Koodankulam: Kerala plans alternative route

Author: Tiki Rajwi | ENS

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With the Koodankulam Nuclear Power Project expected to begin commercial operations soon, Kerala will be using an alternative route for the time being to bring home its share of electricity.

Kerala’s share of 133 MW from KKNPP Unit 1 will be brought via Tamil Nadu to the new 400 kV sub-station in Palakkad. According to the latest from the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), Unit 1 is slated to launch commercial operations in February.

As of now, the State Government has been unable to finalise an acceptable compensation package for land-owners in Pathanamthitta and Kollayam districts who have objected to heavy duty transmission lines being drawn over their land.

This has confounded the PGCIL’s efforts to complete the original power highway for evacuating Kerala’s share from KKNPP to the Madakkathara sub-station in Thrissur district.

Kerala’s share of 133 MW from Unit I can easily be evacuated via Palakkad, KSEB officials said. But with the commissioning of more units at Koodankulam in the future, the Palakkad route will prove inadequate, KSEB officials said.

“We can use this route to bring up to 266 MW, the total from the first two units of KKNPP. Beyond that it will prove difficult and we will need the Thirunelveli-Madakkathara line,” KSEB chairman M Sivasanker said.

Kerala’s share from the first two units is 266 MW. Going by the deadline set by NPCIL, KKNPP unit II is slated to begin commercial operations in September this year. Talks are on between India and Russia for setting up two more units at Koodankulam.

The original plan was to evacuate the state’s share via the power highway being constructed by PGCIL from Thirunelveli to Madakkathara in Thrissur district. But work was disrupted midway due to local protests. The line has been drawn from Thirunelveli to Edamon in Pathanamthitta district and from Pallikkara in Ernakulam district to Madakkathara. Over the past months, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been on a collision course over KKNPP power.