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Water worries for ryots in Vanakalam

Irrigation projects run dry in Karimnagar, cultivation to depend on rainfall

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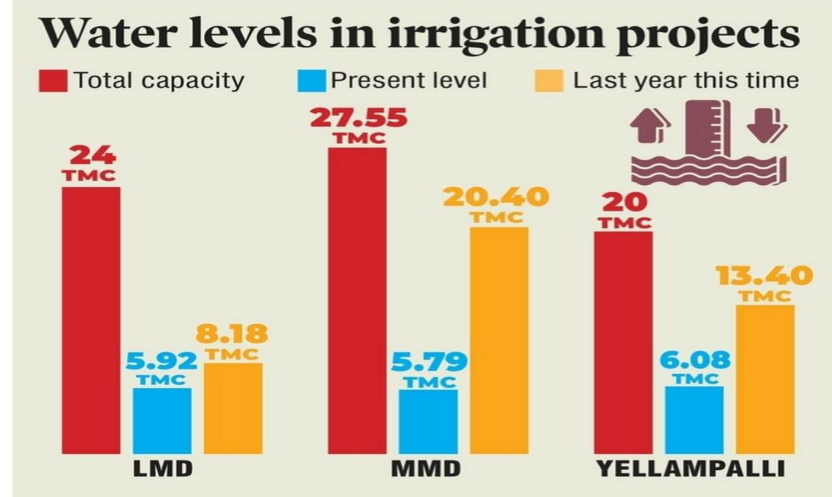
Farmers in the erstwhile Karimnagar district are worried over the cultivation of crops in the Vanakalam season with all water bodies, including irrigation projects, here remaining almost completely dry.

Even the existing meagre water levels would dip and reach the dead storage levels if adequate rains are not recorded in the coming days. Cultivation of crops will be taken up depending on the rainfall to be recorded in June and July, they say, adding that things could turn terrible if good rainfall is recorded by the end of this month.

Last year, there was no shortfall for irrigable water since all irrigation projects were brimming after adequate rainfall was recorded. However, the situation is different this time around. Compared to last year, there is a significant decline in water levels in reservoirs of the Mid Manair Dam (MMD), Lower Manair Dam (LMD), and Sripada Yellampalli project.

Earlier, water used to be lifted from Medigadda of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project and dumped in the Yellampalli project from where it would be taken to Mid Manair by filling the Nandi reservoir and operating the Gayatri pump house. Besides LMD, water used to be supplied to the Ranganayaka Sagar in Siddipet district from MMD.

However, with water being left out of the Sundilla, Annaram, and Medigadda



barrages, it is not possible to draw water from Godavari. Water levels in Yellampalli have declined since there are no inflows from SRSP, as well as there, is no chance to lift water from the Kaleshwaram project. In order to protect standing crops, irrigation officials had lifted more than 25 TMC from the Kaleshwaram project every year for three years.

Now, water levels in Yellampalli have declined to 6.08 TMC as against its storage capacity of 20.175 TMC. This time last year, the project had 13.40 TMC water.

Similarly, only 7.79 TMC of water is available in the Mid Manair reservoir as against its storage capacity of 27.55 TMC. Last year, 20.87 TMC of water was available. In LMD, water levels have declined to 5.92 TMC as against its storage capacity of 24 TMC. Around 8.18 TMC of water was

available in June last year.

LMD is the main drinking water source for Karimnagar town as well as a few villages in the Siddipet district. Instead of on a regular basis, water is being supplied to the residents of Karimnagar town every alternate day due to the shortage of water in LMD. Besides drinking water, it is the only irrigable water source for more than 6 lakh acres in erstwhile Karimnagar, Warangal, Khammam, and Nalgonda districts.

A farmer, G Rajesham said it was difficult to cultivate crops if LMD was not filled with water since it was the main water source for their agricultural fields. Otherwise, they have to depend on pump sets. If there were no adequate rains, groundwater would not be recharged and it would become difficult to draw water from borewells too, he said.

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Saurabh Bharadwaj inspects preparations at Yamuna before the arrival of monsoon, on Tuesday

There will be no flooding in Yamuna this time: Minister

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: In anticipation of the upcoming monsoon season, Delhi's Irrigation and Flood Control minister, Saurabh Bharadwaj, visited the ITO Barrage on Tuesday to assess preparations for managing potential flood scenarios in the Yamuna River.

This proactive visit underscores the administration's commitment to preventing a repeat of last year's severe flooding.

Accompanied by departmental officials, Bharadwaj inspected the barrage and reviewed the measures in place to handle potential floodwaters. He emphasised that the unprecedented rainfall and water release from Haryana last year resulted in significant flooding, which led to severe waterlogging and inconvenience for Delhi residents. "Even if water comes to the same level as last year, there will be no flooding in Yamuna," he assured.

Bharadwaj highlighted the collaborative efforts between Delhi and Haryana to manage the barrage, which falls under Haryana's jurisdiction. "This time, the Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control Department has coordinated with the Haryana government to prepare for the

HIGHLIGHTS

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- » He emphasised that the unprecedented rainfall and water release from Haryana last year resulted in significant flooding, which led to severe waterlogging and inconvenience for residents
- » This time, the Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control Department has coordinated with the Haryana government to prepare for the potential issues: Bharadwaj

potential issues," he said. The preparations include ensuring that all gates at the barrage are opened to prevent any obstruction to water flow.

For the first time, the Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control Department is employing a new technique called the "Pilot Cut" to prevent water accumulation.

This method involves digging small channels from the accumulated soil in front of the barrage, creating small islands of soil between the artificial channels. "When rainwater is released from Haryana, it will flow swiftly through these artificial channels, carrying with it the small soil islands, thereby eliminating any possibility of water stagnation and allowing the water to flow swiftly ahead," explained Bharadwaj.

The minister also addressed the repair and maintenance of regulators, which were damaged in last year's floods. "All regulators damaged due to floods last year have been repaired," he noted, adding that broken regulators have been replaced and thoroughly tested to prevent future incidents.

Bharadwaj acknowledged that water accumulation in urban areas involves multiple agencies, including the DDA, PWD, and MCD. However, he expressed confidence in the measures taken by his department. "As the Minister of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department responsible for handling flood situations in the Yamuna, they have prepared this year in such a way that they are hopeful there will be no flood situation in the Yamuna this year," he concluded.

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L-G SAXENA RUBBISHES CHARGE

Haryana 'deliberately' & 'illegally' halting water supply to city: Atishi

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Delhi Water minister Atishi on Tuesday accused the Haryana government of deliberately and illegally halting the water supply to the Capital.

In a press conference here, Atishi alleged that the Haryana government was releasing less water to Delhi, rendering the city unable to meet its daily water needs.

Citing an affidavit submitted by the Haryana government in the Supreme Court, the minister said, "The Haryana government has been lying that they have released adequate supply of water to Delhi. Their affidavit filed in the Supreme Court presents the data on actual discharge of water which has exposed their lie."

The minister also slammed Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena for blaming the AAP government for the ill maintenance of water canals and theft of water supply by illegal tankers.

"L-G sahab has been exposed. He said the Munak canal is not maintained properly. The maintenance, repair, and security of the canal comes under the Haryana Irrigation Department. He also said water is being stolen from the canal. If all this is happening why doesn't he speak to Haryana CM? He only has one job, to blame the AAP government for everything," Atishi said.

"The Delhi police reports to L-G, why doesn't he get those stealing water arrested? This shows everything is happening with his blessings," she alleged.

Raj Niwas in a statement accused the city government of making excuses to hide its "criminal failure" in providing water to Delhi residents.

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CLOSER LOOK

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» 'Minister Atishi is yet again characteristically lying to mislead the people of Delhi, create an excuse for the criminal failure of the Kejriwal government in providing water to the people and creating a false public narrative even while the

ure of the Kejriwal government in providing water to the people and creating a false public narrative even while the SC is hearing the matter," the L-G office said in a statement.

It said the question of the shortfall, if any, is irrelevant since by her admission, all Water Treatment Plants of Delhi bar-

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» Citing the affidavit, Atishi said that from May 23, the water quantities released by the Haryana government were reduced

» The figures of the affidavit given by the Haryana govt in the SC show that from May 1 to 22, Haryana released 719 cusecs of water in CLC and 330 cusecs of water in DSB through the Munak canal

» 'That means 1,049 cusecs of water were released daily. But after this, it started decreasing from May 23. That means, that when there were elections in Delhi, Haryana reduced the sending of water'



ring one, are producing more water than their capacity, from water supplied by the Munak canal from Haryana.

"The only one that is not is the Wazirabad WTP which lifts water from the reservoir behind Wazirabad barrage which is filled with silt to 96 per cent of its capacity

and has not been desilted for the past 10 years," it said.

On the jurisdiction of the repair work, it said, "Yes, the Haryana government repairs the Munak Canal but the same is done at the demand of and payment by the Delhi government... Obviously, the Delhi government has never tried to ascertain the disrepair in the lining of the canal and never asked for its repair."

It said, "The custodians and owners of water coming into Delhi are the Delhi government and DJB. Tankers are stealing water from the canal but DJB has never even filed a complaint, leave apart an FIR with Delhi Police. This is obviously because there is active connivance between the tanker mafia and AAP."

The L-G office asked Atishi to file an FIR against the water theft and promised her that it will back the complaint with the strictest action.

If only the 54 per cent unaccounted water and 40 per cent leakage are plugged by the Kejriwal government, the poor people of Delhi will have more than ample water, it claimed.

"However, Minister Atishi will not say a single word about this, because of the deep nexus that exists between her party and the water mafia," the statement added.

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ing from May 23. That means, that when there were elections in Delhi, Haryana reduced the sending of water, she said.

"Compared to 719 cusecs of water in CLC and 330 cusecs in DSB, the water supply became 675 cusecs and 283 cusecs, this is Haryana's figures. The elections in Delhi were on May 25, before that, the water supply to Delhi was reduced for four days, which is clear from his Supreme Court affidavit itself," she added.

The minister said that according to Haryana's data, on June 7, 8, 9 and 10, the state was supposed to release 719 cusecs of water in CLC, instead of which only 675 cusecs of water were released, and in DSB, instead of 330 cusecs, 310 cusecs of water was released.

"Today the lies of the Haryana government have been exposed and it has become clear that Haryana is releasing only 985 cusecs of water instead of 1050 cusecs, which is getting even less in Delhi due to transmission loss.

"Due to this, water production is decreasing and the people of Delhi are troubled," she said.

The minister said that she would write a letter to Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on the matter and approach the Supreme Court to present the data in the affidavit.

"We will submit all these figures to the Supreme Court and tell how the Haryana government is also disobeying the Supreme Court," she said.

BJP president Virendra Sachdeva on Tuesday alleged water theft from Munak canal in collusion with the Kejriwal government. In a press conference, Sachdeva showed purported photos and videos of water being drawn from the Munak canal through tankers.

WITH AGENCY INPUTS