

Rain harvesting: NGT gives 7 agencies a week to file reply

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: After the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in September 2019 had directed agencies to follow an expert committee's guidelines for installation of rainwater harvesting systems (RWHS), the tribunal has now issued notices to seven of these authorities.

The notices followed a plea that was filed in NGT claiming that the committee had pointed out deficiencies in RWHS that had not been rectified till now.

The agencies, Delhi Jal Board, Delhi Development Authority, Public Works Department, New Delhi Municipal Council, erstwhile South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Central Ground Water Authority and Delhi Pollution Control Committee, have been asked to file a compliance report in a week.

In 2019, NGT had constituted the expert committee that suggested stopping rainwater harvesting of contaminated water, and proper maintenance of the rainwater harvesting systems.

T.N. irrigation dams are yet to reach 50% capacity

T. Ramakrishnan

CHENNAI



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» Page 2

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On Monday morning, the storage of the reservoirs was about 92.8 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) as against their total capacity of about 195 tmc ft.

The main reason for the situation is that the storage (30.2 tmc ft) of the Mettur reservoir is nearly one-third of its capacity of 93.47 tmc ft. If Mettur is left out, the combined storage of the other reservoirs is around 61% of their total capacity.

Bhavanisagar had a storage of approximately 16.3 tmc ft; Parambikulam 8.9 tmc ft; Sathanur 6.9 tmc ft; and Mullaperiyar 6.2 tmc ft. In respect of the Mullaperiyar reservoir, the water level stood at 136.2 feet as against the permitted level of 142 feet.

The reservoirs that were almost full included Sathanur; the downstream dam, Krishnagiri 1.5 tmc ft; and Perunchani 2.5 tmc ft.

Six reservoirs recorded an inflow in four digits. The highest figure was 1,827 cubic feet per second (cusecs) received at Mettur. Papanasam in the south registered 1,748 cusecs and Bhavanisagar 1,329 cusecs. The remaining reservoirs were Mullaperiyar (1,307 cusecs); Vaigai (1,259 cusecs); and Pechiparai (1,078 cusecs).

As for the Cauvery water realisation, the State got 10.66 tmc ft in November, taking the total realisation since June 1 to 68.7 tmc ft. Had the current year been normal, the State would have received about 157 tmc ft. So, the shortfall, as seen from this angle, was around 88.5 tmc ft.

Central board flags 'over-extraction' of groundwater in Punjab, Haryana

AKSHEEV THAKUR
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI DECEMBER 4

As per the latest assessment of dynamic groundwater resources, the total annual groundwater recharge for the entire country is 449.08 billion cubic metre (bcm). The total natural discharge works out to be 41.89 bcm. The annual extractable groundwater resources for the entire

country is 407.21 bcm.

However, a report by the Central Ground Water Assessment Board says that the extraction of groundwater is more than 100 per cent in several states and UTs, including Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. In Punjab, especially Sangrur and Malerkotla, the extraction of groundwater is 164 per cent more than the recharge.

In Tamil Nadu, UP, Karnataka and UTs of Delhi, Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Puducherry, the ground water extraction is between 60-100 per cent. Punjab receives 534.4 mm of rainfall annually. As compared to 2022 estimates, the annual groundwater recharge in Punjab has decreased from 18.94 to 18.84 billion cubic metres. The report attributes the reduction in recharge to

less rainfall, unlined canals, reduced recharge from ponds and tanks.

In Punjab, of the total 150 assessed blocks, 114 (76.47 per cent) have been categorised as 'over-exploited', three (1.96%) as 'critical', 13 (8.5%) as 'semi-critical' and 20 blocks (13.07%) as 'safe', the report says. "Similarly, of 50,175.27 sq km recharge worthy area of the state, 36,515.30 sq km (72.8 per

cent) area is 'over-exploited', 1,192.98 sq km (2.38 per cent) 'critical', 4307.45 sq km (8.58 per cent) 'semi-critical' and 8159.54 sq km (16.26 per cent) 'safe'," the report states about Punjab.

In Haryana, the groundwater extraction is 135.74 per cent. "Of the total 143 assessment units (blocks/urban), 88 units (61.54 per cent) have been categorised as 'overexploited', 11 units (7.69 per cent) as 'criti-

cal', nine units (6.29 per cent) as 'semi critical' and 35 units (24.48 per cent) as 'safe' categories of assessment units," it said. In Chandigarh, the total annual recharge, in comparison to 2022, has increased marginally from 0.05 bcm to 0.054 bcm, owing to increased rainfall recharge. The current groundwater extraction also decreased minutely from 0.04 bcm to 0.036 bcm.

Karnataka complied with CWMA order on water release: Centre

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Centre on Monday said Karnataka has followed the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)'s order in releasing Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu.

Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti Bishweswar Tudu informed the Rajya Sabha that the chairman, CWMA, had informed the Jal Shakti

Ministry that Karnataka had complied with all decisions taken in CWMA meetings regarding realization of stipulated quantity at Biligundlu.

As per the Supreme Court order in 2018, Karnataka would be required to release 177.25 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) of water at the inter-state contact point with Tamil Nadu, i.e., at Biligundlu

in a normal year, the minister said in his written answer.

"This year, so far, seven meetings of CWMA and 11 meetings of CWRC have been held to resolve the issues regarding distribution of Cauvery water, as per the final award of the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal (CWDT), as modified by the Supreme Court," he said.

CYCLONE POISED FOR LANDFALL ON DECEMBER 5

Cyclone Michaung: 5 killed as rains pound Chennai; Andhra on high alert

HM Amit Shah speaks to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry CMs, takes stock of cyclone situation, assures them of central help

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI/AMARAVATI/CHENNAI: Cyclone Michaung is looming over west-central and adjoining southwest Bay of Bengal, off the coasts of south Andhra Pradesh and adjoining north Tamil Nadu. It lay 80 kilometres southeast of Nellore, 120 kilometres north to northeast of Chennai, 210 kilometres south of Bapatla and 250 kilometres south to southwest of Machilipatnam.

It is likely to move northwards parallel and close to the south Andhra Pradesh coast and cross between Nellore and Machilipatnam, close to Bapatla during the forenoon of Tuesday as a severe cyclonic storm with wind speeds reaching up to 110 kilometres per hour.

With the severe Cyclone



Commuters on a waterlogged road during heavy rain owing to Cyclone Michaung, in Chennai, on Monday PTI

Michaung poised for landfall by the Bapatla coast on Tuesday, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan

Reddy on Monday directed officials to be on high alert for taking up relief measures.

Meanwhile, in Tamil Nadu,

rains wreaked havoc across Chennai and its neighboring districts, inundating the city, causing disruptions in flights

Highlights

- » Cyclone is likely to cross between Nellore and Machilipatnam, close to Bapatla during the forenoon of Tuesday as a severe cyclonic storm with wind speeds reaching up to 110 kilometres per hour
- » Shah said adequate deployment of NDRF personnel has already been made and additional teams are ready for further assistance
- » In Andhra, the evacuation process of the people affected is underway and 181 of the 308 required relief camps have been opened

and trains, and startling residents with a video capturing a crocodile crossing a submerged road. **Continued on P4**

Cyclone

The relentless downpour, reminiscent of the 2015 deluge, paralysed daily life, prompting authorities to declare a public holiday and dispatch rescue teams to aid a city besieged by torrential rains.

At least five cyclone-related deaths were reported from Chennai in Tamil Nadu on Monday after the rains pounded the city and adjoining areas. Two of the victims died of electrocution while one person was killed after a tree fell on him in the upmarket Besant Nagar area of the city, an official release said. Two unidentified bodies—each of a man and woman were found in different rain-affected parts of the city.

Earlier on Monday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday spoke to the chief ministers of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry on the situation arising due to Cyclone Michaung and assured them of all necessary central help.

Shah also said adequate deployment of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel has already been made and additional teams are ready for further assistance.

In a post on X, Shah said he had spoken to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his counterparts in Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and N Rangaswamy, respectively.

“...Took stock of the measures taken to tackle the challenging weather conditions caused by the Cyclone Michaung. Assured them of all the necessary assistance from the Modi government to secure lives,” Shah said in the post.

“Adequate deployment of the NDRF has already been made and additional teams are ready for further assistance,” he further said.

Separately, the home minister also had a discussion with the Andhra Pradesh chief minister about the preparations concerning the cyclone’s potential landfall.

“Saving the lives of citizens has been our priority. The central government is braced to provide all the necessary assistance to Andhra Pradesh. NDRF is already deployed and more teams are on standby to mobilise as needed,” he said.

In view of the heavy rain lashing Andhra Pradesh under the influence of the severe cyclonic storm, the state government issued an alert for eight districts — Tirupati, Nellore, Prakasam, Bapatla, Krishna, West Godavari, Konaseema and Kakinada — while the chief minister set several relief efforts in motion.

In a review meeting at his camp office, Reddy directed the officials to treat the storm as a major challenge to avoid loss of life and property as the winds are expected to blow gales reaching speeds of up to 110 kilometres per hour.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister’s Office, the severe cyclonic storm is expected to make landfall near Bapatla around noon on Tuesday, accompanied by winds reaching speeds of up to 100 kilometres per hour.

The weather system is expected to persist till Thursday and thereafter become a deep depression and subside, the statement said.

Meanwhile, the evacuation process of the people affected is underway and 181 of the 308 required relief camps have been opened.

Five National Disaster Response

been deployed in the affected districts.

Further, the chief minister directed the special officers to focus on the medical, food and drinking water needs of the evacuees. While returning from the relief camps, officials have been directed to handover financial assistance of Rs 2,500 per family and Rs 1,000 in case of individual evacuees.

For severely affected thatched houses, Reddy directed the officials to distribute an aid of Rs 10,000. Additionally, food rations of 25 kilogramme rice, along with pulses, edible oil, onions and potatoes will be distributed to the evacuees.

In Tamil Nadu’s Chennai, residents hurried to purchase and replenish supplies, with a high demand for drinking water. The continuous downpour resulted in power outages and internet disruptions.

Transportation services took a severe blow, with numerous trains and flights canceled. Waterlogged roads presented challenges for the scarce number of road users. Operations at the Chennai airport were halted from 9:40 am to 11 pm, with about 70 flights cancelled due to incessant rains and waterlogging affecting the runway and tarmac, as stated by the Airport Authority of India.

The Southern Railway reported the suspension of many trains originating from Dr. MGR Chennai Central to destinations such as Coimbatore and Mysuru, offering full refunds to affected passengers.

As a result of inundation, 14 subways in the city were closed, and authorities removed uprooted trees from 11 locations.

To manage the situation, the Tamil Nadu government declared a public holiday for educational institutions, government and private offices, financial institutions, and banks in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, and Chengalpattu districts on Tuesday. Private companies were urged to enable work from home for employees in affected regions.

Despite the disruptions, essential services such as police, fire service, medical facilities, power supply, and disaster response offices continued to operate. The government deployed ten teams with 250 National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel for rescue operations in affected districts.

The Industries Department established a help desk to aid small and medium enterprises, while SIPCOT monitored and cleared hurdles within industrial parks in affected areas. WITH AGENCY INPUTS

यमुना प्रदूषण : यूपी के मुख्य सचिव को एनजीटी का नोटिस

नई दिल्ली। राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण (एनजीटी) ने उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य सचिव को नोटिस जारी कर मथुरा में यमुना नदी में अनुपचारित सीवेज वाटर छोड़े जाने को लेकर एक हफ्ते में कार्रवाई रिपोर्ट दाखिल करने को कहा है। इस साल 5 अक्टूबर को अधिकरण ने पाया था कि मुख्य सचिव ने इस विषय में रिपोर्ट दाखिल नहीं की। न ही उसके अप्रैल के आदेश पर संबंधित अधिकारियों ने कोई उपचारात्मक कार्रवाई की। एनजीटी अध्यक्ष जस्टिस प्रकाश श्रीवास्तव की पीठ ने उत्तर प्रदेश प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड के वकील की दलीलों पर गौर किया। दलीलों के अनुसार, बोर्ड के सदस्य सचिव ने मुख्य सचिव को एनजीटी के आदेश की जानकारी दी थी। इसके बावजूद रिपोर्ट पेश नहीं की गई। अगली सुनवाई 7 दिसंबर को होगी। ब्यूरो

जल शुद्धिकरण संयंत्र के लिए 59 बसावटें चिह्नित : शेखावत

केंद्रीय जल शक्ति मंत्री गजेंद्र सिंह शेखावत ने कहा कि पश्चिम बंगाल में 59 बसावटों को आर्सेनिक प्रदूषण से प्रभावित बसावटों के रूप में चिह्नित किया गया है। जहां अंतरिम उपाय के तहत सामुदायिक जल शुद्धिकरण संयंत्र (सीडब्ल्यूपीपी) उपलब्ध कराए गए हैं। शेखावत ने राज्यसभा में कहा कि सरकार देशभर में आर्सेनिक संदूषण से प्रभावित बसावटों की समस्या को दूर करने की कोशिश कर रही है। उन्होंने कहा कि पश्चिम बंगाल में जल जीवन मिशन- एकीकृत प्रबंधन सूचना प्रणाली (जेजेएम-आईएमआईएस) में 29 नवंबर 2023 तक 59 बसावटों को आर्सेनिक संदूषण से प्रभावित बसावटों के तौर पर चिह्नित किया गया है। उन्होंने कहा कि इन सभी बसावटों में अंतरिम उपाय के रूप में सीडब्ल्यूपीपी उपलब्ध कराए गए हैं।