

Tension over 'lathi charge' on TN workers at Parambikulam

- Staff Reporter

Incident follows denial of permission to PWD officials from Tamil Nadu to visit the Parambikulam Aliyar dam site

Tense moments prevailed at Topslip and Pollachi on Monday following reports that labourers from Tamil Nadu working at the Parambikulam Aliyar dam site were attacked by the Kerala Police when they allegedly blocked a few Kerala government vehicles and tourist vehicles.

It is said that a Public Works Department (PWD) officer in the rank of a junior engineer from Tamil Nadu was also injured in the attack by the police.

The incident comes just two days after a team of 12 PWD officials from Tamil Nadu were denied entry to the dam by forest personnel. The forest personnel reportedly made the officials wait for more than three hours, before the latter returned to Tamil Nadu during the late hours of the day.

Sources said that a few families from Tamil Nadu work at the dam site and stay in a village there.

The government vehicle of the PWD used to take their children to a government school at Vettaikaranpudur near Anamalai and take them back home every day. Following Saturday's incident, the PWD did not send their vehicle to pick up the children at Parambikulam.

It is learnt that the workers from Tamil Nadu were agitated that a vehicle was not sent to take their children to school and resorted to road blockade near the village.

Around 50 persons including children are said to have taken part in the protest, blocking a few Kerala government and tourist vehicles.

The police there reportedly asked the protesters to clear the road, and when they refused, they allegedly resorted to a 'lathi charge' to disperse them. Nine persons were treated in a hospital in Pollachi.

Following the incident, tense moments prevailed at the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border at the Anaipadi Checkpost (20 km from Topslip).

Condemning the attack, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam cadres staged a protest in Pollachi and blocked Kerala State Road Transport Corporation buses.

PWD officials and the police here said that they would get a clear picture of the incident only after an inquiry.

State youth wing secretary of Marumalarchi Dravida Munetra Kazhagam V. Eswaran urged the Kerala Government to take stringent action against the police and forest department personnel who allegedly carried out the attack.

He appealed to both the governments to ensure cordial relationship between the States.

TN workers were reportedly upset that a vehicle was not sent to take their children to school

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