

News

Illegal brick kilns in Palakkad even mine earth from dam

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Palakkad: Reeling under a drought and deficient monsoon, Kerala's driest district Palakkad has yet another anthropogenic crisis to handle this time. The brick kilns of the district are busy extracting whatever water they can, this time from a check dam that supports the basic water needs of the people.

In the Chunayangad region, kilns have been extracting water from the check dam between Mattur and Pirayiri that supports the water needs of Athalur Navakkod, Kalapparambu, S C Colony, Thekkeppura and Valipparambu. Heavy duty motors have been deployed to pump water from the check dam to the kilns. Most of the extraction happens in the night since a stop memo, issued by the Asst. Collector banning the functioning of illegal brick kilns in the Pirayiri and Mattur area is already in force.

Complaints against the functioning of such kilns were made to the Mattur panchayat and revenue officials even earlier but their activities continue unchecked. Unscrupulous as it is, the lobbies have been mining earth from the dam and have also taken to dumping kiln waste affecting its water holding capacity.

With the stop memo being ignored by the kiln owners, the revenue department is moving towards initiating criminal proceedings against them. A single bench at the Kerala High Court has dismissed the pleas against the District Collector in a case where bricks were confiscated from the illegal brick kilns inside the agricultural lands and were handed over for construction work. The case is due for hearing on an appeal to a larger bench and in the meanwhile the revenue authorities are moving towards more stringent measures to curb the activities of illegal brick kilns.



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