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With monsoon still five weeks away, Beed struggles with depleted wells, drying dams

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BEED: Shabbir Sayyad, a resident of Dahiwandi in Shirur tehsil of Beed district, bagged the Padma Shri in 2018 for protecting cows and other bovine animals for more than three decades at his house. On a recent afternoon five years after winning India's fourth highest civilian award, sixty-three-year-old Sayyad Mamu was staring at his cattle in his cowshed, wondering how he was going to keep them alive amidst the baking heat. The growing water and fodder scarcity has taken a toll on him. The Sayyads take their fleet of cattle more than 150 cattle five km away to graze and quench their thirst.

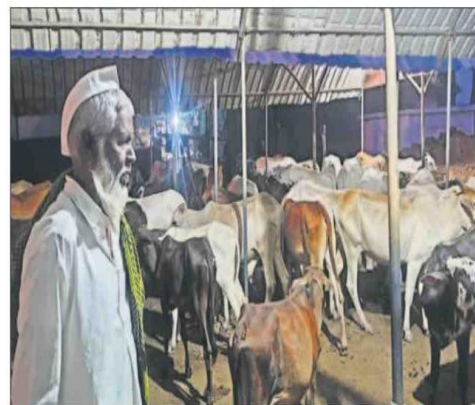
The Sayyads are not alone in Beed district struggling to get water for drinking, washing and bathing. The families get dirty water supplied from lakes several kilometres away. They use the dirty water for bathing, washing clothes and feeding cattle. Drinking water comes from places that are at least two to three kilometres away.

The water storage in the dams in Marathwada dropped to nearly one-tenth of capacity on Friday. Same day last year, it was more than two-fifths. In Beed, of the eight dams that supply water to the district, three have no water, while two others some 2%. Storage in the other three range from some 7% to 22%. Five more weeks are to go before the monsoon sets and the situation is dire indeed.

Of the 3,393 water tankers deployed across the state, 382 have been deployed for 308 villages and 282 hamlets in Beed.



Above, a woman fills plastic tanks with water from a tanker in Kathoda village. Villagers say tanker water is unfit for drinking. On the right, Shabbir Sayyad, winner of Padma Shri for protecting cattle, talks about water, fodder scarcity



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non-availability of green fodder. "We used to purchase them at a very high cost of ₹ 7,000 for a gunny sack of jowar fodder. This year, the fodder is not available owing to the shortfall in rainfall last monsoon. Generally, the district administration sets up cattle camps, but this time there is no sign of any arrangements for the same," he said.

In Jalna, around 102-km from Beed, Raju Chavan, a farmer from Ghansawangi village, is staring at the dried trees of Mosambi he planted on five acres in 2021. "I was expecting to harvest the fruits from 200 trees planted three years ago, but everything has been devastated because of no water. There is no water in the well or borewell and we cannot afford to hire tankers. I was expecting to earn ₹ 1 lakh to cover this year, after investing ₹ 2.5 lakh in its plantation," Chavan said. He lives in a kachcha house near his field of Mosambi.

Shivkumar Swami, residential deputy collector, Beed, said, "We have been tapping water sources to make the water available to the villages in dire need. We have not come across com-

plaints of dirty water. We will look into it if complaints are made."

Swamy said that the fodder camps have not started yet as there was no such demand by the farmers. "We have cattle stock in large numbers in tehsils like Ashti and Patoda, but the water scarcity is relatively less because of the retreating showers in these areas last monsoon. Secondly, the farmers are not ready to send their cattle to the fodder depots because of the fear of diseases like lumpy (LSD)," he said.

Manisha Tokale of Jagar Foundation, an NGO working among cane cutters, said, "Water scarcity in villages like Kamkheda, Kathoda is so alarming that that farm laborers and cane cutters are compelled to purchase water at ₹ 500 for 2,000 liters for washing and cleaning and ₹ 30 a jar of 20 litres for drinking. They can't afford to spend but have no option and end up selling off their goats and other belongings for purchasing water. The water they get through water tankers is dirty and has resulted in skin diseases among children and women."

This is the third largest in the state. Neighbouring Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar (656 tankers) and Jalna (488) tankers have more tankers than Beed.

"We have stopped getting tap water owing to our wells depleting. When there is ample water in the well we lift the water to the common tank and it is supplied through taps to doorsteps. Since the water in the lake has depleted, we have stopped the water supply system and physically fetch water from the well some two kilometers away. The government supplies water for washing, bathing and for cattle once a day through tankers. The water supplied is too dirty and we fear that it may lead to skin diseases," said Jayashri Ovhal of Kathoda village in Beed.

Kathoda has around 200 households in hilly terrain. The

families have purchased big plastic tanks that they use along with household utensils to store the water supplied by the tankers once a day.

"The water supplied by the government tankers is used for other than drinking purposes. We fetch drinking water from a public well two-km away as our borewell in the backyard has dried up. We bring drinking water through motorbikes with two cans hanging on either side of the two-wheeler," said Sudarshana Dake.

She says that the government should have organised cattle camps by now but hasn't. "Grazing and making arrangements for drinking water for the cattle has become very difficult," she adds.

Shabbir Sayyad says that he is forced to spend huge amounts of money on fodder owing to the

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हाइड्रो पावर पर क्यों घट रहा दुनिया का विश्वास

को लम्बिया और इक्वाडोर में हाल ही पड़े सूखे के दौरान हाइड्रो पावर से पैदा होने वाली बिजली की आपूर्ति गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित हुई है। दुनिया में जहां धीरे-धीरे गर्मी और सूखा बढ़ता जा रहा है, वहां हाइड्रोपावर के विकल्प की तलाश क्यों की जा रही है? आइए जानें—

करीब 100 साल से प्रयोग किया जा रहा हाइड्रो पावर विश्वसनीय, सस्ता और कम कार्बन उत्सर्जन वाले स्वच्छ ऊर्जा स्रोत के रूप में जाना जाता है। यह अन्य सभी नवीनीकरण योग्य ऊर्जा स्रोतों के मुकाबले अधिक बिजली प्रदान करता है। परन्तु कोलम्बिया और इक्वाडोर में पड़े सूखे से उजागर हो गया कि यह ऊर्जा स्रोत जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रति



उस दौरान पूरी दुनिया में हाइड्रो पावर के उत्पादन में 8.5 प्रतिशत की गिरावट देखी गई। विश्व का सर्वाधिक हाइड्रो इलेक्ट्रिसिटी उत्पादक देश चीन है। इसके उत्पादन में आई वैश्विक गिरावट का तीन चौथाई अंश चीन के हिस्से आता है। 2022-23 में पड़े अकाल के चलते चीन की कई नदियां और जलाशय सूख गए। इसलिए चीन को पारंपरिक रूप से बिजली उत्पादन पर ध्यान देना पड़ा।

संवेदनशील हैं। अलनीनो के कारण आए सूखे के कारण हाइड्रो पावर प्लांट्स में जलस्तर कम हो गया, जिनसे दोनों देशों की विद्युत आपूर्ति होती है। परिणाम स्वरूप इक्वाडोर ने आपात स्थिति की घोषणा करते हुए बिजली कटौती शुरू कर दी। पड़ोसी देश कोलम्बिया में पानी की कमी के चलते उसने इक्वाडोर को बिजली का निर्यात रोक दिया।

कैसे बनती है हाइड्रो पावर

जब पानी को टरबाइन नामक यंत्र में घुमाया जाता है तो उसके घूर्णन से बिजली बनती है। विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार, हाइड्रो पावर इस प्रकार पानी पर निर्भर है कि अगर पानी न हो तो बिजली बन ही नहीं सकती। इससे ऊर्जा उत्पादन बाधित होता है। जलवायु परिवर्तन के कारण बार-बार पड़ने वाले अकाल और अचानक आने वाली बाढ़ बांधों को नुकसान पहुंचाती है। ब्रिटेन के एक थिंक टैंक एम्बर के अनुसार 2023 के शुरुआती 6 महीनों में हाइड्रो पावर में ऐतिहासिक गिरावट आई है। नतीजतन

सौर और पवन ऊर्जा

अफ्रीका में हाइड्रो पावर पर एक शोधकर्ता के अनुसार कांगो, इथियोपिया, मलावी, मोजाम्बिक, युगांडा और जाम्बिया में 80 प्रतिशत बिजली उत्पादन हाइड्रो पावर से ही होता है। इनमें से कई गंभीर संकट से जूझ रहे हैं। इन देशों के पास वैकल्पिक बिजली उत्पादन की क्षमता सीमित है। बिजली आयात करने का इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर भी सीमित है। इन देशों को अब सौर और पवन ऊर्जा की ओर रुख करना होगा। घाना और केन्या जैसे देश हाइड्रो पावर को छोड़ कर दूसरे ऊर्जा स्रोतों ओर बढ़ चुके हैं। इस बीच हाइड्रो पावर प्लांट्स में पानी में तैरते सोलर पैनल लगाने को लेकर चीन और ब्राजील में अनुसंधान चल रहा है। जलाशय के केवल 15-20 प्रतिशत हिस्से पर सोलर पैनल लगाने से ही आप इतनी बिजली उत्पादन कर लेंगे जितनी हाइड्रो पावर से होती है। इंटरनेशनल एनर्जी एसोसिएशन के अनुसार भविष्य में हाइड्रो पावर का स्थान सौर और पवन ऊर्जा ले लेंगी।