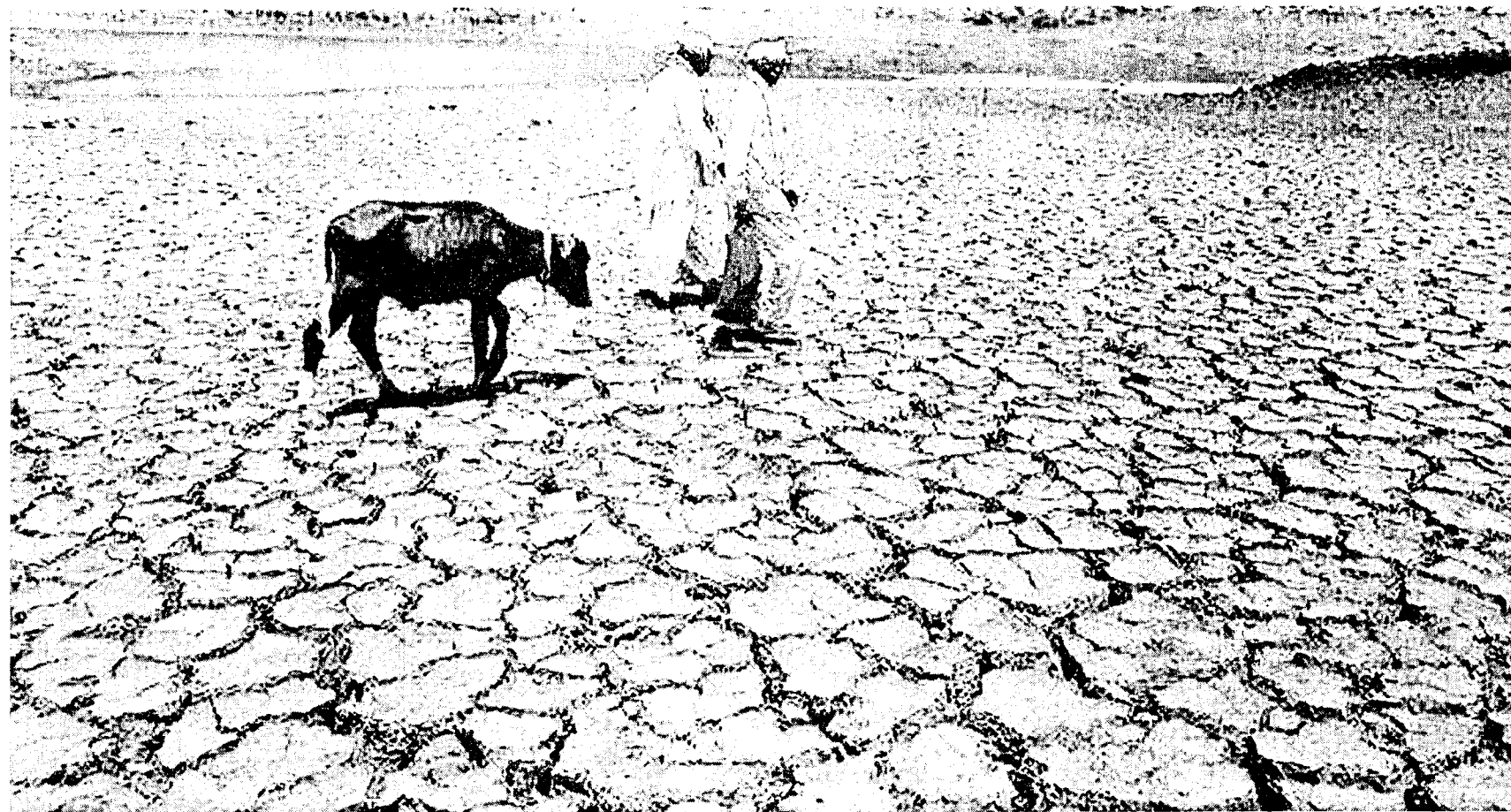


**A**mong the various regions affected most by drinking water scarcity in India, the name of Bundelkhand has been mentioned frequently. This region is spread over 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in central India. A recent visit to several remote villages of three districts of this region at the peak of the scorching summer revealed that even though the officially declared drought ended several months back, there is a very serious water shortage in vast rural areas as well as in some urban areas.

In fact the water scarcity was so acute that villagers told me time and again that arranging the day's water supply has become their biggest task. This takes up a lot of their time thereby affecting their livelihoods. In seven out of eight villages that I visited people said that several farm and dairy animals particularly cows and bullocks have perished largely due to water shortage related factors during the last three months as the temperature started shooting up rather early this year. Water shortage forces people to drink and use contaminated water and this exposes them to several diseases.

Although Bundelkhand's plateaus and rocky, granite-filled terrain leads to several problems, communities have traditionally adjusted to these by creating well-planned and carefully built tanks as well as other water-bodies several of which are also connected to each other. Instead of learning from and further building on such strengths, recent times have seen a failure to properly protect these structures and to preserve their catchments.

There is much that can be done at comparatively low budgets for protecting, repairing and renovating these tradi-



tional water works using local wisdom so that the ability of these structures to conserve rainwater is retained.

In addition when we visit villages affected by water scarcity, people talk about relatively low-cost, small-scale, decentralised solutions to their problems. They are keen about such short-gestation and small-scale projects which can give results in a relatively short time, providing considerable relief to the rural communities.

Hence the participation of people is likely to be easy to secure in the case of such localised, low-cost projects. In fact some efforts are already on to improve community involvement in water conser-

vation with special emphasis on improving the participation of weaker sections. In one such project supported by the European Union and WHH, paani panchayats have been mobilised in several villages and jal sahelis have been selected from the more active local women to take forward the task of water conservation.

In some cases some remedial works have already been approved and in others some work has been taken up only to be left incomplete due to resource constraints or other problems. People also give examples of possible remedial actions being messed up due to corruption.

While much of this rela-

tively lower-cost is languishing as enough resources are not made available, at the same time the authorities have no hesitation in making available huge or even colossal amounts for large-scale projects of dubious value. Bundelkhand has had more than its share of large dams but their cost-benefit estimation has been suspect. Several years after dam construction one still meets several displaced people who have not recovered from the trauma and multiple problems caused by displacement. Excessive discharges from several dams have led several times to very destructive floods.

At present the biggest such project being taken up for

implementation is the Ken Betwa Link Project which involves the construction of one large dam, a 250 km. canal and other related structures. This is planned at present estimates and prices at a whopping Rs. 18,000 crore. This project has been criticised as it is likely to lead to the cutting of an estimated 1.8 million trees apart from causing very serious damage to Panna Tiger Reserve area and other protected areas for gharials. This project is aimed at diverting water of Ken river to Betwa river.

For this it is essential to establish the existence of a surplus in Ken for transfer to deficit-hit Betwa but this has not been done yet. This project has

been promoted in the name of solving the water crisis of Bundelkhand but it involves transfer to upper reaches of Betwa river, upstream of Bundelkhand while the adverse impact on water recharge in the downstream areas of Ken river flowing into Bundelkhand have been neglected. Serious questions arise as to why these adverse aspects are being ignored while promoting the costly project. Priorities in the water sector have to be defined properly in a just and unbiased way if we sincerely want to quench the thirst of many parched villages and their people.

The writer is a freelance journalist who has been involved with several social initiatives and movements.

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Punjab Keshari (Hindi)  
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Indian Nation  
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The Times of India (A)  
Blitz

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## Mahanadi dispute: Naveen accuses Centre of siding with Chhattisgarh

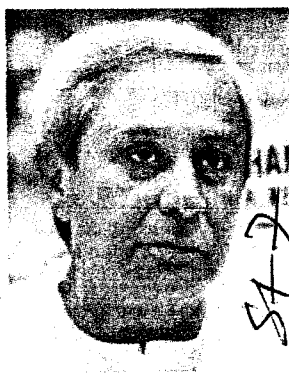
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 6 JUNE

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday accused the Centre of siding with the Chhattisgarh government which has unilaterally impeded flow of Mahanadi waters to Odisha resulting in an alarming situation.

In a strongly worded letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Odisha Chief Minister drew his attention to the high-handed acts of the upper riparian state of Chhattisgarh against the downstream state of Odisha and its inhabitants for whom water of Mahanadi river is a lifeline.

Chhattisgarh has unilaterally undertaken the construction of six barrages across the inter state Mahanadi river including Kalma barrage, which is located near the border. Odisha had objected to these barrages in November last year and sought constitution of a inter state tribunal under the provisions of the Inter State River Water Disputes Act of 1956.

However, despite passage of more than six months, no steps have been taken by the Central Government allowing the upstream Chhattisgarh to uninterruptedly go ahead with the disputed projects in Mahanadi River basin,



said Mr Patnaik.

Odisha has also approached the Supreme Court and on the last occasion, while adjourning the matter to 25th July 2017, the court requested the Additional Solicitor General representing the Central Government to take instructions on the formation of a Tribunal as demanded.

The CM informed the PM that recently an alarming situation has developed due to the dwindling flows into the Hirakud Reservoir.

"On inquiry, it was learnt that Chhattisgarh while opposing the formation of a Tribunal (which unfortunately seems to have been entertained by the Union Ministry of Water Resources) has gone ahead and erected the gates of Kalma barrage and then closed the same blocking the free flow of water to Odisha and

its inhabitants causing huge unrest in the border districts on account of reduction of flow into Hirakud reservoir resulting in scarcity of drinking water in summer months", he stated.

Patnaik noted that he had written to his counterpart Raman Singh on 3 June and requested immediate opening of gates of Kalma barrage. But has not received any response till date.

Seeking intervention by the PM, the Odisha CM said the head of a federal system needs to intervene and instruct Chhattisgarh government to stop the construction of barrages and to open the gates of Kalma and other barrages to maintain the free flow of water downstream.

Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh told media persons that the sharing of water, flow during summer months etc is regulated by the Central Water Commission.

Any concern of Odisha government needs to be addressed to the CWC which can then look in to what is the reality.

On Monday, the Water Resources Minister of Chhattisgarh had categorically denied closure of any new gate at Kalma barrage and indicated that summer flow in Mahanadi had dipped.

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Punjab Keshari (Hindi)  
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Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)  
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# Monsoon getting better, will be more evenly distributed: IMD

## EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 6

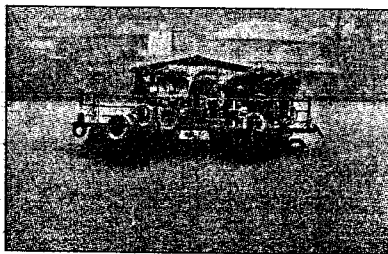
WITH THE first week of monsoon having seen good rainfall, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Tuesday that the four-month season was likely to bring more rain than it had earlier believed.

In its second-stage forecast for the June-September monsoon season, released on Tuesday, the IMD said the country as a whole was likely to receive 98 per cent of normal rainfall. In April, it had forecast 96 per cent rain for the season. Both the forecasts have a model error of four per cent.

The IMD said there was a 63 per cent probability that the country would receive at least 96 per cent of normal rainfall.

More heartening is the fact that rainfall is likely to be evenly distributed across all geographical regions. Central India is expected to receive 100 per cent rainfall, while the southern peninsular region is likely to get 99 per cent rain. Northwest India and northeast India are both likely to get 96 per cent rain.

"The picture that is emerging as of now is looking very good. All areas in the country are likely to get good rainfall, near their normal levels. This does not happen very often," said IMD Director General KJ Ramesh.



**In Kochi on Tuesday. Monsoon arrived on the Kerala coast two days earlier than the normal date of June 1.**

Nirmal Harindran

IE 7

Another climate model that the IMD has been running for the last few years in experimental mode is actually predicting 100 per cent rain, with a model error of 5 per cent, a statement from IMD said.

The monsoon season accounts for nearly 75 per cent of India's annual rainfall. During this time, the country, as a whole, receives about 89 cm of rainfall. Barring Tamil Nadu, which receives a bulk of its annual rainfall in winter, almost the entire country has rainy season during these months.

In the latest forecast, the IMD also gave the likely distribution of rainfall in July and

August, the two rainiest months within the season. Rainfall is likely to be 96 per cent of normal value in July and 99 per cent in August.

The arrival of monsoon on the Kerala coast, that signals the start of the season, happened two days earlier than the normal date of June 1. Moving northwards after that, monsoon has now covered almost entire Kerala and many parts of Tamil Nadu.

"Conditions are becoming favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and southwest Bay of Bengal, some parts of central Arabian Sea, coastal and south interior Karnataka, Rayalaseema and south coastal Andhra Pradesh, some more parts of west-central and north Bay of Bengal, remaining parts of Tripura, Assam and Meghalaya and some parts of sub-Himalayan West Bengal during next three days," the IMD said.

In the first week of monsoon, the country received 20.9 mm of rainfall overall, which is five per cent more than the normal of 19.9 mm. The extra precipitation has happened mainly in the northeastern states which have received 36 per cent more rain than normal. Southern peninsula, barring Kerala, and central India have actually received 20 per cent less rain than normal.

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Punjab Keshari (Hindi)  
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### महानदी पर सीएम बोले, जल आयोग की सहमति से बनाया बांध

रायपुर @ पत्रिका. महानदी जल बंटवारा विवाद के नए दौर को मुख्यमंत्री डॉ. रमन सिंह ने गौर जरूरी बताया है। मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा, महानदी पर बांधों को केंद्रीय जल आयोग की सहमति से बनाया गया है। किस राज्य को कितना पानी मिलेगा, यह ना तो मैं तय कर सकता हूँ और न ओडिशा सरकार। यह तय करने का अधिकार केंद्रीय जल आयोग को है। उनका कहना था, महानदी में पानी का बहाव केवल चार महीने ही होता है। तीन दिन पहले ओडिशा के मुख्यमंत्री नवीन पटनायक ने मुख्यमंत्री डॉ. रमन सिंह को पत्र लिखकर कलमा बैराज का गेट करने पर कड़ी आपत्ति दर्ज कराई थी। उनका कहना था कि छत्तीसगढ़ की इस कार्रवाई की वजह से ओडिशा के झारसुगुडा, बरगढ़ और संबलपुर जिलों में पेयजल का संकट पैदा हो गया है।

पत्रिका-7-6-17

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सरकार की बेरुखी

## बजट अभाव में अटकी राणकपुर बांध की मरम्मत

**जलसंसाधन विभाग  
ने भेजा प्रस्ताव  
नहीं मिल पाई  
निर्माण की स्वीकृति**

सादड़ी @ पत्रिका, देसूरी उपखण्ड क्षेत्र के सिंचाई व पेयजल स्रोत राणकपुर/सादड़ी बांध की मरम्मत का कार्य इस मानसून से पहले भी पूरा होना संभव नहीं लग रहा। बारिश के सीजन में अब कुछ ही दिन बचे हैं और सरकार ने बांध की मरम्मत के लिए राशि अब तक स्वीकृत नहीं की है। राणकपुर बांध की रियासतकालीन वर्षों पूर्व बनी ओवरफ्लो की दीवारों की वर्ष



**पत्रिका - 7-6-17**  
**ग्राउंड  
रिपोर्ट**

2002 के बाद से आज तक कोई मरम्मत नहीं हुई। बान्ध पर कुल तीन ओवरफ्लो बने हैं। उनमें से दो ओवरफ्लो दीवार पिछली दो-तीन भारी बारिश एवं नदियों के साथ बहकर आए पत्थरों की टक्कर से क्षतिग्रस्त हो गई है। इनमें से जगह-जगह फव्वारे छूटते सहज दिखाई देते हैं। फिल्टर प्लांट के सामने वाले मैन ओवरफ्लो दीवार से तो दो जगह पत्थर निकल गए हैं। आगामी मानसून बारिश में इसके लबालब



होने की आशंका है। राजस्थान पत्रिका ने कुछ माह पूर्व समस्या को प्रमुखता से उठाते हुए जलसंसाधन विभाग का ध्यान आकर्षित करवाया।

इस पर विभाग ने करीब 13 लाख का प्रस्ताव बनाकर सरकार के पास भेजा। लेकिन इस पर आज तक स्वीकृति नहीं मिल पाई है।

ओवरफ्लो मरम्मत के प्रस्तावित कार्यों का तखमीना बनाकर भेजा है। सरकार से वित्तीय स्वीकृति नहीं मिल पाई है। स्वीकृति मिलते ही निर्माण करवाया जाएगा।

**ताराराम गहलोत**, सहायक अभियन्ता, जलसंसाधन विभाग, बाली

ऊर्जा राज्य मंत्री को प्रमुखता से समस्या का समाधान करवाना चाहिए। अन्यथा आगामी मानसून बारिश में बान्ध लबालब होने के दौरान बड़ी त्रासदी की आशंका से नकारा नहीं जा सकता है।

**गणेशराम, मांगीलाल, पुरखराज, मोहनलाल**, किसान