesday. Kodathussery native Girija, 41, died at a camp in Thalavadi panchayat. Edathua police said the incident happened at 9.30 am when she was preparing lunch for the inmates.

Engineer will visit the place and a decision on constructing a retaining wall will be taken after inspection," she said.

Another landslide was reported at the Chakkoli curve on Munnar Road on Tuesday night. Forests Department staff removed the mud from the road.

# Heavy inflow poses big risk to Idukki, Mullaperiyar reservoirs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Idukki

MULLAPERIYAR and Idukki dams are facing a higher risk than ever this monsoon. Both the reservoirs are nearly full at the same time of the year. The Idukki reservoir had almost reached its full capacity during the southwest monsoon this year. Water level has been brought down to 2,388.36 feet above the mean sea level by increasing power generation.

The water level in the dam is

only 16 feet away from reaching full capacity. Earlier, in July 1991, the water level had reached the same level.

The power generation at Moolamattam power station on Wednesday was at a high of 13.246 million units (till Wednesday 7 am). The catchments of both the reservoirs have been experiencing heavy rain for the past few days. The catchment areas of the Mullaperiyar dam — Periyar and Thekkady — received a rainfall of 26 mm

and 22 mm respectively, while Idukki dam received a rainfall of 94 mm rainfall on Wednesday.

Tamil Nadu has reduced the intake from Mullaperiyar from 2,300 cubic ft per second to 2,100 cubic ft (6 am on Wednesday) to raise the water level to 142 ft. This can increase inflow of water, which flows down to the Idukki reservoir.

The full reservoir level of the Idukki project is 2,403 feet (732.62 metres) above the mean sea level.

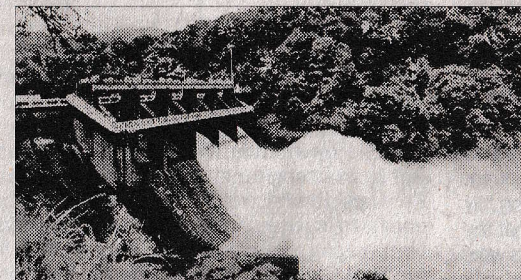
The risk can be reduced by starting the release of water before it rises to the full reservoir level at Idukki and keeping the generation levels up. "The water level can safely go up to the maximum reservoir level of 2,403 feet. However, problems compound when something unexpected like blockage of spillways or disruption of power generation occurs," said an official. The problem will be beyond management if the 110-year-old Mullaperiyar dam fails when

the Idukki reservoir is full. Over-topping of Idukki dams will be a certainty in such an event. Theoretically, a concrete gravity dam like Cheruthoni will topple if water level exceeds the maximum reservoir level. However, the officials monitoring the Mullaperiyar dam said the water level in the Mullaperiyar reservoir was holding steady at 135.40 ft on Wednesday morning. If the rain continues the water level may raise further.

### Water level at major dams of KSEB

Reservoir	Max level	Tuesday's level	%
Idukki	732.43 m	727.97 m	83
Kuttiady	758.03 m	758.03 m	100
Thariode	775.6 m	775.6 m	100
Poringal	423.97 m	423.97 m	100
Lower Periyar	253 m	253 m	100
Sengulam	847.6 m	846.5 m	99
Kakkad	192.63 m	191.95m	99
Sholayar	811.68 m	811.19 m	97
Ponmudi	707.74 m	707.6 m	97
Neriamangalam	456.59 m	456.35 m	97
Idamalayar	169 m	164.36 m	87
Pamba	986.33 m	983.8 m	85
Kakki	981.45 m	977.36 m	84
Mattupetty	1,599.59 m	1,595.5 m	80
Anayirankal	1,207 m	1,197.8 m	80
Kundala	1,759.69 m	1,752.3 m	99

## Amid heavy showers, KSEB is all smiles



MANOJ VISWANATHAN @ Kochi

THE southwest monsoon has brought both good news and bad news for the state.

While the bad news is the incessant rainfall has devastated some parts of the state, the good news is it has led to a heavy inflow of water to the reservoirs, which, in turn, has brought cheers to the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB).

The authorities said almost all the major dams were brimming with water, which had crossed the 80 per cent mark. And for the first time in 26 years, the Idukki Arch Dam, Kerala's powerhouse, is set

to achieve full capacity storage. The water level in the dam has touched 728 m and the authorities have started preparations to open the shutters once the water level reaches the maximum level of 732 m. The shutters of the dam were last opened in 1992.

With three more months left before the withdrawal of the southwest monsoon, the authorities are hopeful all the reservoirs will achieve 100 per cent storage capacity this time.

The KSEB has achieved the feat thanks to the bountiful rains within 45 days of the arrival of southwest monsoon. The previous record storage was in 2007-08 when KSEB had enough water to generate 3,500 million units of electricity in its reservoirs. As on Wednesday, it had enough water to generate 3,800 million units of power.

Considering the huge inflow of water in the reservoirs, KSEB is utilising its hydel power generators to the maximum.

On Tuesday, the total consumption of power in the state was 62 million units of which the contribution of hydel projects was 35 million units.

The spillway shutters of reservoirs at Sengulam, Neriampalam, Ponmudi and Lower Periyar have been opened due to the huge inflow of water.