

The Pioneer - 23 March-2024

India braces for water scarcity as storage declines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As the summer season approaches, India braces itself for a challenging scenario of water scarcity, as evidenced by recent data from the Central Water Commission (CWC) concerning the live storage capacity in the country's primary reservoirs. The figures paint a stark picture, revealing that the current storage levels stand at a mere 38 per cent of their total capacity.

This alarming statistic not only raises immediate concerns but also underscores a worrying trend amid the broader context of climate change which threatens to impact the water resources banks such as glaciers and rivers across the Himalayas range.

As per the data, in urban areas like Bengaluru, the situation is already dire, with water shortages becoming increasingly prevalent. The city is grappling with a substantial daily short-fall of approximately 500 million litres, pitted against a staggering demand of 2,600 million litres per day. Such a deficit places immense strain on the city's water resources and infrastructure, significantly impacting the lives of its residents.

The predicament in Bengaluru is further exacerbated by the drying up of borewells, which serve as a vital source of water for thousands of households. Shockingly, out of the 14,000 borewells scattered across the city, nearly half, amounting to 6,900, have already run dry. This alarming trend reflects the severity of the water crisis unfolding in one of India's



major urban centers.

Among the States, Karnataka, along with several others including Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and others, have reported lower storage levels compared to the same period last year, as highlighted in the weekly bulletin by the CWC.

According to the statistics, the total live storage capacity of the 150 primary reservoirs in India amounts to a significant 178.784 billion cubic meters (BCM). However, the current live storage available in these reservoirs paints a different picture, standing at a mere 67.591 BCM, which represents just 38 per cent of their total capacity. This disparity between capacity and actual storage levels raises questions about the efficacy of water management practices and the need for more sustainable solutions.

In the Southern region of India, encompassing states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, the situation is particularly grim. Here, the total live storage available in reservoirs is a mere 23 per cent of their total capacity. This dismal figure marks a significant decrease compared to storage levels during the same period last year and falls below the average storage over the past decade.

I/167515/2024

Millennium Post - 23 March-2024

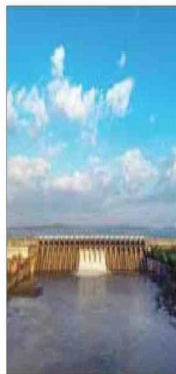
AS SUMMER LOOMS

Water storage in country's key 150 reservoirs at just 38%

NEW DELHI: As summer approaches, data reveals that the live storage capacity of India's 150 main reservoirs is currently at a mere 38 per cent of their total capacity. The figure is lower than the average of the past decade for the same time period.

Bengaluru, among other cities, is already facing a water deficit of approximately 500 million litres per day (MLD), with the city's demand being 2,600 MLD.

According to the Central Water Commission's weekly report, Karnataka and several other states have recorded lower



Total live storage capacity of these 150 reservoirs is 178.784 BCM, accounting for about 69.35% of country's total live storage capacity estimated at 257.812 BCM

The city's water requirement is 2,600 MLD, of which 1,470 MLD is sourced from the Cauvery River and 650 MLD from borewells, as stated by Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah.

Other states, including Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana (two combined projects in both states), and Tamil Nadu, have also reported lower storage levels compared to last year.

The total live storage capacity

of these 150 reservoirs is 178.784 billion cubic metres (BCM), accounting for about 69.35 per cent of the country's total live storage capacity estimated at 257.812 BCM, as per official data.

The reservoir storage bulletin on Thursday reported that the live storage available in these reservoirs is 67.591 BCM, which is 38 per cent of their total live storage capacity.

However, during the same period last year, the live storage available was 80.557 BCM, with a decade's average of 72.396 BCM.

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storage levels compared to the same period last year.

In Bengaluru, out of 14,000

borewells, 6,900 have dried up.

The city's water bodies are either encroached or have dried up.

Water storage

Therefore, the current live storage in these 150 reservoirs is 84 per cent of the storage during the same period last year and 93 per cent of the average storage over the past decade.

The bulletin stated: "The overall storage position in the country is lower than the corresponding period last year and also falls short of the average storage over the past ten years for the same period."

The Southern region, which includes states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana (two combined projects in both states), Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, monitors 42 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 53.334 BCM.

As of the Reservoir Storage Bulletin dated 21.03.2024, the total live storage available in these reservoirs is 12.287 BCM, which is 23 per cent of their total live storage capacity.

This represents a decrease compared to the storage levels during the same period last year (39 per cent) and the average storage over the past ten years (32 per cent).

Thus, the current storage levels in the Southern region are lower than those observed during the same period last year and also fall below the average storage over the past ten years.

AGENCIES

The Morning Standard- 23 March-2024

Water crisis looms as reservoir levels dip

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

POLITICIANS hitting the campaign trail for the coming Lok Sabha will have to sweat it out, maybe even literally.

The extreme hot weather is set to bring with it serious water crisis especially in Southern and Western parts of the country as the water level in major reservoirs is less than the corresponding time of 2023.

The water reservoirs act as special buffers between large rivers and urban water supply involving industrial users.

Owing to the strong presence of the El Nino phenomenon, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and other global weather agencies have forecast above normal temperatures this summer.

Severe water crisis would turn the heat on the campaigners and bring the water scarcity issue to centre stage. Huge deficit winter rainfall (-33%) between January and February 2024, has not only led to loss of soil moisture but also increased the farmers' burden.

In the coming months, it is going to aggravate the potable water issue. Bengaluru happens to be one of the glaring examples of it as Karnataka faced deficit monsoon in Kaveri

REGION-WISE STORAGE POSITION (BILLION CUBIC METRES)			
Regions	Capacity Total	Last year 2023	Current year 2024
North (HP, Punjab, Rajasthan)	19.66	7.742	6.744
Eastern (Jharkhand, Orissa, WB, Tripura)	20.09	9.147	10.363
Western (Gujarat, Maharashtra)	36.41	21.159	17.815
Central (UP, Uttarakhand, MP, Chhattisgarh)	48.23	23.797	22.770
Southern (AP, Telangana, Kerala, karnataka, TN)	53.07	22.277	13.054
Country as a Whole	178.784	84.122	70.746
<div>Deficit winter rain (-33%) between Jan & Feb reduced soil moisture and increased farmers' woes</div> <div>Extreme hot weather may bring along serious water shortage</div> <div>The crisis would be temporary as the El Nino climatic phenomenon would end</div>			

basins which kept reservoirs below the expectations.

As per the data provided by the Central Water Commission, the current water level is 84% of the corresponding time of 2023. Last year, there was 84.027 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 150 major water reservoirs, while this year, it was 70.746 BCM on 18 March 2024.

The current water level is 97% higher than the average of the last ten years. The average of the last 10 years of live storage is 72.857 BCM.

However, in 2023, the water level was 115% higher than the average of the last 10 years. Also, the average of last 10 year live storage was a bit higher than this year.

Water reservoirs in South and Western India have a larger deficit of live storage capacity than North, Eastern and Central regions reservoirs.

The live storage position in Southern region reservoirs are 13 BMC which was 22.2 BMC last year. Similarly, in the Western region current live storage capacity is 17.8 BMC while it was 21.1 BMC last year.

Meanwhile, as per the meteorologists, the water crisis would not last long in view of the ending of the El Nino climatic phenomenon, while the La Nina phenomenon would bring bountiful rainfall. El Niño Southern Oscillation(ENSO) or El Nino is a climate pattern that describes the unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

It is synonymous with weakening of the Indian southwest monsoon. La Nina is the cyclic counterpart to El Nino, known for cool phases of a recurring climate pattern across the tropical Pacific causing good rainfall in India.

If NITI Aayog Composite Water Management Index's predictions are coming true, India is currently facing its worst water crisis in history, with 21 cities on the brink of depleting their groundwater resources.

Rashtriya Sahara- 23 March-2024

कृषि क्षेत्र में जल के बेहतर प्रबंधन पर ध्यान दें : नीति आयोग

नई दिल्ली (भाषा)। नीति आयोग के सदस्य रमेश चंद ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि भारत एक टन कृषि फसल पैदा करने के लिए कई विकासशील देशों के मुकाबले 2-3 गुना अधिक पानी का उपयोग करता है।

उन्होंने कहा कि कई विकसित और विकासशील देशों ने कृषि क्षेत्र में बेहतर जल प्रबंधन पर जोर दिया है।

धानुका एग्रीटेक लिमिटेड द्वारा विश्व जल दिवस 2024 के अवसर पर आयोजित एक कार्यक्रम को संबोधित करते हुए उन्होंने कृषि क्षेत्र में जल के बेहतर प्रबंधन पर जोर दिया। चंद ने कहा कि बढ़ती जनसंख्या और आय वृद्धि के कारण भोजन और पानी की मांग बढ़ रही है। उन्होंने कहा कि चावल जैसी अधिक पानी की खपत वाली फसलों को प्राथमिकता देने के कारण भी पानी की मांग बढ़ रही है। धान का रकबा बढ़ा है।

नीति आयोग के सदस्य ने बताया कि बारिश नहीं होने पर रबी (सर्दियों में बोई जाने वाली) फसलों का कुल रकबा बढ़ गया है।

चंद ने बेहतर जल प्रबंधन की आवश्यकता पर जोर देते हुए कहा, 'भारत कई विकसित और विकासशील देशों की तुलना में एक टन फसल पैदा करने के लिए 2-3 गुना अधिक पानी का उपयोग करता है।'

उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकारों को स्थानीय पर्यावरण और भौगोलिक परिस्थितियों के अनुरूप खेती को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए। केंद्रीय कृषि आयुक्त पी के सिंह ने कहा, 'जल शक्ति मंत्रालय के सहयोग से, हम सतही जल के अधिकतम उपयोग के तरीके तलाश रहे हैं।' धानुका समूह के चेयरमैन आर जी अग्रवाल ने कृषि कार्यों के लिए आधुनिक प्रौद्योगिकियों को अपनाने की पुरजोर वकालत की।