

Cheruthoni, Dam, Trial Run

# Cheruthoni traders, residents want trial run

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**Cheruthoni:** Merchants and traders here have requested the district administration to carry out a trial run for water release before formally opening the shutters.

Residents are seeking a trial run as it could help clear the path of water in five panchayats. "It should be done so that we can clear the encroachments," said Joy Joseph, a resident.

He said many people have encroached the land as the dam shutters remained shut for a long period. "We have no fear of the flowing waters because we believe that the district administration will not do anything that could affect the local people. They will give us adequate time and notice. As for untoward happenings, that can happen to anyone, any-

where," he added. "We don't know how the water, once released, will flow. So, it is better to have a trial run. We should remember that the earlier two openings were in October," said Jose Kuzhikandathil, president, Vyvasayi Vyapari Bank, Cheruthoni.

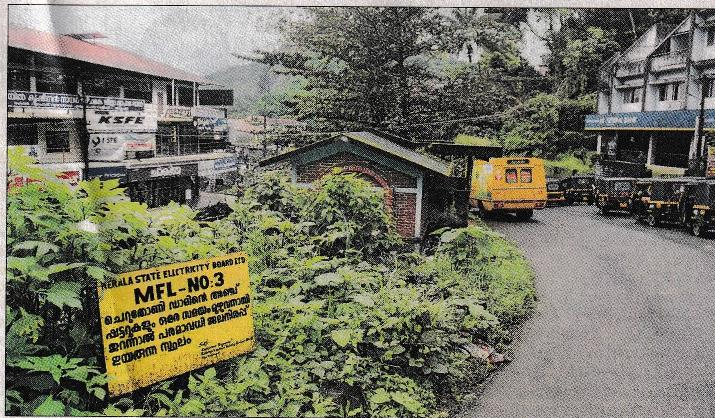
The Cheruthoni unit committee of the Kerala Vyapari Vyvasaya Ekopana Samithi has given a memorandum to the district collector in this regard. Expressing apprehension on behalf of residents, the samithi wanted the officials to release a controlled quantity of water to detect its flow and route.

The samithi after internal discussions have asked the officials to check the condition and status of the Cheruthoni check dam. "If it is not strong, then steps should be made to break the check dam and ensure the flow of water," said a

samithi member. Like it has been done before, steps should be taken to ensure that the dam storage is not up to the brim exposing the area to danger in the event of an earthquake, the samithi said.

"There is a private bus stand on the path through which water is likely to flow. So, we want the authorities to safeguard it by constructing a wall. We want the bus stand to be protected as it is a connectivity point for residents," said N J Varghese, general secretary, Kerala Vyapari Vyvasaya Ekopana Samithi.

Merchants union members have communicated the concern to power minister M M Mani. "The administration has asked the shops in the lower region to down the shutters. We know that we will be given notice well in advance for us to shift and make alternative arrangements," he said.



The spot at Vazhathoppu Junction in Cheruthoni town that is likely to submerge if all the five shutters of Cheruthoni dam are opened