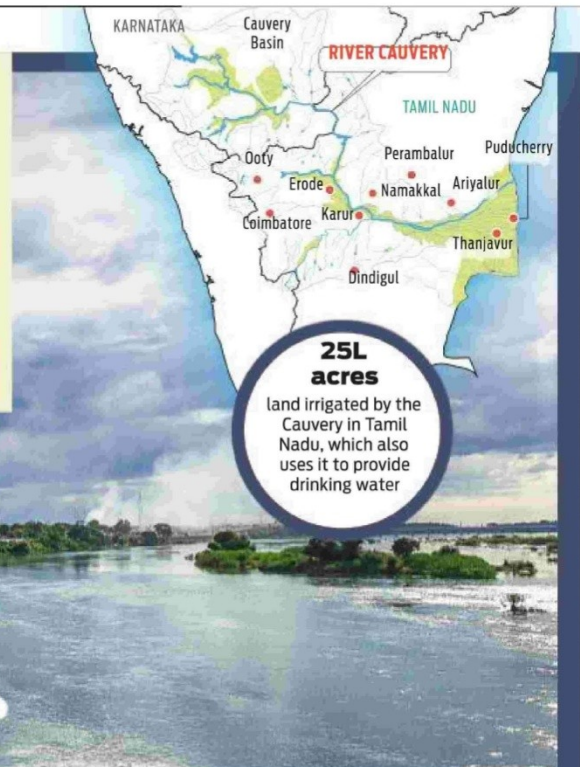


**AN ANCIENT RIVER**

Cauvery figures prominently in ancient Tamil literature. "It has been mentioned as a perennial river in the Sangam literature (100 BCE-250 CE)," says historian Kudavayil Balasubramanian. "In the Tamil epic Silappathikaram, written in the second century CE, the full flowing Cauvery is mentioned," he added. Inscriptions found in Tiruchendurai and Musiri in Tiruchy also have mentions of the river

**WATER DISPUTE**

Disputes over Cauvery's water date back to the Colonial time with the then princely state of Mysore and the Madras Presidency sparring over sharing the water. This continued even after Tamil Nadu and Karnataka were formed post the Independence. The solution came with the final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) in 2007 and the Supreme Court's order in 2018



A view of the Cauvery flowing majestically through the delta region in Tiruchy | MK ASHOK KUMAR

N RAMESH @ Thanjavur

# CAUVERY'S BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL

Pollution, deforestation, and climate change wreak havoc on the river even as disputes over its water refuse to die down

**C**AUVERY, the river that nourishes all who flocked her banks, has long been an apple of discord between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. But, the din of the mudslinging between the two riparian states drowns the river's plea for help as pollution, deforestation, and climate change bleed it dry at a thousand spots.

Once a perennial river, Cauvery originates at Talakaveri in Karnataka's Coorg district in the Western Ghats. It flows for a distance of around 800 km through Karnataka and Tamil Nadu before emptying into the Bay of Bengal at Poompuhar in Mayiladuthurai. Along its course, the river irrigates around 18 lakh acres in Karnataka and 25 lakh acres in Tamil Nadu, which also uses it to provide drinking water to nearly 19 districts.

It's this lifeline of millions that is under threat from a plethora of problems, mostly

man-made.

"The deforestation in the Cauvery catchment area in the Western Ghats in Karnataka is a major threat to the river," said P Maniyarasan, Coordinator of the Cauvery Rights Retrieval Committee (CRRC). Trees were being felled in large numbers in that area to make way for roads and habitations, he claimed. "The CRRC joined hands with residents of those areas to protest against the deforestation," he said. According to environmentalists, trees are critical to the health of a river as they hold water in the soil, releasing it gradually to waterbodies. With them out of the equa-

**A major threat to Cauvery is from Karnataka's refusal to adhere to the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal (CWDT)'s final award and the Supreme Court's order on the water dispute**

P Maniyarasan, CRRC

tion, soil erosion, flash floods and droughts would become the order of the day.

Also, effluent from industrial units and sewage from the cities like Bengaluru are discharged into Cauvery and its tributaries, he said. "Effluent from industries in Tamil Nadu in places like Mettur and Erode also pol-

lutes the river," Maniyarasan added. His statements were attested by the documents submitted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) before the Supreme Court in a case filed by Tamil Nadu government against pollution of Cauvery in Karnataka.

"A major threat to Cauvery is from Karnataka's refusal to adhere to the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal (CWDT)'s final award and the Supreme Court's order on the water dispute," says Maniyarasan. Also, if the proposed dam at Mekedatu is built, water flow in Cauvery would diminish drastically, he said. Even the environ-

mental groups in Karnataka are opposing the Mekedatu project as it would wreak havoc on the environment, including deforestation.

Nakkeeran, an environment activist and author of books on ecology from Tiruvarur, said Climate Change, too, is affecting the river. "Global warming causes heavy downpours in brief periods of time, resulting in floods in the river." This affects agricultural planning, leading to lesser output and food shortage, he said, adding that deforestation in the catchment areas is already causing harm to the Cauvery ecosystem.

Nevertheless, there have been a few initiatives to face the climate change effects on Cauvery system. The implementation of the first phase of the climate adaptation in the Vennar sub-basin project with the funding of Asian Development Bank (ADB) at a cost of ₹960 crore is under way. The project, mostly taken up in Tiruvarur district, is in advanced stage of completion.

Indian Express- 22- September-2021

# Eyes on the prize: Four schemes in one, from tanks to taps

SANTOSH SINGH

PATNA, KATIHAR, SEPTEMBER 21

8,387 GRAM panchayats; 1.08 lakh wards; 143 urban and local bodies — Rs 30,000 crore.

What started in 2015 as a poll promise by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is now his government's largest welfare initiative, both in terms of scale and reach.

Officially launched in September 2016, Bihar's Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal (tap water in every home)

scheme has so far provided drinking water to 152.16 lakh tap connections. This is separate from the 8.44 lakh connections provided under the Central Government's Jal Jeevan Mission and 2.32 lakh connections through the National Rural Drinking Water Programme.

Essentially, Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal is a cluster of four state schemes under various categories that were launched to provide clean drinking water through taps in urban and rural

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

**EXPLAINED**

**E**

**8,387**  
GRAM  
PANCHAYATS

**1.08**  
LAKH  
WARDS

**143**  
URBAN AND  
LOCAL BODIES



# How this showpiece scheme plugs many gaps, and opens some

homes. The common goal: easy access to clean drinking water with the larger aim of improving public health across the board.

Under the scheme, drinking water is supplied for two hours each in the morning, afternoon and evening. And to implement this, work is allotted to contractors by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), and Panchayati Raj and Urban Development departments, through Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs).

For work under Panchayati Raj, where a panchayat committee has to implement the scheme, the project cost (for unfiltered water) is Rs 15-18 lakh, depending on the size of a ward and the number of households. At this level, the authority that holds the power of approval is a three-member panchayat committee headed by the mukhiya. At the state level, a team headed by the Panchayati Raj Secretary decides the amount to be allotted for a panchayat ward based on population.

For the same volume for work, PHED disburses Rs 30-57 lakh, depending on water quality — the project cost is higher because of maintenance and filtering costs. This department, which implements a major chunk of the scheme, disburses 60 to 65 per cent of the contract amount to contractors during the course of work and 35 to 40 per cent in equal parts for maintenance over five years.

The Urban Development Department allots Rs 45-50 lakh for a contract, which includes five years' maintenance for each ward. For PHED and Urban Development Department contracts, the executive engineer in charge approves the award of contracts after the bidding process.

Each project involves setting up two ISI-marked plastic water tanks of 5,000 litres on an elevated (26-48 feet) iron platform called Jal Minar; pumping water from 300-400-foot-deep borewells maintained by a local

**Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal is a cluster of four state schemes...The common goal: easy access to clean drinking water with the larger aim of improving public health across the board.**

**EXPLAINED**

operator; and, providing supply to a point nearest to the house entrance through plastic pipes and a brass tap.

Firms or individual contractors who win the bid have to maintain the project for five years. A ward usually has 100-250 households, and one household can get one or more tap connections according to the number of Aadhaar cards produced. Any misuse, such as the water being used for other purposes, can attract fines of Rs 350 for the first offence, Rs 400 for the second and Rs 5,000 for the third, followed by disconnection of supply.

According to several officials and contractors, projects under PHED and Urban Development Department are sought after since they involve tenders for multiple wards that are usually at least four times the cost of those awarded at the panchayat level.

The norms specify that in each of these contracts, there have to be at least two bidders. However, in the case of a re-tender, a single bid is enough. This provision, officials and contractors say, is a key factor that has led to the process being compromised.

"When it is decided that a certain person has to be awarded

work, no one bids in the first tender. In the re-tender, the favoured person emerges as the single bidder and gets the contract," said a contractor, who has bagged contracts in three districts.

"Another method involves the favoured person and his or her dummy company or contractor taking part as the two bidders in the first tender. Other contractors are given some money and promised contracts in the next lot," said a contractor from Bhagalpur.

Incidentally, the SBDs of Jeevanshree Infrastructure Pvt Ltd, in which Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tarkishore Prasad's aide Prashant Chandra Jaiswal is a director, show that 21 contracts in one consecutive series (SBDs No.137-157) and 10 in another (SBDs No. 315-324) were awarded to the company in Katihar in 2019-2020.

At least 12 contractors from different districts told *The Indian Express* that in most cases, the PHED executive engineer calls the shots. "All prospective bidders are told about who will get the contract. Other bidders are asked either to abstain or quote higher rates to get disqualified," said a contractor.

According to a PHED contractor from the Seemanchal region, it is a "standard rule to give four per cent commission to the PHED department before start of work" and "this can go up to 10-11 per cent till completion". The contractor said the commission is allegedly divided among officials, "right from junior engineers to executive engineers and chief engineers" — and are "direct cash transactions".

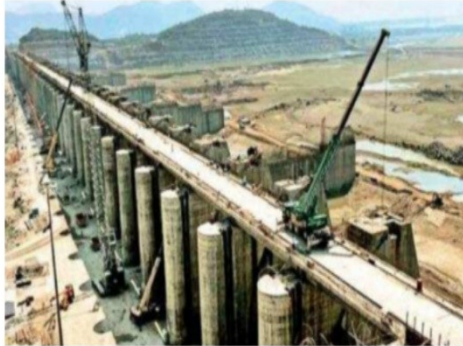
When contacted, Bihar PHED Minister Ram Prit Paswan acknowledged that there have been "complaints about some engineers awarding contracts to their favourites". PHED Secretary Jitendra Srivastava said that action would be taken if irregularities are detected in the award of contracts.



Times of India- 22- September-2021

## Panel to address Polavaram flood threat fears in Odisha and Chhattisgarh

TNN | Sep 22, 2021, 04:00 AM IST



AMARAVATI: In a move to clear hurdles for the Polavaram project, the Union jal shakti ministry has decided to constitute a high-level committee to look into the grievances of Odisha and Chhattisgarh. The Centre is keen to address the concerns of a flood threat in the two states before the completion of the first phase of the project, sources said. A team of officials from the Central Water Commission (CWC), Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha will be deputed to take up a study in both states.

The Centre has also directed Odisha and Chhattisgarh to conduct public hearings in the identified villages that are expected to be submerged following the construction of flood banks to Sabari and Sileru, major tributaries of the Godavari. The flood banks have been proposed to

prevent flooding from the Polavaram project backwaters.

AP ALLAYS CONCERNS		
<p>➤ The AP government has put work on the Polavaram project on the fast track</p>	<p>➤ It is going ahead with its target to complete the project by June 2022</p>	<p>➤ The AP government has said water will be stored up to <b>41.5 metres</b> in the first phase as per the advice of the CWC</p>
<p>➤ There will be no flood threat to Odisha and Chhattisgarh with <b>36 lakh</b> cusecs flood waters in the river</p>		
<p>➤ The AP government has proposed constructing two separate flood banks in Odisha and Chhattisgarh at a cost of <b>₹700 crore</b></p>		
<p>➤ Odisha and Chhattisgarh want the construction of flood banks completed before the AP government stores water the next kharif season</p>		

Meanwhile, the AP government has assured that it would not store waters in the project till the completion of the study in areas facing the flood threat.

However, the Centre turned down Odisha and Chhattisgarh's demand for a fresh public hearing to assess the flood threat when the Godavari receives a maximum inflow of 58 lakh cusecs instead of the present design of the Polavaram project that can release 50 lakh cusecs. The Odisha government referred to an IIT Roorkee report that states the Godavari would receive about 58 lakh cusecs of flood waters once in 500 years while the Polavaram project spillway was constructed to release only 50 lakh cusecs. "In such an event, there would be massive flood in Sabari and Sileru, resulting in submergence of vast extent of areas in Odisha," said Odisha irrigation secretary Anu Garg.

However, the CWC turned down this contention, stating it had conducted a comprehensive study on the anticipated flood level in the Godavari before giving its final nod to the design that would handle 50 lakh cusecs of water.

In fact, the AP government promised to construct a flood bank to avert floods in the two states and pay compensation for relief and resettlement work. AP has proposed to take up work on a flood bank with a length of 30.2 km at a cost of Rs 378 crore. Similarly, a 29.12-km-long flood bank will be constructed at a cost of Rs 332 crore in Chhattisgarh. Polavaram Project Authority (PPA) CEO Chandraskhar Iyer brought the issue to the notice of Union jal shakti ministry secretary Pankaj Kumar that Odisha and Chhattisgarh were not conducting the public hearings despite repeated appeals. He said the construction of flood banks would be taken up soon after completion of the public hearings.

Hindustan Times- 22- September-2021

# Haryana: Role of Saraswati river in Mahabharata to be taught in schools

**Fareeha Iftikhar**

fareeha.iftikhar@htdigital.in

**NEW DELHI:** References of the Saraswati river from Vedic and pre-Vedic texts; its role in the battle of Mahabharata; medieval-era Sanskrit text Vamanapurana that explicitly mentions the history of the river and the Harappan-era archaeological site 'Dholavira' in Gujarat; are among the topics recommended by the Haryana's 'Saraswati river syllabus committee' to be taught in the state schools.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Haryana government had last month announced to include the history of Saraswati river in the curriculum for students of classes 4th to 12th in its

## THE HSHDB CONSTITUTED 'SARASWATI RIVER SYLLABUS COMMITTEE' ON AUGUST 26 TO PREPARE THE CURRICULUM

schools with an aim to make students aware about the mythological history of the river. The Haryana Saraswati Heritage Development Board (HSHDB), which is headed by chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar, constituted a 14-member 'Saraswati river syllabus committee' on August 26 to prepare the curriculum.

Officials at the board said the committee submitted its recommendations on Monday. Dhumman Singh Kirmach, vice-chairman of HSHDB, said the recommended topics will be included in the already existing state government's books of History and Geography. The committee has also suggested including the "role of Saraswati river" wherever Mahabharata or Bhagavad Gita is mentioned in the curriculum. "The Saraswati played a major role in the selection of Kurukshetra as the place for the battle of Mahabharata. It was chosen because it is situated on the banks of the Saraswati. The committee has suggested teaching all of this to our students," Kirmach said.

Millennium Post- 22- September-2021



## Orange alert: IMD issues warning for bad weather today

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** The meteorological department has issued a warning for bad weather in Delhi on Wednesday with the possibility of waterlogging and disruption of traffic.

It was a warm Tuesday in Delhi with some parts of the national capital witnessing rain in the latter part of the day, leading to waterlogging and traffic snarls in a few areas.

The Safdarjung Observatory recorded 3.6 mm of rainfall till 5.30 pm. Lodhi Road, the Ridge area, Noida and Pitampura recorded 1 mm, 17.6 mm, 2 mm and 7 mm of rainfall respectively between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the Safdarjung Observatory, which is considered the official marker for the city, has received 1161.1 mm of rainfall this season. It had gauged 1,155.6 mm of rainfall in 1975 and 1190.9 mm in 1964.

The all-time record is 1,420.3 mm rainfall in 1933.

There was a massive traffic jam on Rohtak Road owing to waterlogging on the Mundka underpass. Commuters also experienced traffic snarls in central Delhi and Lutyens' Delhi.

The maximum temperature was recorded at 35.6 degrees Celsius, a notch above the sea-

son's average, while the minimum settled at 25.8 degrees Celsius, a degree above normal.

Humidity levels oscillated between 89 per cent and 55 per cent.

The IMD has issued an "orange" alert for Wednesday and a "yellow" alert for Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. For Friday, it has issued a "green" alert.

The IMD uses four colour codes — "green" means all is well, "yellow" indicates severely bad weather and that the weather could change for the worse, causing disruptions in the day-to-day activities, an "orange" alert is issued as a warning for extremely bad weather with the potential of disruption in commute with road and drain closures and interruption of power supply and "red" is when extremely bad weather conditions are certainly going to disrupt travel and power and pose significant risk to life. The weatherman has forecast a generally cloudy sky for Wednesday with the possibility of light rain or thunder-showers. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 32 and 25 degrees Celsius respectively. The minimum temperature was 26.5 degrees Celsius on Monday, while the maximum was 35.8 degrees Celsius.



The Tribune- 22- September-2021

# Rains overstay again, retreat expected in Oct

VIBHA SHARMA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 21

The withdrawal of monsoon appears to have been delayed again with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) today predicting more rains over hills and plains of the Northwest, including Rajasthan, for the next couple of days.

According to private forecaster Skymet, the retreat of the seasonal rains can now be expected in the first week of October. Mahesh Palawat of Skymet said the trend (of late retreat) being observed in the past couple of years was continuing this year as well.

Notably, just last year, the withdrawal date was revised to September 17 by the IMD.

The prolonged active spell has certainly helped reduce the rain deficit. The country is only 3 per cent short of the long period average (LPA).

The Northwest, which was



## MONSOON WATCH

**21%**

MORE RAIN IN HARYANA,  
CHANDIGARH AND DELHI

**13%**

DEFICIT RAIN IN PUNJAB

### PERIOD

JUNE 1 TO SEPT 21

supposed to receive "below normal" rains in September, as per the IMD, is just seven per cent short and stands in the "normal category" of rains. Between June 1 and September 21, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi received 21 per cent more rains than the LPA and is in the "excess" category of rains.

Punjab, with a 13 per cent deficiency, is also in the "normal" category, according to the IMD. Western UP (minus

22), J&K and Ladakh (minus 28) are the two sub-divisions in the "deficit category" in the Northwest.

According to the experts, the regular formation of convective systems over the Bay of Bengal and their movement over central and north-western parts are among the reasons for its extended stay. Currently, the monsoon trough is lying south of its normal position and is likely to remain there during next five days, says the IMD.

Rajasthan Patrika- 22- September-2021

## माही के 16 गेट खोले: अगले 4 दिन यलो अलर्ट जारी



बांसवाड़ा . माही बांध के सभी गेट खोलने के बाद बहती जल राशि।

जयपुर . प्रदेश के ज्यादातर जिलों में आषाढ़, सावन माह सूखा ही बीता। अब भादो ने बारिश से झोली भर दी है। बांसवाड़ा जिले में अच्छी बारिश और मध्यप्रदेश से पानी की लगातार आवक से मंगलवार को माही बांध के सभी 16 गेट खोले गए। मौसम विभाग के अनुसार दक्षिणी राजस्थान में अभी बारिश की स्थिति बनी रहेगी। कई जिलों में यलो अलर्ट जारी किया गया है। 22 को भीलवाड़ा, राजसमंद, उदयपुर, 23 को भीलवाड़ा, राजसमंद, 24 व 25 को उदयपुर जिले में यलो अलर्ट जारी किया गया है।



Rajasthan Patrika- 22- September-2021

**द्रव्यवती नदी:** बैठक के लिए नहीं मिल रहा समय, इधर नदी पर नहीं दे रहा कोई ध्यान

# जालियां चोरी, वॉकिंग ट्रैक पर लगे मिट्टी के ढेर



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**जयपुर.** द्रव्यवती नदी की दशा दिनों-दिन बिगड़ती जा रही है। बावजूद इसके अधिकारियों को उसके कार्याकल्प के लिए बैठक का समय नहीं मिल रहा है। वर्तमान स्थिति यह है कि नदी में कई जगह गंदा पानी बह रहा है तो कुछ जगहों पर पानी जमा हुआ है। विधानी के पास तो सुरक्षा की दीवार तक नहीं है। यहां लगी लोहे की जालियां चोरी हो गई हैं। साथ ही जो ट्रैक लोगों के घूमने-फिरने के लिए बनाया था, उस पर जगह-जगह मिट्टी के ढेर लगे हैं। नदी में जो पानी बह रहा है, उसमें कैमिकल है और झाग आ रहा है। जबकि, पानी को साफ करके नदी में डालना था। ऐसा ही हाल अजमेर रोड स्थित पुरानी चुंगी से गुजरने वाली नदी का भी है। यहां पर पानी ठहराव की वजह से बदबू से लोग परेशान रहते हैं।

**47** किमी लम्बाई है द्रव्यवती नदी की  
**17** किमी का उद्घाटन किया जा चुका है पहले ही  
**30** किमी का काम पूरा नहीं हो पाया है  
**05** एसटीपी से पानी साफ कर नदी में जाता है



फोटो: अनुग्रह सोलोमन

**12** पेज का एजेंडा है तैयार

**मंगलवार** को विभिन्न मुद्दों पर नगरीय विकास विभाग के प्रमुख सचिव कुंजीलाल मीणा बैठक करने वाले थे, लेकिन ऐनवक्त पर बैठक को आगे खिसका दिया। इसके लिए 12 पेज का एजेंडा तैयार किया गया है। स्थिति यह है कि पिछले ढाई-तीन वर्ष से नदी का निर्माण कार्य ठप है। जेडीए के अलावा अन्य विभागों की लापरवाही की वजह से नदी का काम पूरा नहीं हो पा रहा है।

**प्रमुख बिन्दु**

**जेडीए**

■ गोनेर में करीब दो किमी क्षेत्र में काश्तकारों से विवाद है। इसकी वजह से नदी का काम नहीं हो पा रहा।

■ निर्माणकर्ता और रखरखाव करने वाली कम्पनी के साथ जेडीए का विवाद है। भुगतान को लेकर भी विवाद है।

**नगर निगम**

■ हसनपुरा में करीब 350 मीटर सीमा क्षेत्र में नदी की दीवार नहीं बन पा रही है। वहां पर अतिक्रमण है, जिसे निगम को हटाने है।

■ घर-घर कचरा संग्रहण को दुरुस्त करना होगा। कई जगह गाड़ियां नहीं आने की वजह से लोग नदी में कचरा फेंकते हैं।

(इसके अलावा राजस्थान राज्य प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड के भी प्रकरण हैं।)

**पैसा ऐसे खर्च**

**1676** करोड़ रुपए का है यह प्रोजेक्ट

**206** करोड़ रुपए 10 वर्ष में रखरखाव पर होंगे खर्च