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{ WATER DOWN THE DRAIN? }

15.5 lakh litres of water being used to wash city roads daily

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MUMBAI: At a time when the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is considering a 10% water cut beginning March, due to dipping lake levels, on an average 15.49 lakh litres of water is going down the drain daily due to chief minister Eknath Shinde's deep cleaning scheme.

Every day, the civic body's hydraulic department washes 422 roads covering around 659.09 kms with water drawn from bore wells and sewage treatment plants. 211 tankers are

deployed for the purpose. Additionally, 18 misting machines are used to further cover 59.5kms of roads to sprinkle water to mitigate dust pollution. This reserve could have been utilised for secondary purposes like firefighting, watering public gardens and in public toilets.

The weekly drive which was initiated in early December to curb dust and improve the overall sanitation of the city and suburbs, was converted into a daily drive from the beginning of February.

At 1.2 lakh litres, K west ward in Andheri-Juhu utilises the most water.

→P3

Precious waste: BMC uses 15.49 L litres of water to wash roads daily

Civic body carries out the drive, despite dipping lake levels, as part of CM's deep cleaning scheme

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MUMBAI : At a time when the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is considering a 10% water cut beginning March, due to dipping lake levels (which measured 46.67% on Monday), on an average 15.49 lakh litres of water is going down the drain daily due to chief minister Eknath Shinde's deep cleaning scheme.

This is not very dissimilar to the CM's ambitious ₹1,700-crore beautification drive last year, which resulted in trees being lit up and butterfly lights fixed on electric poles.

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This reserve could have been utilised for secondary purposes like firefighting, watering public gardens and in public toilets.

The weekly drive which was initiated in early December to curb dust and improve the overall sanitation of the city and suburbs, was converted into a daily drive from the beginning of February. Every Monday, ward offi-



cers draw up weekly plans for the drive, undertaken between 6.30am and 2pm. This is actioned across 25 wards; 175 tons of dust is collected daily.

Prashant Tayshetty, chief engineer, solid waste management (in-charge) said, "There are at least 100 locations in 25 wards from where we draw water from borewells and sewage treatment plants every day for misting machines to combat air pollution."

At 1.20 lakh litres, K west

ward in Andheri-Juhu utilises maximum water followed by 1.14 lakh litres in K east ward which is Andheri east, Jogeshwari east and Vile Parle east.

Need for water efficiency

Pranjal Deekshit, chairman of Centre for Water Policy and Governance at the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS), said while there is no way to establish a direct correlation between the extraction and depletion, he emphasised that water which

can be used for secondary purposes should not be wasted for deep cleaning of roads. "When Mumbai is still growing vertically, BMC is under pressure to set up large pipelines," he said.

He called attention to the transformation of central Mumbai over the last 15 years where many high rises have come up for both commercial and residential purposes. "The entire pipeline network has been changed to satisfy the needs of the regrown part of Mumbai.

Water efficiency is required and in case of a shortfall in dams one will have to dip into groundwater for secondary purposes like public gardens and fire brigade. Hence, it isn't recommended that such water be used to clean streets and roads," he said.

Deekshit added that towns and villages that are in the catchment areas of the seven dams, which supply water to Mumbai and Mumbai Metropolitan Region where the boundaries overlap, are deprived of water.

Deekshit explained this saying, a "Mumbaikar's consumption is 240 litres per person per day (the highest in India), while other towns have 135 litres per person per day and some towns have 70 litres per person per day despite having similar lifestyles. So, using ground water for cleaning roads and putting more pressure on the system in the drier areas in summer is not acceptable."

Dip in lake levels

The city is also facing diminished lake levels this year due to reduced rainfall in September and October. The dip in lake levels is attributed to accelerated evaporation due to a warmer winter this season and the premature withdrawal of monsoon.

Gulfran Beig, chair professor at NIAS, IISC, and founder project director, SAFAR put the deficit down to the El Nino phenomenon.

"The El Nino period this summer is connected to an extreme summer which will have an effect on lake levels. We expect more frequent heatwaves in the upcoming summer months. If the trend persists, a warmer summer is expected with faster depletion of water levels in the lakes," said Beig.

Activist advocate Godfrey Pimenta, from Watchdog Foundation, offered other options to keep the city clean.

"BMC should impose a strict penalty on the polluter who is littering the area. Singapore has zero tolerance for such nuisance. The civic body can also frame a policy to drill civic sense into people. Otherwise, it is just a futile exercise and not to mention criminal wastage of water," said Pimenta.

COASTAL | RESOURCES

TN to restore 5,000 waterbodies through community participation; Policy to capitalise potential of Blue Economy

Mega schemes for flood mitigation, protection of water bodies and sea coast

N. RAVIKUMAR | DC
CHENNAI, FEB. 19

Finance minister Thangam Thennarasu on Monday announced the allocation of ₹1,675 crore for 'Neithal Meetchi Iyakkam', a project to restore coastal resources in 14 districts. He also came up with flood prevention and mitigation schemes for the Chennai suburbs and southern districts affected by heavy rains last year, besides projects to harvest rainwater and construct water recharge structures at a cost of ₹630 crore.

Presenting the budget for the financial year 2024-25 in the Assembly, the minister

said the 'Neithal Meetchi Iyakkam' would cover a stretch of 1,076 kilometre. Enhancement of coastal biodiversity, coastal protection, improving livelihoods of coastal communities and pollution control in coastal areas are the four major aims of the mission, he explained.

The 'Neithal Meetchi Iyakkam' would primarily focus on the restoration of mangroves, coral reefs and salt marshes. Works for conserving mangroves and reviving coral reefs at Kariyachalli islands in the Gulf of Mannar will be undertaken. Additionally, works are under way to

establish a sprawling botanical garden at Kadambur in Chengalpet in 137 acres, at a cost of ₹545 crore. In collaboration with London Kew Gardens, sea turtle conservation centres would be established at Nagapattinam and Chennai along with an international Dugong conservation centre at Manora in Thanjavur district.

Besides, the Ennore creek would be rejuvenated at a cost of ₹40 crore.

In Chennai, Chengalpet, Kanchipuram and Thiruvallur affected by cyclone Michaung, 22 permanent flood prevention and mitigation centres are

- Second phase of modernisation of Grand Anicut at a cost of **RS 400 CRORE**
- 2,000 new overhead tanks in rural local bodies, at a cost of **RS 365 CRORE**
- Second phase of the Hogenakkal at an expense of **RS 7,890 CRORE**
- A combined water supply scheme using Kollidam river for Perambalur at an estimated cost of **RS 366 CRORE**
- A combined water supply scheme using river Vaigai at a cost of **RS 565 CRORE FOR DINDIGUL**

being undertaken at a cost of ₹350 crore. In the southern districts, Thangam Thennarasu announced that works for permanent flood control are being undertaken at a cost of ₹280 crore.

Besides, checking the floods, storing water is a major part of water conservation.

He said to effectively harvest rainwater and ensure assured water supply for irrigation purposes, con-

struction of water recharge structures and maintenance works of water bodies would be undertaken.

The minister said that water bodies had gradually deteriorated over time due to encroachment and lack of

maintenance. In an effort to address this issue, a landmark initiative will be launched in the coming year to restore water bodies by rehabilitating minor irrigation tanks, ponds and their feeder channels in

panchayat unions. This major project, aimed at restoring 5,000 water bodies, will be implemented through community participation under the guidance of leading scientific institutions, at an estimated cost of ₹500 crore.

Besides, irrigation systems including construction of sub-surface dykes, renovation of channels and construction of new anicuts will be taken up in the current year at a cost of ₹734 crore. In addition, repair and replacement of old and damaged shutters in barrages and dams will be taken up at a cost of ₹66 crore, he said.

Telangana Today- 20- February-2024

Ryots drill borewells to save crops in Nalgonda

At least 60 to 100 new ones being dug in each village in ayacut areas

P SRINIVAS
NALGONDA

Nalgonda district, which was once known for fluorosis, is now back in focus for high concentration of borewells. After 10 years, farmers in the district are now resorting to digging borewells, thanks to the crop holiday declared for the left canal of the Nagarjuna Sagar Project for the Yasangi (Rabi) season due to nonavailability of water in the project.

There are over 25 lakh borewells in 7,122 square metres of geographical area i.e., 28 borewells in each square metre. Some farmers even drilled over 100 borewells to try their luck. For the first time after the formation of Telangana, the Congress government declared a crop holiday to the left canal of NSP. The water level in the project dropped to 517 ft against the dead storage level of 510 ft.

Groundwater levels also dropped drastically as irrigation tanks have gone dry. Deficit rainfall in the district too was one of the factors behind the depleting groundwater levels.

According to a rough estimate, around 60 to 100 borewells are being dug up in each village to save crops as the existing borewells

IN LIMBO

Over **25L** borewells in **7,122** sq metres of geographical area i.e., **28 borewells** in each sq metre

- Water level in NSP: **517 ft**
- Dead storage level: **510 ft**
- Groundwater levels dropped drastically
- Deficit rainfall too one of the reason

WATER TABLE DROPPED TO

Chandampet

15.62 metres

Munugode

6.06 metres

Nakrekal

7.74 metres

Nalgonda

7.79 metres



“Two borewells in my agriculture fields have gone dry and two new borewells were drilled but in vain. I had spent Rs 60,000 to drill two borewells

— KONDEREDDY JALANDER REDDY, farmer



have gone dry. According to Groundwater Department, water table dropped to 15.62 metres in Chandampet mandal, 9.59 in Chinthapally, 8.2 in Devarakonda, 6.56 in Gundlapally, 12.85 in Nere-

dugumma, 6.68 in PA Pally, 6.29 in Adavidevulapally, 4.70 in Damaracherla, 7.4 in Madgulapally, 7.76 in Miryalaguda, 8.04 in Nidmanoor, 10.35 in Peddavoora, 7.31 in Thirumal-gir (Sagar), 7.80 in

Thripuraram, 10.25 in Chandur, 12.30 in Chityal, 6.91 in Kanagal, 9.86 in Kattangur, 10.46 in Gurram-pode, 10.49 in Marriguda, 6.06 in Nampally, 7.47 in Neredugumma, 7.79 in Kethapally, 6.06 in

Munugode, 7.74 in Nakrekal, 7.79 in Nalgonda, 8.45 in Narketoally, 6.68 in Shaligowrarm and 7.12 in Thipparthi mandal.

The groundwater table significantly dropped in the ayacut area of the NSP left canal, AMRP canal, ayacut area of the Musi project and surrounding villages of Shaligowraram reservoir in the district. Speaking to 'Telangana Today', Kondareddy Jalander Reddy, who owns three acres at Vallala, said that two borewells in his agriculture fields have gone dry and two new borewells were drilled but in vain. He had spent Rs 60,000 to drill two borewells. To save his crop, Jalander Reddy is hiring a tanker once a week.

“I need seven tankers for my lemon farm for which I am spending close to Rs 2,000 a week,” Reddy said and added that he had “no other option”. Another farmer Kararu Mallaiah, who owns two acres at Theluvargudem said that he decided to drill two new borewells as the existing one dried up. “I had spent Rs 60,000, but of no use,” he further said. Farmers at Mushampally, located less than 12 km away from district headquarters are drilling borewells in the dried up irrigation tank of the village.

Telangana Today- 20- February-2024

TS farmers in a fix as groundwater depletes

Average levels down to 7.72 mbgl in January this year, lowest in half a decade



Farmers across Telangana are a worried lot as the State's groundwater table dries out due to excess drilling.

P S DILEEP
HYDERABAD

Telangana's water crisis has deepened as the average groundwater levels plummeted to 7.72 m below ground level (mbgl) in January, the lowest in half a decade.

Alarming declines exceeding 3 mbgl have been witnessed in Nagarkurnool, Nalgonda and Vikarabad districts. The previous lowest average groundwater level in the State was witnessed in January 2020, at 8.88 mbgl.

Over the last five years, the groundwater levels hovered around 6 mbgl but plummeted by a massive 1.5 m this year, posing a major challenge to the State. The average depth of water lev-

DEPLETING GROUNDWATER LEVELS HAVE BEEN POSING A THREAT TO FARM OPERATIONS, WHICH WERE ALREADY AFFECTED DUE TO DECREASED WATER AVAILABILITY IN PROJECTS ON KRISHNA & GODAVARI RIVERS

Alarming decline

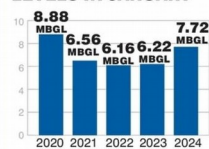
- In last 5 yrs, groundwater levels hovered around 6 mbgl but plummeted by massive 1.5 m this year
- Over 27.5 lakh agricultural connections pumping water from agri borewells
- More than half of total cropped area in TS dependent on groundwater for crop cultivation

WORST-HIT DISTRICTS

Declines exceeding 3 mbgl witnessed in

VIKARABAD	11.98 mbgl
NALGONDA	8.68 mbgl
NAGARKURNOOL	3.57 mbgl

ALL DISTRICTS RECORDING DIP IN GROUNDWATER LEVELS FOR FIRST TIME IN LAST 5 YRS
AVG DEPTH OF WATER LEVELS IN JANUARY



GOVT FEELS THE HEAT

- Situation affecting drinking water supply in many areas
- State govt forced to take up comprehensive survey to identify villages, habitations facing drinking water crisis
- Recently allocated Rs 1 cr for each Assembly constituency from Chief Minister's Special Funds to address drinking water needs

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We are preparing a contingency plan to address the drinking water shortage in the ensuing summer. Plans are afoot to make optimum usage of water from all available reservoirs to meet the drinking water needs

— OFFICIAL,
Panchayat Raj & Rural Development



FARMERS FORCED TO DRILL BOREWELLS

In Nalgonda district, over 70 new borewells drilled in tiny village of Koppole alone

At least 50 new borewells dug up in each village in ayacut areas



Borewell drillers have hiked prices from Rs 60 per ft to Rs 70 due to increased demand (REPORT PAGE 5)

els from the surface in Telangana during January was recorded as 8.88 mbgl in 2020, 6.56 mbgl in 2021, 6.16 mbgl in 2022, 6.22 mbgl in 2023 and 7.72 mbgl in 2024.

The depleting groundwater levels have been posing a

threat to agricultural operations, which were already affected due to decreased water availability in projects on the Krishna and Godavari rivers. With more than 27.5 lakh agricultural connections for pumping water

from agricultural borewells, more than half of the total cropped area in Telangana is dependent on groundwater for crop cultivation.

According to the latest groundwater level reports from January this year, all

districts have witnessed a dip in groundwater levels for the first time in the last five years. Vikarabad district registered an average groundwater level of 11.98 mbgl, which is the deepest in the State. (SEE PAGE 2)

TS farmers in a fix as groundwater depletes

However, Nagarkurnool district witnessed the worst dip of 3.57 m compared to the previous year.

As a result, farmers have been prompted to drill new borewells in their farmland to save crops in several districts. In Nalgonda district, the average groundwater level fell to 8.68 mbgl in January compared to 5.27 mbgl last year, following which over 70 new borewells were drilled in the small village of Koppole alone.

“Farmers are forced to drill new borewells to save their crops. At least 50 new borewells have been dug up in each village in ayacut areas. The borewell drillers have also hiked their prices from Rs 60 per foot to Rs 70 due to increased demand,” said All India Kisan Sabha leader M Saidi Reddy from Nalgonda. The situation

has also been affecting the drinking water supply in many areas, forcing the State government to take up a comprehensive survey to identify the villages and habitations facing a drinking water crisis. Officials said the State government recently allocated Rs 1 crore for each Assembly constituency from the Chief Minister’s Special Funds to address the drinking water needs in respective segments.

“We are preparing a contingency plan to address the drinking water shortage in the ensuing summer. Plans are afoot to make optimum usage of water from all available reservoirs to meet the drinking water needs,” an official from the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department said.

Rajasthan Patrika- 20- February-2024

नई डीपीआर चार माह में होगी तैयार

गजेन्द्र सिंह, मनोहरलाल खट्टर और भजन लाल के बीच बनी थी सहमति

चूरू के हांसियावास में बनेगा बांध, यहीं से आएगा यमुना का पानी

पत्रिका

राजेश शर्मा
patrika.com

झुंझुनू, यमुना का पानी शेखावाटी को देने को लेकर 17 फरवरी को नई दिल्ली में केन्द्रीय जल शक्ति मंत्री गजेन्द्र सिंह शेखावत, हरियाणा के मुख्यमंत्री मनोहरलाल खट्टर व राजस्थान के मुख्यमंत्री भजन लाल शर्मा के बीच सहमति बनी थी। सहमति के अनुसार नई डीपीआर चार माह में तैयार होनी है। यमुना जल समझौते की पालना में बनी सहमति के अनुसार हरियाणा में हथिनीकुंड बैराज के ताजेवाला हैड से यमुना का पानी शेखावाटी में सबसे पहले चूरू जिले के हांसियावास गांव में आएगा।



यमुना नदी पर इस जगह से आएगा शेखावाटी के लिए पानी।

हांसियावास व ताम्बाखेड़ी गांव के निकट बांध बनाया जाएगा। यह कृत्रिम बांध चूरू जिले का सबसे बड़ा बांध होगा। यहां ताजेवाला हैड से लोहे के बड़े पाइपों से पानी लाया जाएगा। यमुना के पानी लाने की डिटेल प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट (डीपीआर)

पर काम चल रहा है। यह डीपीआर जून तक बनकर तैयार हो जाएगी। पहले यह बांध राजगढ़ के निकट गोठया बड़ी गांव में बनना था, लेकिन अब सिधमुख क्षेत्र के हांसियावास गांव में बनना लगभग तय है। सिर्फ मुहर लगना बाकी है।

इसलिए बनेगा बांध

हांसियावास गांव की हरियाणा से दूरी मात्र सात किमी है। यमुना का पानी केवल बरसात के दिनों में मिलेगा। समझौते के अनुसार पानी केवल 120 दिन जुलाई से अक्टूबर के मध्य शेखावाटी को दिया जाएगा। चूंकि उस समय

शेखावाटी में भी बरसात होगी। इसलिए पानी को बड़े बांध में एकत्रित किया जाएगा। बाद में जरूरत के अनुसार लिफ्ट कर पानी को झुंझुनू, सीकर, चूरू और नीमकाथाना जिले में उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा।

तीन जल भंडारण बनेंगे

नई डीपीआर के अनुसार अपर यमुना बेसिन में तीन जल भंडारण रेणुकली, लखवार और किशाऊ विहित किए गए हैं। यहां से राजस्थान को हथिनीकुंड से निर्धारित अवधि के लिए जल उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा।

सबसे पहले पानी चूरू जिले के हांसियावास गांव में आएगा। यहां बड़ा बांध बनाया जाएगा। इसके बाद पानी चूरू, सीकर, झुंझुनू व नीमकाथाना जिले को दिया जाएगा।

- यशवर्धन सिंह शेखावत, संयोजक, यमुना जल संघर्ष समिति