

# Desal plant at Tuticorin thermal plant to start soon

Sarada Mohan Kumar | TNN

**Chennai:** A desalination plant on the premises of the Tuticorin Thermal Plant complex is likely to start operation by year-end. The plant with a 20MLD capacity is being set up at a cost of Rs 175 crore jointly by the Tamil Nadu government and the NTPL, a subsidiary of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. The plant will use the treated sea water instead of drawing from the Tamirabharani river.

The plant has been constructed with the help of the National Institute of Ocean Technology. "The plant is our largest desalination programme in terms of its capacity," said Purnima Jalihal, head of the energy and freshwater technology group at NIOT.

Power plants need water that is purer than drinking water for their functioning. While the hardness of drinking water could be between one to 500 parts per million, the boiler water's hardness should be within two parts per million, said Jalihal.

"After the plant is set up, power units will be self-sufficient," she said. "The desalination plant will take the dis-

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charged warm water and the cold sea water, both of which will be run through the system to produce fresh water," she said. The project is funded 89% by the NTPL and 11% by the Tamil Nadu government. Construction of civil works has been completed and a UAE-based contractor is erecting the equipment, said a senior NTPL officer.

The institute has already set up desalination plants in Kavaratti island off Lakshadweep and has been put to use. A demonstration plant has been set up in north Chennai thermal power station, said NIOT director M A Atmanand during national technology day celebrations at NIOT.

## India's lone missile test-firing range faces sand erosion

**Chennai:** Changing sand patterns around India's lone missile test-firing range at Wheeler Island off Odisha coast is causing serious concern for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the agency is seeking assistance from Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) to control the erosion.

"The sand patterns around the Wheeler Island are changing. Due to erosion, some 300m of sand area have

submerged sometime and some sand is showing up in other part of the island," DRDO's chief controller (R&D) Avinash Chander said.

Since Wheeler Island is technically a "sand bar" with a size of approximately one sqkm in the Bay of Bengal and not a rock formation, water currents result in the change in sand patterns, he said.

Though DRDO has already planted over two lakh tree saplings including casua-

rina and taken other steps to control the situation, he said, adding that we have requested NIOT to send a team of experts to realise the situation.

Wheeler Island, located some 10 Km off Chandipur in Odisha, is the only missile test firing range in the country for defence purposes.

Chander earlier delivered the keynote address for the 'Technology Day Celebrations' at the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) here. PTI