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## 100% hike in water tariff for industrial use draws flak

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THE state government's decision to increase the water tariff for industrial use, by approximately 100 per cent, is being opposed by various groups. The hike is being implemented from June.

The Karnataka Iron and Steel Manufacturers Association (KISMA) has decided to approach the government to revisit this decision. The association said that this decision is not only arbitrary but will also portray the state government's image as "industry-unfriendly".

R K Goyal, Vice President of Karnataka Iron & Steel Manufacturers' Association and MD of Kalyani Steel said, "Yes, they can increase the prices of materials in proportion to the inflation, whether it is iron and ore, water or any other raw materials. Increasing the tariff by 10 to 15 per cent is acceptable. But sudden hike in the water tariff to this extent is not warranted. We will be making a presentation before the government and request them to withdraw this hike."

With this decision, industrial water in Karnataka has become one of the costliest in the country with the state charging ₹10.59 per cubic meter surpassing Maharashtra, which, at present, charges ₹9.60 per cubic metre.

Kishore Alva, President (Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce) BCIC and Joint President (Project Dev, CSR & Corporate Affairs) Adani - Udupi Power Corporation Ltd said: "We would have given a better perspective had the government consulted us before effecting the change in tariff as it adversely impacts very large number of companies in the State. The financial burden would be unmanageable, especially in sectors like power, iron and steel sectors as they operate on thin margins."

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