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The Hindu Business Line- 30- May-2024

# How to regulate water sector

**PRECIOUS RESOURCE.** The Centre must evolve a draft model Bill on water regulation after consultation with States



SK SARKAR

**M**any countries have set up an independent water regulatory authority (WRA), and decentralised system of water governance with government playing the role of a facilitator.

An ideal framework of independent regulation minimises political interference in a sector, brings in technical expertise and efficiency, and provides a level playing field for private players.

In India, several policy initiatives in recent years have been taken for introducing independent regulation in the water sector. The National Water Policy (NWP) 2012 strongly encourages the establishment of “autonomous” water regulatory authorities for fair pricing of water uses, and for cost recovery.

The 14th Finance Commission (2015) also recommended that States should consider setting up of statutory water regulatory authorities so that the pricing of water for domestic, irrigation and other uses can be determined independently and in a judicious manner.

Maharashtra is the first State to enact the Water Regulatory Authority Act in 2005 and followed by 11 other States — Arunachal Pradesh (2006), Uttar Pradesh (2008), Andhra Pradesh (2009), Jammu & Kashmir (2010), Kerala (through ordinance, 2012), Gujarat (through notification, 2012), Punjab (2020), Haryana (2020), Telangana (2009), Uttarakhand (2013), and Jharkhand (2014).

Unfortunately, only four States, — Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab and J&K — have a Water Regulatory Authority.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

In any independent regulation, the Water Regulatory Authority (WRA) should have core functions, recommendatory functions and advisory functions.

Table 1 shows that there is no uniformity in the framework of regulatory legislation across the States. Further, there is no model central legislation in the water sector as we have seen in the electricity sector. There is no consensus across States even on the model regulatory framework as framed by the erstwhile Planning Commission (2011).

As a result, there is no uniform approach in adopting water regulatory



Water regulatory framework in States

Core functions of WRA	Maharashtra	Haryana	Punjab	J&K
Tariff determination	Irrigation; bulk water	Surface water and treated waste water; retail (only recommendation to govt.)	commercial/industrial; ground water (except household drinking purpose); treated waste water	Irrigation, domestic, ground water, commercial and industrial
Promotion of competition	Trading of water entitlement	No provision	No provision	Provision exists
Role in non-economic areas	Conservation of water	Conservation of water and water pollution	Conservation of water	Conservation of water
Regulatory conditions of license of service providers	No provision	No provision	No provision	Regulate water use by licensees
Laydown quality of service standards	No provision	No provision	No provision	Provision exists
Role in private sector participation	No provision	No provision	No provision	No provision
Protection of consumer interest	No provision	No provision	No provision	No provision
Adjudication of disputes	No provision	No provision	No provision	Provision exists

Source: 1. Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Act, 2005, 2. J&K Water Resources (Regulation and Management) Act 2010  
3. Haryana Water Resources (Conservation, Regulation and Management) Authority Act 2020 4. Punjab Water Resources (Management and Regulation) Act 2020

framework in India, and each State has enacted the WRA legislation independently. There is also no transparent process for selection of the members of WRA across States. There is bureaucratic predominance for the chairman's post in the WRA.

Minimum attention has been given to ensure transparency of the regulatory process, accountability of the regulator, and facilitating participation of stakeholders of the water sector.

Many core functions for independent regulation in water sector have also not been adopted by the States. These are protection of consumer interest, laying down of safety standards, adjudicating

disputes and differences involving stakeholders, promotion of competition, promoting economy in the supply of water and sewage services, and framing principles relating to terms and conditions of license.

The current regulatory framework does not also ensure a balance between “market based” approach and “government's social commitment”.

## AGENDA FOR ACTION

The enactment of non-uniform water regulatory legislation by various States shows that there is a need for enacting a draft model Bill on the subject. The Centre should evolve a consensus to develop a model Bill after due consultation with the key water sector players including States and other stakeholders.

Second, the model Bill should specify various functions of WRA, and also deal, with its autonomy, accountability, powers, relationship with government; in the case of autonomy, there should be provisions on transparent selection of regulators, qualification and

disqualification of members, commercial employment of members, tenures of members, reappointment of members, transparent removal of members, power to hire best experts by regulator, and existence of Regulatory Fund. There should be a State Water Resource Council, the highest policy making body, whose policy functions should deal with overall water sector management.

Third, once the model regulatory framework is agreed to at all levels including States, there is a need to enact a central legislation before its adoption by the States. Since water is a State subject, framing a central legislation will require taking recourse to Article 249 or 252 of the Constitution for its consideration by Parliament.

Fourth, a high degree of political commitment at all levels is a must for ensuring the success of independent regulation in the water sector.

The writer is Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and former Secretary, Union Ministry of Water Resources

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The Times of India- 30- May-2024

## Monsoon set to arrive early and simultaneously over Kerala, N-E

Vishwa.Mohan@timesgroup.com

**New Delhi:** In an uncommon phenomenon, monsoon is expected to arrive both over Kerala and some parts of northeastern states simultaneously with IMD on Wednesday predicting favourable conditions for an early onset/progress during the next 24 hours.

Monsoon normally sets in over Kerala on June 1 while it arrives a couple of days later in the North-East and covers most part of it by June 5. Last time, a similar simultaneous onset/progress over Kerala and North-East had happened was on May 30, 2017 triggered by Cyclone Mora that formed over east-central Bay of Bengal.

This time, the possibility of simultaneous onset is attributed to Cyclone Remal that formed over Bay of Bengal last week. The cyclonic circulation has pulled the monsoon flow in the region.

"The conditions continue to become favourable for monsoon onset over Kerala during next 24 hours and advance of monsoon over some parts of northeastern states during the same period," said Met department while predicting early onset of showers. Last year, the onset happened over Kerala on June 8 after a delay of seven days.

Met department also predicted that the prevailing heatwave to severe heatwave conditions over northwest, including Delhi-NCR, and central India are likely to reduce gradually from Thursday. Drop in temperature can be attributed to western disturbances.



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Deccan Chronicle- 30- May-2024

# Antarctic Treaty is at risk

**Shifting geopolitics, climate crisis can impact this final frontier, which will have implications for the world**



SHIRLEY SCOTT

**I**t's been hot in Kochi, where representatives from at least 60 nations have gathered for two important meetings on the future of the world's coldest continent, Antarctica. The 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and accompanying 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection also attract observers from several non-governmental organisations with an interest in the regulation of Antarctic tourism and the protection of its environment.

But unlike the temperatures outside, the atmosphere inside the meeting venue has been frosty following recent reports that Russia has discovered vast amounts of oil and gas in the British Antarctic Territory.

## Russia's Activities

Mining activities in Antarctica are banned under the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, which was adopted in 1991, with Australia playing a lead role. Russia's activities are worrying other countries that fear they will essentially be ripping up the treaty if prospecting goes any further.

The Antarctica Consultative Meetings are regular annual meetings of the states party to the 1959 Antarctic Treaty. The meetings are where states conduct the business of collectively implementing the treaty, which is the cornerstone of the governance system for Antarctica, known as the Antarctic Treaty System. The Antarctic Treaty was considered a diplomatic triumph at the height of the Cold War. Concerned that the continent might become a place of conflict, the original 12 states meeting in Washington DC who signed the treaty agreed to use Antarctica for peaceful purposes only.

The treaty does permit the use of

military personnel or equipment for scientific research or for any other peaceful purposes but prohibits measures of a military nature such as the carrying out of military manoeuvres or weapons testing.

## Territorial Rights

Perhaps the most fundamental question addressed by the treaty is that of the geopolitical status of the continent. Seven states had made claims to specific portions of Antarctica — Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom. Some of the claims overlap.

The situation was complicated further by the fact that neither the United States nor the then-USSR had made a formal claim. Australia has territorial rights to the Australian Antarctic Territory, which covers 42 per cent of the Antarctic continent.

Contrary to popular opinion, the fact that few other countries have explicitly recognised Australia's title does not detract from its legal validity. The treaty includes an agreement to disagree on the question of territorial sovereignty. Australia is not required to renounce its sovereignty but neither are other states required to respect its territorial title during the life of the treaty.

## Australia's Interest

The Antarctic Treaty is, therefore, of particular importance to Australia because it protects Australia's legal rights in respect of the Australian Antarctic Territory. Australia is an active and strong participant within the treaty system. The treaty has been widely hailed as an example of successful in-

ternational cooperation.

It is easy to assume that harmony in respect of Antarctica was — and will continue to be — guaranteed by its remoteness, and to underestimate the significant achievement of the treaty system. But shifting geopolitics and a changing climate could both impact this final frontier, which would have implications for the whole world.

The 2023 meeting adopted a Declaration on Climate Change and also agreed to new wording for the website of the treaty system — both of which can be understood in part as responding to the common misapprehension that the prohibition on mineral resource activities, other than scientific research, will come to an end in 2048. The prohibition has no end date. Any party can request its review from 2048 onwards, but overturning the ban would involve a relatively complex process that is by no means guaranteed to succeed.

Political tensions are felt at the meetings, although more with respect to those issues with higher stakes. Both Russia and Ukraine are parties to the treaty and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has caused some antagonism. Rus-

**Seven states made claims to specific portions of Antarctica — Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and UK. Some claims overlap**



sia prepared a paper for the 2023 meeting, which addressed what it referred to as the "politicisation" of the gathering.

There are concerns that even before we reach 2048, grey zone activities — nefarious or coercive activities that stop short of overtly breaching established rules and norms — may weaken the force of those norms or even lead to a complete breakdown of the treaty system. One of the most obvious rules in relation to which there could be grey zone activities is that of prospecting versus scientific research. The alarm greeting Russia's reported oil and gas activities can be understood in this light.

## China's Ambitions

There are also concerns regarding China's Antarctic ambitions, both with respect to dual-use technology and also in terms of China's aim for far greater access to the resources of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Earlier this year, China opened its fifth Antarctic facility, the Qinling Station, on Inexpressible Island in the Ross Sea.

Due to our proximity to Antarctica, climatic changes there, like the melting of Antarctic ice sheets and resulting rising sea levels, could have a profound impact on geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific. A strong Australian voice when it comes to matters of Antarctic governance remains critical for ensuring a peaceful and sustainable future for Antarctica.

*(The author is a Professor of International Law and International Relations in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at UNSW Canberra. 360info)*



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Deccan Chronicle- 30- May-2024

# Warangal fears flooding again

## State govt fails to take steps ahead of rains

STATE BUREAU

WARANGAL

Despite rains creating havoc in Warangal during the monsoon season last year, the State government has not taken any concrete measures to deal with floods in the city, especially in low-lying areas.

With the monsoon fast approaching and the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting above-normal rainfall during the monsoon season, the fear of inundation is giving sleepless nights to the residents as the rain-related works remain incomplete.

During the tenure of the BRS government, Rs 158.50 crore was sanctioned to take up works on the Bondivagu Nala, which was causing floods during the monsoon season in Warangal and surrounding areas. Although the Irrigation Department completed the tendering process six months ago, no work has started to date.

According to sources, nala expansion, construction of walls on both sides, installation of head regulations at Bhadrakali tank, and installation of downstream plowing shutters at

**Although Irrigation Dept completed the tendering process for Bondivagu nala, works are yet to begin on the project**

Pothananagar and Kapuvada Mattadi were to be taken up. Even though the Irrigation Department Engineer-in-Chief inspected the sites several times and Greater Warangal officials asked the Irrigation Department to start works, nothing has been done till now.

### Study

Sources say the study conducted by the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) engineers showed that Warangal inundated mainly due to Bondivagu Nala last year.

According to them, the Bondivagu Nala was overflowing due to the flood water of Thimmapur, Bestam Cheruvu, Maddelakunta, Ammavaripeta Damera Cheruvu, Ursu Cheruvu, Bhattupalli and New Shayampet Koti tanks.

The officials estimated

that 15,000-18,000 cusecs of water was discharged in July last year, which caused floods in Warangal and nearby regions.

### Nala encroachments

Officials claimed that nala encroachments and illegal constructions within the Full Tank Level (FTL) limits of several tanks and lakes have resulted in inundation, exacerbating the impact of heavy rains in Warangal and Hanamkonda areas.

Over 80 residential colonies were submerged due to the floods under the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation limits last year.

A central team comprising seven members, led by NDMA Joint Secretary Kunal Satyarthi, visited Hanamkonda and Warangal districts to assess the extent of damage caused by the heavy floods last July.

Since the State government failed to take up work related to checking floods in various water bodies and nalas, the residents of Warangal are sure that they will be facing a similar situation this year too because of the lackadaisical approach of the authorities.

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The Statesman- 30- May-2024

## Rain brings slight respite from scorching heat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The temperature in the national capital further increased on Wednesday with Mungeshpur recording a rise in mercury at 52.9 degrees C, 13 notches above the season's normal.

With sudden change in the weather towards the evening, amid the scorching heat, light rain came in as a welcome surprise for the residents brining a little respite from the extreme heat.

As per the weatherman, there were traces of rain in some parts of the city, while it had earlier forecast dust storms or thunderstorms accompanied by very light rain and heat waves for the city.

The people, who experienced the extreme heat out on the roads, called the change



PHOTO BY- SUBRATA DUTTA

in weather with the sudden rain a blessing. However, for some, it did not make much of a difference as, they said, it was too little to cool down the impact of the heat amid high temperatures.

The city has been reeling under heat-wave conditions

for some days, and according to the seven-day forecast by the IMD, there might be a little fall in temperature at the beginning of June as the weather agency forecast a likelihood of temperatures ranging from 29 to 42 degrees C with the possibility of thunder-

**Mungeshpur recorded the highest temperature at 52.9 degrees C, 13 notches above normal.**

storm and rain.

There were posts on social media with pictures of rain as people were in a tizzy over the sudden change in weather as they shared pictures and videos of the skies and rain.

Many expressed their delight over the change after the scorching heat. They saw in it a hope of complete change in the scenario.

The experts have also advised everyone to remain hydrated drink a good amount of water and take oral hydrating solutions as well to prevent heat-related problems.



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Amar Ujala- 30- May-2024

# छोटी नदियों को जिंदा रखने की मुहिम



छोटी नदियां बड़ी नदियों के प्रवाह को बढ़ाने के साथ भूजल पुनर्भरण में सहायक हैं। छोटी नदियों का कार्याकल्प समुदाय के बिना संभव नहीं है।

सुरेश भाई

जल संरक्षण

**छोटी** नदियों के संगम से बनी गंगा 2,550 किलोमीटर, ब्रह्मपुत्र और सिंधु भारत में क्रमशः 916 और 1,114 किलोमीटर लंबी हैं। लगभग सभी बड़ी नदियों के उद्गम ग्लेशियरों से हैं। इनके बहाव क्षेत्र में जंगल, तराई, मैदान और बौद्ध क्षेत्रों से छोटी-छोटी नदियां बड़ी नदियों में मिल रही हैं।

भारत की सबसे छोटी नदी अरवरी है, जो आरवली पर्वतमाला से निकलकर राजस्थान के अलवर जिले में बहती है। यमुना सबसे बड़ी सहायक नदी है। यमुना में भी टीस, हिंडन, चंबल, वेतवा आदि मिलती हैं। छोटी नदियां बड़ी नदियों के प्रवाह बढ़ाने के साथ उन्हें भूजल पुनर्भरण में सक्षम बनाती हैं। मिट्टी की नमी बनाए रखती और जैव विविधता में सुधार करती हैं। सूखे और बाढ़ का सामना करने में मदद करती हैं, लेकिन सूख रही छोटी नदियों का कार्याकल्प समुदाय के बिना संभव नहीं है। इन सहायक और छोटी नदियों



में निरंतर घटती जल राशि चिंता का विषय है।

ग्लेशियरों के सूखने से हिमपोषित नदियां भी सूख रही हैं। भीषण गर्मी से बूंदेलखंड की कई नदियां सूख गई हैं। गंगा-यमुना की छोटी नदियां और जल स्रोत सूख गए हैं। हर वर्ष हिमालय से लेकर मैदानों तक भारी जल सैलाब से अपार जन-धन की हानि हो रही है। बारिश के पानी को रोकने की पारंपरिक शैली को आधुनिक विकास ने रौंद डाला है, जहां तालाब, जोड़ड़ जैसी जल संरचनाएं होती थीं। अब उन स्थानों पर

बहुमंजिला इमारतें बन गई हैं। खनन, सीमेंटेड संरचनाओं ने पूरे जल क्षेत्र की जलवायु पर विपरीत असर डाला है। भूजल बहुत नीचे चला गया है। इन चुनौतियों के बावजूद आज भी भारत के गांवों में लोग अपने पारंपरिक प्रबंधन से जल की व्यवस्था करते हैं, जिससे विवेकपूर्ण जल उपयोग को बढ़ावा मिलता है।

सक्रिय समाजसेवियों, पर्यावरणविदों और पानीदार समाज ने मिलकर ऐसे उदाहरण भी प्रस्तुत किए हैं कि सूखी छोटी नदियां फिर से बहने लगी हैं। अलवर में तरुण भारत संघ ने सूखी नदियों को जिंदा कर दिया है। लोग वहां नदियों के पुनर्जीवन के सामाजिक और पर्यावरणीय तरीके सीख रहे हैं। बूंदेलखंड में परमार्थ समाजसेवी संस्थान ने छोटी नदियों के पुनर्जीवन के लिए जोरदार अभियान चला रखा है। उन्होंने अब तक क्लुस्त होती बछेड़ी, कनेरा, बारणी, खुडर, घुरारी नदी के पुनर्जीवन के लिए स्थानीय राज-समाज के साथ मिलकर महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास किए हैं।

मध्य प्रदेश के खजुराहो में हाल ही में जल जन जोड़ो अभियान और परमार्थ समाजसेवी संस्थान द्वारा आयोजित एक संवाद में 15 राज्यों से 50 नदी प्रतिनिधियों ने निर्णय लिया कि 51 नदियों के पुनर्जीवन हेतु यात्रा का आयोजन होगा। जलपुरष राजेंद्र सिंह की अगुवाई में देश भर से आए जल विशेषज्ञों ने मांग की है कि केंद्र सरकार नदियों के लिए

एक स्पष्ट नदी नीति बनाए। नदियों के लिए काम करने वाले लोग मानते हैं कि छोटी नदियों का समुदाय को खाद्य सुरक्षा, उनका सम्मानजनक जीवन और उनके आर्थिक विकास में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका है। इसके साथ ही बड़ी नदियों के प्रवाह को बढ़ाना, भूजल का पुनर्भरण, जमीन की उपजाऊ क्षमता को बढ़ाने में भी ये मददगार होती हैं। जलवायु परिवर्तन का सीधा संबंध छोटी नदियों से है। यदि हम छोटी नदियों को जीवित कर लेंगे, तो जलवायु परिवर्तन का खतरा कम हो जाएगा। इस अभियान के राष्ट्रीय संयोजक डॉ. संजय सिंह ने कहा कि नदियों को पुनर्जीवित करने के लिए निकासी जाने वाली यात्राओं के पहले यह जरूरी है कि संबंधित नदी के बारे में सारे आंकड़े एकत्रित करने के बाद समुदाय के साथ मिलकर संवाद किया जाएगा।

प्रो. विभूति राय कहते हैं कि यदि पारंपरिक जल सुरक्षा के उपायों पर ध्यान नहीं दिया गया, तो मानव जीवन पर संकट बढ़ जाएगा। अगले 20 वर्षों में नदियां सूख जाएंगी। यदि छोटी नदियों को पुनर्जीवित करना है, तो हर क्षेत्र की जलवायु के अनुसार अलग-अलग प्लान की आवश्यकता है। शैक्षणिक पाठ्यक्रम में नदी ज्ञानंत्र को शामिल किया जाए। डब्ल्यूएचएच भारत के प्रमुख शंका कटल कहते हैं कि यह नदियों को बचाने की आपातकालीन स्थिति है। इसलिए देश भर में नदियों के पुनर्जीवन के लिए चिंतित समाज और पर्यावरणविद आगे आकर एक-एक नदी को पुनर्जीवित करने लिए कदम बढ़ा रहे हैं।

Hindustan- 30- May-2024

# पानी बर्बाद करने पर दो हजार का जुर्माना लगेगा

नई दिल्ली, प्रमुख संवाददाता। दिल्ली में पानी की बर्बादी करने पर अब दो हजार रुपये का चालान काटा जाएगा। इसके लिए दिल्ली सरकार ने दिल्ली जल बोर्ड की 200 टीमों का गठन किया गया है, जो गुरुवार सुबह से कार्रवाई शुरू करेंगी।

दिल्ली में पानी का संकट बढ़ता जा रहा है। दिल्ली की जल मंत्री आतिशी की तरफ से जारी आदेश में कहा गया है कि अगर पाइप से कार की धुलाई की जाती है। टंकी से पानी ओवरफ्लो होता पाया जाता है या फिर घरेलू पानी आपूर्ति का इस्तेमाल निर्माण या किसी व्यावसायिक काम के लिए किया जाता है तो टीम कार्रवाई करेगी। इसके साथ ही निर्माण स्थलों, व्यावसायिक प्रतिष्ठानों पर अवैध जल कनेक्शन काटे जाएंगे। आदेश में लिखा गया है कि भीषण गर्मी के बीच दिल्ली में पानी आपूर्ति में कमी

## श्रमिकों को दोपहर 12 से 3 तक छुट्टी

राजधानी दिल्ली में काम कर रहे श्रमिकों को लेकर उपराज्यपाल वीके सक्सेना ने बुधवार को बड़ी घोषणा की है। उन्होंने निर्देश दिया है कि दोपहर 12 बजे से तीन बजे तक श्रमिकों को सवेतनिक छुट्टी दी जाएगी। इन तीन घंटों के दौरान उनसे कोई काम नहीं लिया जाएगा। डीडीए में यह लागू किया जा चुका है, अन्य विभागों में भी इसे लागू करने को कहा गया है।

आई है। हरियाणा की तरफ से पानी सप्लाई प्रभावित है। दिल्ली के कुछ हिस्सों में घरेलू पानी के कनेक्शन से व्यावसायिक और निर्माण स्थलों के लिए भी कनेक्शन लिए गए हैं। अब जल निगम की टीम कार्रवाई करेगी।