

Central Water Commission
Technical Documentation Directorate
Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section

West Block II, Wing No-5
R K Puram, New Delhi - 66.

Dated 8.9.17

Subject: Submission of News Clippings.

The News Clippings on Water Resources Development and allied subjects are enclosed for perusal of the Chairman, CWC, and Member (WP&P/D&R/RM), Central Water Commission. The soft copies of clippings have also been uploaded on the CWC website.

P. Maheshwari
8.9.17
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

Deputy Director (Publication)

Ans. 8/9

Director (T.D.)

Ans. 8/9

For information of Chairman & Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned, uploaded at www.cwc.nic.in

Ans.

Item/letter/article/editorial published on 8/9/17 in the

Hindustan Times
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The Times of India (N.D.)
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Deccan Chronicle
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and documented at

Path (English) & Publicity Section, CWR

It is wrong to link the cost of disasters with emissions

If we want to limit future flooding damage, global carbon cuts are a poor method. Much more needs to be done

BJORN LOMBOG

While the world focuses on the devastating storms in South Asia and the US, it is timely to ask ourselves two broad, related questions. First, how do we prevent such disasters from being so devastating in the future? And second, how do we best help the vulnerable people who are most affected?

When big weather events happen, often the first thing talked about is climate change. Perhaps it's a matter of trying to pin blame for a natural disaster. This claim has some justification, but points us in the wrong direction. Despite the devastation of recent weeks, it is incorrect to link the increasing costs of disasters with the emission of greenhouse gases. The UN, in its latest extreme weather report, found that losses adjusted for population and wealth "have not been attributed to natural or anthropogenic climate change" and "the absence of an attributable climate change signal in losses also holds for flood losses." This does not mean that climate change caused by humans is not real or of genuine concern. But it means that many commentators and campaigners—and even journalists—seem to ignore these relevant scientific findings.

This matters, because if we want to limit future flooding damage, global carbon cuts are a very poor method. Even if carbon cuts like those promised between now and 2030 in the Paris treaty are successful, they would reduce heavy rain increases by a tiny fraction. The lesson from the US and around the world is that a much more effective policy is to look at where societies are allowing construction to take place. Unabated construction on flood plains and coastal areas means that there are more people at risk. And urban planners paving over floodplains and denuding forests make matters worse. A city with

lakes, ponds, and open spaces is not only more pleasant, but it is better prepared, because all of these features allow water to drain away. Many affected cities have poor drainage and outdated storm water systems that clog with debris and rubbish. This—and a lack of pumping stations and floodgates—make cities more vulnerable to flooding. And having poor or no early warning systems means that people aren't given the information they need to help them escape.

The majority of deaths in Mumbai's floods occurred in shanty town slums. Indeed, it is a cruel reality that natural disasters often afflict the poorest the most. This means that efforts to reduce poverty are also an "anti-flooding" measure. Flood death rates both in India, Asia and globally are declining, because less poverty is making people less vulnerable. Over the past half century, the flood death rate in India has almost halved: In the 1960s, India saw 2.1 flood deaths per million people per year, whereas 2010-16 has seen 1.1 deaths, the lowest yet. So while we need to address policy issues of flood infrastructure, planning, and disaster preparedness, another policy needs to be considered: How to continue making society's most vulnerable better off.

A vast amount of state and national spending as well as international development funds are devoted to this purpose. Tools like cost-benefit analysis can help prioritise the policies that will have the biggest absolute impact for a city, state or nation. At a global level, we already have answers on how to lift people out of poverty. Copenhagen Consensus commissioned economists to study the international development agenda and identify the approaches that would make the biggest impact for every dollar spent.

The panel identified 19 policies that would be transformative. Among these, achieving universal access to contraception and family planning and cutting tuberculosis by 90% would save many lives. Ending fuel subsidies (which cost India \$16.9 billion a year in 2013 and 2014) would be good for the environment and free up public funds. And introducing freer global trade would, in the longer term, have the biggest impact on poverty. It is understandable that we focus on the immediate response to disaster. The rebuild is going to take a considerable amount of time and resources. But we also need to look at the bigger picture, and invest both in smarter policies and more poverty reduction to reduce the impacts of future floods.

UNABATED CONSTRUCTION ON FLOOD PLAINS AND COASTAL AREAS MEANS THAT THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE AT RISK. AND URBAN PLANNERS PAVING OVER FLOODPLAINS AND DENUDING FORESTS MAKE MATTERS WORSE

Bjorn Lomborg is president, Copenhagen Consensus Center and Visiting Professor at Copenhagen Business School

The views expressed are personal

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Climate change is leading to extreme weather events

This means that the country must learn to cope with twin challenges: Excessive rainfall and drought



The Indian monsoon is never really 'normal'. It is variable and unpredictable. But now the definition of what is 'normal' is changing. The fact is that the monsoon is becoming more extreme and more variable. In this way, the new normal is flood at the time of drought.

This year, even as 40% of the districts in India face prospects of drought, close to 25% districts have had heavy rainfall of more than 100 mm in just a matter of hours. This year, even as the overall average rainfall in the country is below normal - deficient - large parts have received much more than their share of rain and worse, this rain came down in a matter of hours.

Chandigarh was recently submerged in water. It had deficient rainfall till August 21, and then it got 115 mm of rain in 12 hours. It drowned. In other words, it got roughly 15% of its annual rain in just a few hours. Bengaluru hardly had any rain and then it poured. It got 150 mm of rain in one day, which is close to 30% of its annual monsoon rain. It is no wonder that the city drowned. Then Mumbai got some 300 mm of rain - some 15% of its annual in just hours.

This should not surprise us. Models have predicted that the first impact of a changing climate would be on increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. It was also predicted that South Asia would be worst hit by extreme rain events. It is happening. What should worry us is that models have predicted that this would only get worse as temperatures rise.

On the one hand, we are getting our water management wrong - we are building in floodplains, destroying our water-bodies and filling up our water channels. Mumbai or Chandigarh or Bengaluru did not drown

only because of extreme rain. They drowned also because all drainage systems have been destroyed. Now, the changing climate will make this mismanagement even more deadly. Just consider the facts. This year, up to mid-August, India has had 16 extremely heavy rain events, defined as rainfall over 244 mm in a day and 100 heavy rain events defined as rainfall between 124 to 244 mm in a day. This means that rain will become a flood. Worse, in met records, the rain will be shown as normal, not recognising that it did not rain when it was most needed for sowing or that the rain came in one downpour. It came and went. It brought no benefits.

It is time we understood this reality. This means learning to cope with twin scenarios. This means being obsessive about how to mitigate floods and how to live with water scarcity. But the good news is that doing one can help the other. But we need to stop debating, dithering or dawdling. We know what to do. And we have no time to lose - climate change will only increase with time as weather and rainfall will only get more variable, more extreme and more catastrophic.

The answer to floods is what has been discussed for long. In fact, it was practised in these flood-prone regions many decades ago. It requires planning systems that can divert and channelise water so that it does not flood land and destroy life. It means linking rivers to ponds, lakes and ditches so that water is free to flow. This will distribute the water across the region and bring other benefits. It will recharge groundwater so that in the subsequent months of low rainfall, there is water for drinking and irrigation.

It is time to accept that we are beginning to see the impact of climate change. It is time to demand that the world change its ways to mitigate emissions. It is equally important we change the way we deal with water. The opportunity lies in making sure that every drop of the rain is harvested. Since rain will come in more ferocious events we must engineer for its storage and drainage. This does mean that every water body, every channel, drain, nullah and every catchment has to be safeguarded. These are the temples of modern India. Built to worship rain. Built for our future.

Mitigating floods and droughts has only one answer: Obsessive attention to building millions and millions of connected and living water structures that will capture rain, be a sponge for flood and storehouse for drought. The only question is: when will we read the writing on the wall? Get on with it. Get it right.

Sunita Narain is director general, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi
The views expressed are personal

IT IS TIME TO ACCEPT THAT WE ARE BEGINNING TO SEE THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE. IT IS TIME TO DEMAND THAT THE WORLD CHANGE ITS WAYS TO MITIGATE EMISSIONS. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO CHANGE OUR WATER STRATEGY

Item/letter/article/editorial published on 07/11/15 in the

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statesman
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SYL: Settlement possible, Centre tells SC

Gets six more weeks to mediate between Punjab, Haryana to resolve canal water issue

SATYA PRAKASH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 7

The Centre today told the Supreme Court that there was a possibility of a settlement between Punjab and Haryana over the vexed Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal issue — a bone of contention between the two states.

"There is an atmosphere of optimism.... There is possibility of a settlement. We need more time as the PM is out of the country," Attorney General KK Venugopal told a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra during the brief hearing.

NEXT HEARING ON NOVEMBER 8

- Attorney General KK Venugopal said in the SC: "There is an atmosphere of optimism.... There is possibility of a settlement. We need more time as the PM is out of the country."
- Giving six more weeks to the Centre to mediate between Punjab and Haryana, the court posted the matter for further hearing on November 8

The Bench gave six more weeks to the Centre to further mediate between Punjab and Haryana to arrive at an amicable solution and posted the matter for further hearing on November 8.

The mentioning of PM Narendra Modi's name in the SYL dispute by the Attorney General is being read as a

sign of negotiations at the highest political level.

This is the second time that the Centre has sought time from the top court to work out a solution to the issue.

During the last hearing on July 11, Venugopal had requested the Bench to give two months to the Centre to arrive at a negotiated settle-

ment acceptable to both sides.

Senior advocates Shyam Divan and Jagdeep Dhankhar were present in the court on behalf of Haryana, while Punjab was represented by senior advocates AK Ganguly, RS Suri and Advocate General Atul Nanda. Much of the work on the canal in Haryana had already been completed and it was only the Punjab part that remained pending.

The Bench had earlier directed both states to ensure that there was no agitation on the SYL Canal issue during pendency of the case after

Nanda had said a political party in Haryana was agitating on the issue.

During the last hearing, Rajasthan had also demanded that its rights must be safeguarded in any settlement between Punjab and Haryana.

Haryana has maintained that it can't be made to wait for such a long time for the construction of the SYL Canal. Any further delay in the execution of the top court's decree passed in 2002 would lead to people losing faith in the judicial system. "How long we will have to wait?" Divan had asked on July 11.

SYL settlement possible: Govt

On the other hand, Punjab says the decree was not executable and the state required time to argue its case. It has told the SC that the canal land returned to the landowners could not be recovered.

Punjab contended there were difficulties in implementation of the court's decree. The decree was premised on the fact that there was enough water in the river. But now there is not much water flow, making it impossible to give effect to it.

Punjab wanted a negotiated settlement between the two states with the help of the Centre.

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गंगा को प्रदूषण मुक्त करने की तैयारी

नई दिल्ली | रामनारायण श्रीवास्तव

गंगा को निर्मल व अविरल करने के पहले बड़े चरण के तहत अगले एक साल में गंगा को प्रदूषण से मुक्त कर लिया जाएगा। गंगा में जाने वाले सभी प्रमुख नालों पर एसटीपी लगाने का काम अक्टूबर 2018 तक पूरा कर लिया जाएगा। गंगा में सीधा प्रदूषण डाल रहे उद्योगों को भी इसके दायरे में रखा गया है। गंगा को प्रदूषण मुक्त करने के बाद अविरलता व निर्मलता पर काम किया जाएगा।

नए जल संसाधन, नदी विकास व गंगा संरक्षण मंत्री नितिन गडकरी के नेतृत्व में मंत्रियों की नई टीम ने नमामि गंगे परियोजना को अपनी वरीयता में सबसे ऊपर रखा है। चार सितंबर को मंत्रालय का कामकाज संभालने के बाद गडकरी

गांधीजी का 150वां साल यादगार बनाया जाएगा

नमामि गंगा प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के बेहद महत्वाकांक्षी मिशन है। माना जा रहा है कि तीन साल में इसकी धीमी गति के चलते ही तीनों मंत्रियों को बदला गया है। सूत्रों के अनुसार, प्रधानमंत्री चाहते हैं कि अगले साल दो अक्टूबर तक गंगा पूरी तरह से प्रदूषण मुक्त हो जाए। चूंकि अगले साल दो अक्टूबर से महात्मा गांधी का 150वां साल शुरू होने जा रहा है और सरकार उस दिन को यादगार रूप से मनाने की तैयारी में है।

ने अगले दिन मंत्रालय के बारे में जानकारी हासिल की। छह सितंबर को नमामि गंगे परियोजना की समीक्षा की। सात सितंबर

अधिकांश नामों पर एसटीपी को मंजूरी मिली

परियोजना के तहत गंगा में सीधे जाने वाले सूचीबद्ध 144 नालों में अधिकांश के लिए एसटीपी को मंजूरी दी जा चुकी है। इस साल अक्टूबर से सभी एसटीपी पर काम शुरू हो जाएगा, जिसे छह माह में पूरा किया जाएगा। गंगा को प्रदूषण मुक्त करने की योजना के तहत नालों पर एसटीपी लगाकर और उनकी मोड़ कर दूसरी तरफ ले जाने, टेनरियों के प्रदूषण पर पूरी रोक लगाकर और नदी में सभी तरह की प्रवाहित की जाने वाली सामग्री को पूरी तरह से रोका जाएगा।

को राज्यमंत्री सत्यपाल सिंह ने राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ गंगा मिशन के कार्यालय में जाकर परियोजना की प्रगति की जानकारी ली।