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BSY gives Rs 10,000 cr for UKP-III a day after Budget

BENGALURII, DHNS: Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Friday announced that Rs 10,000 crore will be earmarked for the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) Stage-III, a day after the 2020-21 Budget made no mention of the long-pending irrigation project.

Making the announcement in the Legislative Assembly, Yediyurappa said an action plan will be prepared for the

project. "To take up UKP-III works and rehabilitation & resettlement (R&R) of 27 villages, Rs 10,000 crore will be earmarked in the upcoming financial year. The government is committed to taking up R&R over the next three years,"he said.

► Budget, Page 8

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**BUDGET, FROM PAGE 1** 

The announcement came even as the Opposition pointed out that the 2020-21 Budget had no allocation for the UKP-III. "Thave discussed mobilising resources for this with officials. I am going to Delhi to get more funds,"

Yediyurappa said.
The UKP-III will increase the height of the Almatti dam to 524 metres and its storage capacity from 123.5 tracft to nearly 200 tmcft. This will help the state fully utilise its share of the Krishna river water allocation. The project will irrigate 5.3 lakh hectares in the drought-prone districts of Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Raichur, Koppal, Vijayapura, Bagalkot and Gadag.

Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah, however, was not impressed. "Where's the money for this," he asked. Yediyurappa assured the House that the government will mobilise the resources required for the project which, he said, was languishing for

Intervening on the topic,

Deputy Chief Minister Govind Karjol said the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal headed by Justice Brijesh Kumar had allocated 173 trncft water for the UKP-III. "It's been seven years and the previous governments did not give a single rupee," he said. "In 2012-13, when Jagadish Shettar (BJP) was the chief minister, an action plan worth Rs 17,207 crore was approved. The next government (Congress) didn'ttakeitforward,"he said.

The UKP-III project will require R&R of 27 villages and compensation for 1.32 lakh acres. "If this had been done, we could have raised the height of the dam to 524.25 metres," Karjol said. "I ex-pected Siddaramaiah, who now belongs to my Bagalkot district, to congratulate the chief minister."

Siddaramaiah said it was hard to believe that the government can mobilise resources. "If this had been included in the budget speech, I'd have certainly congratulated the government. But the CM is now saying he'll do jugglery to raise funds."