

State farmers cry foul as R'sthan plugs canal

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, DECEMBER 7

The Rajasthan Government's drive to crack down on water theft and stop tube-well-based supply for irrigation in the bordering districts of Haryana is set to deepen the problem of irrigation in Hisar and Sirsa villages.

The Hanumangarh district administration has launched a special drive to dismantle borewells and pipelines laid by Haryana farmers to get water to their fields. A team of Bhadra subdivision of Hanumangarh district has started a survey of the entire border area along the Sidhmukh canal to check the flow of water to Haryana.

SDM, Bhadra, Narendra Singh Kulhari told The Tribune today that while large tracts of Rajasthan remained parched, farmers in the neighbouring villages of Haryana have been stealing water from the canal to irrigate their fields. "We have decided to stop

Drive to dismantle borewells launched

The Hanumangarh district administration has launched a special drive to dismantle borewells and pipelines laid by Haryana farmers to get water to their fields. A team of Bhadra subdivision of Hanumangarh district has started a survey of the entire border area along the Sidhmukh canal to check the flow of water to Haryana.

the theft after several complaints came to us. We have detected around 20 such pipelines today. The process to register an FIR is under way", the SDM said.

Haryana farmers have disputed the charge. Sultan Singh, a resident of Chaudhariwali village, said he had purchased a piece of land along Sidhmukh canal and laid the pipeline to fetch water to irrigate his fields across the border. "I found a sweet water source at about

40 feet along the canal which is the only source of irrigation. The groundwater available at a deeper level is very salty. Since most villages along the Rajasthan border are located at the tail-end of canals, the supply is inadequate", he said.

Virender Punia, a farmer leader in Budak village in Hisar, said groups of farmers came together to purchase land in Rajasthan and lay pipeline to fetch water.

"It costs about Rs 20 lakh to fetch water from Rajasthan. It can't be termed illegal," said Punia, adding around 20 villages in Hisar and Sirsa districts get water from Rajasthan. "They are in double trouble now. On the one hand, they face criminal charges, on the other, they face the risk of their crops getting destroyed in the absence of water supply," he said. "Two decade back, Haryana provided water to several Rajasthan villages before the Sidhmukh canal was dug up" Punia recalled.

Govt takes in-principle decision to ban all construction on Ganga

AMITAV RANJAN

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 7

TO MAINTAIN the river's minimum environmental flow and protect the ecology dependent on it, no new construction would be allowed on river Ganga or any of its tributaries.

The decision was taken in principle last month at an Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) meeting to review an Expert Body report giving clearance to hydro-electric power (HEP) projects to be built on Alaknanda and Bhagirathi river basins in Uttarakhand.

Sources said a formal ban on construction would be conveyed to the Supreme Court after an IMG-constituted committee submits its "comprehensive view" on all aspects of environment flow and longitudinal connectivity in the two rivers, along

with authentic figures of water availability.

The IMG — comprising Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and Power Minister Piyush Goyal — formed the five-member committee chaired by Water Resources Secretary Shashi Shekhar, who has trashed the Expert Body report on giving clearance to five of the six HEP projects.

Shekhar told the IMG that the requirement of environmental flow and longitudinal connectivity, as recommended by the Expert Body, was "grossly inadequate". "It will leave these rivers with almost no water during non-monsoon season," he told the ministers.

Shekhar has been given a month's time to conclude the committee's report so as to apprise the Supreme Court of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.

Ganga

government's final decision at the next hearing on January 20.

Sources said the IMG is also agreed on refunding the money invested by project promoters and has asked the Power Ministry to "make available latest figures of expenditure on six HEPs, including the contractors' pending claims".

According to sources, Bharti has offered to compensate the six HEPs — NTPC's Lata Tapavan, NHPC's Kotlibhel IA, GMR's Alaknanda, Super Hydro's Khirao Ganga and Bhyunder Ganga and THDC's Jelum Tamak — out of the Namami Gange funds.

The Union Cabinet in May approved Rs 20,000 crore for use over the next five years

for the flagship Namami Gange, which integrates the efforts to clean and protect the river in a comprehensive manner.

Bharti, also the minister for Ganga Rejuvenation, is upset that the Environment Ministry filed the affidavit based on the Expert Body report in the apex court without consulting her ministry, even though the determination and maintenance of minimum environmental flow in Ganga and its tributaries was one of the "important mandates" of her ministry.

"Though chief engineer of Central Water Commission working under this ministry was included as technical organisation expert (in the Expert Body), CWC is not competent organisation to give opinion regarding e-flow and longitudinal connectivity," she wrote to Javadekar.

After the 2013 Uttarakhand floods, the court took cognizance of the tragedy and prohibited setting up of any new HEP in the state till further orders. In December 2014, it asked the Environment Ministry to consider the six HEPs in a cluster for which a four-member committee was set up. The four-member committee in February 2015 said "these six projects in their present form may not be taken up as they have potential of causing significant impacts on the bio-diversity, river system, wildlife and other fragile eco-systems in areas where these projects are located due to altered hydrological parameters". The court then asked the ministry to submit its final recommendations on the six projects through an Expert Body. The Expert Body in October overturned previous recommendations.

खिसक गया पहाड़, हजारों पर्यटक फंसे

8/12/2015 CPD

चंडीगढ़ @ पत्रिका . बफीलीं वादियों में छुट्टियां मनाने जाते वक्त अचानक से रास्ते में पहाड़ खिसक जाए और धूल का गुबार राह रोक ले, तो...! सोमवार सुबह हिमाचल के मंडी से करीब 25 किमी दूर चंडीगढ़-मनाली हाईवे पर अचानक से पर्यटकों के सामने ऐसा ही नजारा था। भूस्खलन से पहाड़ ब्यास नदी के ऊपरी हिस्से से खिसक कर नीचे आ गया और हजारों पर्यटक मार्ग पर फंस गए हैं। अब कुल्लू व मनाली जाने के लिए बस बजौरा वाया कोटला का रास्ता ही बचा है। पहाड़ दरकने से बंद एनएच 21 पर से मलबा हटाने का काम शुरू हो गया है।



पहाड़ खिसकने से चंडीगढ़-मनाली हाईवे सोमवार को बंद हो गया। हाईवे पर जेसीबी से मलबा हटाने की कोशिश में जुटा प्रशासन।

गंगा किनारे निर्माण पर रोक की तैयारी

नई दिल्ली | पीयूष पांडेय

सिफारिश

8/12/11

केंद्र सरकार की ओर से गठित अंतर मंत्रालयी समूह ने गंगा और उसकी सहायक नदियों के आसपास नए निर्माण पर रोक लगाने की सिफारिश करने का निर्णय लिया है।

समूह की ओर से यह सिफारिश सुप्रीम कोर्ट में पेश की जाने वाली रिपोर्ट में की जाएगी, ताकि नदियों के पर्यावरणीय प्रवाह और पारिस्थितिकी को कायम रखा जा सके। सर्वोच्च अदालत में उत्तराखंड से लेकर बंगाल की खाड़ी तक गंगा और उसकी सहयोगी जलधाराओं को संरक्षित करने के लिए

- अंतरमंत्रालयी समूह सुप्रीम कोर्ट में इस संबंध में प्रस्ताव रखेगा
- परियोजना को बंद करने के बदले मुआवजा देने को तैयार सरकार

विस्तृत रिपोर्ट जल्द पेश की जाएगी।

सरकार के सूत्रों के मुताबिक, नदियों के आसपास निर्माण से पड़ने वाले सभी पहलुओं पर विस्तृत रिपोर्ट को समूह अंतिम रूप दे रहा है। सूत्रों के अनुसार, सरकार नदियों के किनारे चल रही परियोजनाओं को बंद करने के बदले मुआवजा देने को भी तैयार है।

Don't roil the waters

The flood situation in Chennai is now in danger of being politicised, which must be resisted

Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa is known to be a person of few words, but perhaps this was not the occasion to have kept quiet as a catastrophe of such monumental proportions hit Chennai. The prime minister showed the way by going to survey the damage and offering financial assistance but we have heard too little, too late from the chief minister on the situation. There is not much that can be done now to alleviate people's suffering other than to ensure that help reaches the needy and lines of communication are kept open, but it would have been heartening for the beleaguered citizens of Chennai if the chief minister had reached out to them rather than just make a statement on relief. Worse, there is the appalling news that AIADMK supporters have been seen stopping trucks containing relief material and insisting that stickers bearing the image of Jayalalithaa be put on them before they reach the needy.

The AIADMK has a culture of sycophancy but to display it at this time does not reflect well on the chief minister or her administration. In fact, even officials have been reluctant to share information with journalists and others for fear that this will violate the party's dictates. To be fair, the opposition party in the state has extended a helping hand and risen above politics. This is a time when people are hungry for information and the state administration has to be alive to this rather than shut off people in this manner. The chief minister cannot be unaware that she has to lead from the front on this occasion.

There is a pressing need for a new urban plan for the city. Earlier entreaties by civic organisations and environmentalists against the construction of a second runway on a river bed were ignored with negative results. Thanks to the activities of over-zealous party workers, the situation is now in danger of being politicised and this is something that must be firmly resisted by the party leadership. If this becomes yet another political football, as has happened so often during past natural calamities, it will be disastrous, given the extent of suffering and damage that the city has endured and the remarkable courage shown by its citizens in the face of all odds.

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Reconsider building hospital on Yamuna floodplain: activist

- [Akanksha Jain](#)



The Parmanand Blind Relief Hospital is coming up on the Yamuna floodplain near Nigambodh ghat. photo: special arrangement

: Environmental activist Manoj Misra has written to Lieutenant Governor Najeeb Jung and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal requesting them to reconsider the construction of a blind relief hospital on the Yamuna floodplains in Nigambodh ghat area of Yamuna Bazaar.

Citing example of the recent floods in Chennai, where many patients died due to logistical complications from flooding, Mr. Misra wrote that Delhi must ensure that no public utility, especially a hospital, is constructed in an area prone to flooding. "...construction in the active floodplain, of Parmanand Blind Relief Hospital, has been permitted by the DDA. We wonder if any environmental impact assessment or environmental clearance of the project has been taken?" the letter said. Mr. Misra added that the area where the hospital is coming up is inundated during normal floods, and a major flood could prove catastrophic.

"We believe this to be an example of a highly irresponsible land-use permission given by the DDA and we request that this dangerous development be urgently reviewed and the concerned developer be allotted suitable alternate piece of land at a safe location in the city. ...the Nigambodh ghat area is in urgent need of a "redevelopment plan" with its ecological, religious and mythological values kept intact," said the Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan activist.

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Drought debate: Opposition demand goodies for farmers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 7 December

Members of the Lok Sabha today expressed concern over drought situation in the country with the opposition demanding waiver of bank loan and electricity bill for farmers as part of relief measures.

At least two senior members, Jyotiraditya Scindia (Congress) and Trinamul Congress floor leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay demanded that the loans granted to farmers be waived.

Initiating the debate over the issue of drought in the House, Jyotiraditya Scindia also demanded that electricity bills of the farmers should be waived off.

"If you want to learn how to waive off debt, you should learn from our leader Sonia Gandhi," the Congress chief whip said, apparently referring to the 2008 decision of the Congress-led UPA government to give Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief worth Rs 70,000 crore.

About 50 per cent of the country has been hit by drought this year, Scindia said, adding faulty policy on the part of the central government has affected at least 18 states.

"This is the second consecutive year when the country received deficient monsoon," he said. Expressing dismay over the government's policies, Scindia said high prices of food items including pulses coupled with low yield due to drought have broken the back of the farmers.

Targeting the govern-

ment, the Congress leader said it is maintaining silence over the sufferings of farmers.

He was interrupted number of times by BJP members and while countering him the union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh denied that the government is into any paralysis.

"We are not sleeping. We are at work...just because you have been voted out; don't think the government is sleeping," Singh said adding a drought relief of Rs 15,000 crore was announced for Congress-ruled Karnataka.

To this, Scindia said "there is a saying in English 'there is many a slip between the cup and the lip' and suggested that announcements about drought relief made for Karnataka has not been released yet.

"This government has made several announcements but implementation is zero," he accused. He claimed that about 11,700 farmers have committed suicide during the NDA rule.

BJP's Janardan Mishra said there is no need to politicise the plight of farmers affected by drought.

He suggested that the government should call a meeting of state governments and make assessment of the drought situation.

He maintained farmers' suicide can be checked only when there is adequate protection of animals.

"In the past faulty animal husbandry policy was pursued under which jersey cows those lived in cold temperature were brought in

India and made to suffer 45 degree Celsius temperature. This affected milk production," Mishra opined.

To address the problems faced by farmers, TMC leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay said the central government should waive off bank loans extended to farmers.

"The government should rise to the occasion with a transparent outlook... and positive foresightedness," he said and wondered what was the methodology followed in deciding the amount of funds to be released to states by the central government after a natural calamity or drought.

After the visit of a central team to an affected area, the amount is fixed which is "far from reality and truth", he said. "What is the actual process?," he wondered.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is also supposed to discuss the situation of farmers, among other issues, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the TMC leader said.

Noting that no special package has been announced for West Bengal, Bandyopadhyay said the state is facing a huge financial crisis.

The Centre should intervene and the waiver of bank loans extended to farmers should be taken on priority, he added. BJD's B Mahtab said over 50 per cent of the districts are affected by drought and the situation is serious.

"There is agrarian crisis... There is great problem because of drought. Drought is like a slow poison," he noted.

Displaced families count their losses

• [Ramya Kannan](#)



The Hindu

Women line up for food distributed by a private organisation in Kotturpuram, Chennai on Monday, as scenes of devastation are seen all around them. Photo: Shaju John

Situation is ripe for an epidemic, health experts sound warning.

The waters have receded as of now, and people are slowly attempting to return to what is left of their homes in most areas of Chennai. If the skies hold, and further flooding does not occur, then it may be safely assumed that the city has reached the 'post-impact' phase of the disaster.

In a flood scenario like this, a key characteristic of this phase is the [looming spectre of epidemics](#) and the larger question of sustaining relief and rehabilitation work.

Piles of garbage

Piles of garbage have been swept up by the flood waters, sewage has entered the homes and where the flood waters have not yet receded, there is an unbearable stench. In some areas, people have spotted carcasses floating by, and rodents and snakes run riot in abandoned homes. The situation is ripe for an epidemic, if the State is not prepared, public health experts have warned.

[>> 400 more health camps set up](#)

As it is, families are trying to cope with the stress of displacement, and in some cases, with the injuries caused during the floods. A number of people suffered falls, bites, allergies, skin ailments, and electrocution. The poor hygiene and sanitation situation comes as an extra challenge at this stage, even as distribution of relief remains an issue that needs to be addressed simultaneously.

"So far, we have no large-scale incidence of fever and diarrhoea, two conditions that we are expecting at this stage," explains a senior health department official, not ruling out isolated bursts of disease because of contamination of local water sources. The proven protocol in such circumstances is a combination of surveillance and prevention activities, watching out for the outbreak of diseases and ensuring that the factors that contribute to it are removed.

[Click here for full coverage of the Chennai floods](#)

Battered Chennai rises from rubble

Cops shield relief trucks from goons, ‘sticker’ mobs

Chennai: Flood-ravaged Chennai's spirits rose with the sun on Monday as flights took off, trains chugged on and people got back to work. As water receded from many areas, the challenges became clearer — of homeless thousands, the spectre of an epidemic, the urgency to rebuild infrastructure, and rein in the bands of Amma supporters who try to brand the CM's name into relief supplies.

Life is crawling back to normal. Buses plied on Monday without charging commuters. Power supply was restored across the city but for a few patches where electrocution remained a danger. Mobile phones cracked back to life and people were talking long hours sharing woes and exchanging hopes. Forty flights took off from the city, and the airport promised to be back to full-fledged operation by Tuesday.

But volunteers, NGOs and

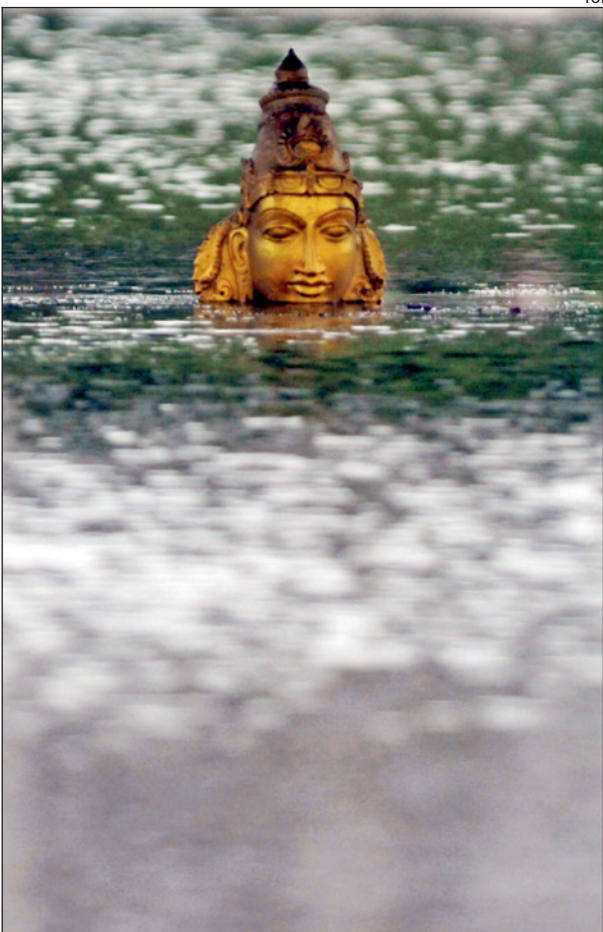
Jaya announces flood relief package

Days after DMK chief Karunanidhi criticised her over flood assistance, Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalithaa on Monday announced a comprehensive relief package for the flood-hit, including 10,000 houses, a dole between Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 as well as compensation for loss of crops and poultry for farmers. A financial assistance of Rs 10,000 for those who lost their huts, allocation of 10,000 tenements besides an aid of Rs 5,000 will be provided to families hit by the deluge, she said. "For families who lost their huts, a flood relief of Rs 10,000, ten kilo rice, a dhoti and saree will be given," she said. Also, for such families, permanent houses will be provided, it said. "Immediately, 10,000 tenements will be allotted in Chennai," she said. For other families hit by the floods, cash assistance of Rs 5,000, ten kilo rice, a dhoti and a saree will be provided, she said.

other organisations mobilising relief for victims have another task on their hands — arranging for police protection. Amid reports of goons and ruling partymen hijacking relief material and branding it with Amma stickers, many in the central and southern districts are asking for cops to accompany trucks.

The district administrations are obliging by deputing two armed reserve police personnel per vehicle.

Retired DSP M Vellingiri



RIVER CHENNAI: The flood of the century turned out a great leveller

TN govt let 30,000 cops sit idle while city sank

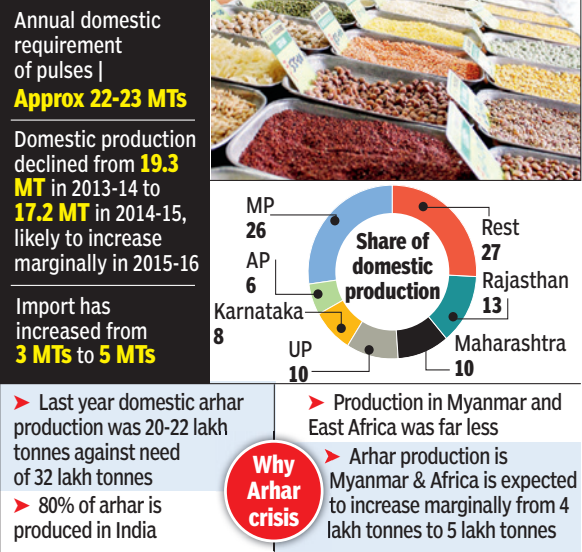
Chennai: Experts call it the single biggest blunder by the Tamil Nadu government, which is battling the Chennai floods. Much of the 1.15 lakh-strong police force remained largely idle over the past fortnight, as the government did not follow the procedures to mobilise police for rescue and relief operations.

While the 28,000-odd cops in Chennai were engaged in regular law and order, crowd control and 'VIP duty', more than 65% of the state force based in districts unaffected by rains was reduced to mere spectators, a retired police officer, who has handled such situations, told TOI.

When a calamity strikes, the state police control room is instantly activated, and a circular is issued to all dis-

Another year of dal crisis looms, govt takes stock

CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION



Dipak.Dash@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Preparing to tide over another year of shortage of pulses, particularly arhar dal that triggered a crisis, private importers have informed government of their intention to import nearly 5.5 million tonnes (MTs) of pulses next year in comparison to about 4.5 MTs in 2015.

The government will also increase import besides carrying out direct procurement from farmers to create stock.

Sources said private importers shared their preparedness with government at a meeting held in commerce ministry on Wednesday. India is the largest importer of pulses because of deficient production back home. The demand supply gap is 3-5 MTs and the trend is likely to continue in 2015-16 though domestic production may increase marginally.

Traders insist the crisis was more acute this year, particularly for arhar, as it was in short supply in the international market. They deny there was much hoarding.

However, officials did not buy this since prices of all pulses, including chana dal and masoor, increased significantly. "The prices started shooting simultaneously. So, to prevent such a situation again, we have to import to create some stock and fix the stock limits," said a government official.

Sources said that government has to prepare for shortage of arhar considering that India produces 80% of arhar. While the demand was 35 lakh tonnes in 2015, domestic production was only 20 lakh tonnes and around 3.5 lakh tonnes was imported by private players. Next year, domestic production may increase marginally to 21 lakh tonnes and import would be around 4.5 lakh tonnes.

Potatoes going for ₹100 a kilo

Chennai: Heavy rain and flooding in the city has affected supply and pushed up prices of meat and some vegetables, with potatoes retailing for Rs 100/kg in some parts of the city on Monday.

Worse, it appeared that some retailers or wholesalers there purchase groceries from were making a killing, with residents reporting that prices were uneven across the city. Potatoes were available for Rs 70/kg in Alwarpet but cost Rs 80/kg in Kodambakkam and Ashok Nagar, and anywhere between that and Rs 100/kg in other parts of the city. The rate of potatoes on online portals, however, was Rs 28/kg. The wholesale rate is also around Rs 20/kg, said V R Soundararajan, advisor to the Koyambedu Wholesale Traders Association.

Doctors' network feels Chennai's pulse, reaches out to cut-off areas

Chennai: Gowri Shankar, fondly known as 'military uncle', has been sick for the past one week, and residents of his apartment complex at Tambaram, one of the worst-affected areas, are unable to help the 73-year-old procure his daily blood pressure medication. This is not an isolated story.

It is to provide treatment to such patients that many doctors, including diabetologists, are forming a network to help provide quality medical assistance to people in inaccessible areas. "Our clinics are yet to see a crowd as many people are still stuck in their houses without access to medical care. So, we doctors have formed teams and are sharing patients and conducting on-



Flood affected people getting medical assistance at a medical camp at Kotturpuram in Chennai on Monday

line consultations. If one of my patients is living in a particular locality and a doctor I know lives nearby, I request him to take a look at the patient and prescribe medicines. This method works as all of us are networking," said diabetologist Dr K Ponvannan.

Health experts are also worried as people with symptoms similar to those of the seasonal flu — like runny nose, sneezing, coughing, eye pain and sore throat —

are consuming random medication available at home. "People should not blindly follow tips doled out on social media platforms as it may result in serious consequences. Randomly consuming medication can have serious side-effects which may be more complicated to treat than the infection itself," said director of public health Dr K Kolandaisamy, adding, "In the current situation, people should be aware of the consequences of self-medication, and must consult doctors or health officials before arriving at a conclusion." He also requested the public to contact the '104' helpline for advice.

An official from diagnostic laboratory chain Lister Metropolis said they were seeing a surge in the number of people coming in for tests.

CBI raids PSU chief in U'khand housing scam

Neeraj.Chauhan@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Cracking the whip on another public sector undertaking, the Central Bureau of Investigation on Sunday evening carried out massive raids on Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCCL) offices, its chairman-cum-managing director Moyukh Bhaduri, other officials of the PSU, and premises of a private company for alleged corruption in a group housing project in Uttarakhand.

CBI sources said several teams swung into action and carried out searches in Delhi, Haryana, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh including HSCCL's head office in Hastings, Kolkata and Bhaduri's premises and recovered incriminating documents.

According to the sources, the CMD is accused of indulging in corrupt practices with some private company(s) for the work of a group housing project in Dehradun, which was given to HSCCL by Mussoorie-Dehradun Development Authority (MDDA).

CBI sources said that HSCCL, being a government undertaking, is given consultancy projects for central and state government projects for infrastructure, steel plants, thermal and hydel power plants and other civil engineering works.

Sources said that MDDA had given the contract for a group housing project to HSCCL in which some private company was favoured leading to losses. CBI officials refused to divulge more details on the contract, its worth and which private company and other officials of HSCCL were involved in the process.

Despite repeated attempts, Bhaduri and other senior officials of HSCCL could not be contacted for their comments but senior officials at the PSU confirmed that CBI teams had carried out raids at CMD's premises and company offices. Bhaduri was appointed CMD of HSCCL on April 2013 for a period of five years. Before becoming the director, he was posted as director (finance) there.

It was not known till Monday evening if any arrests had been made or enquiry was initiated on a complaint given by CVC or it was CBI's independent operation.

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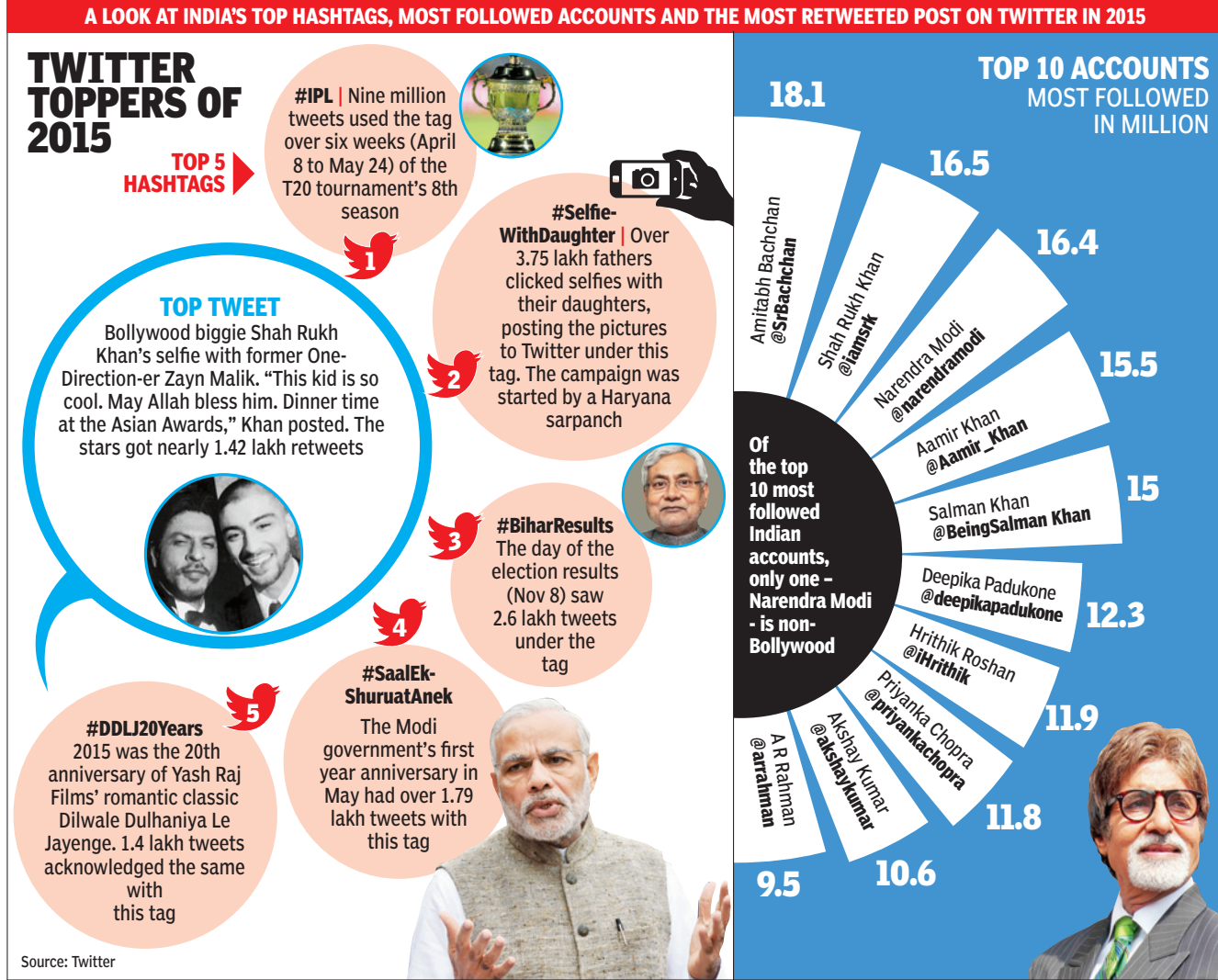
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Mountain of rotting wheat to go dirt cheap

Neel.Kamal@timesgroup.com

Bathinda: Two procurement agencies of Punjab have started the process of disposing damaged wheat stacked in the open on plinths across the state. Punjab Agro Foodgrains Corporation (PAFC) and Markfed have already floated tenders for auction of 1.93 lakh tonnes of the foodgrain, which is not fit for human consumption.

This wheat was procured during 2009-10 to 2012-13. Market value of the stock to be disposed of as per current minimum support price works out to be Rs 294 crore, but it is expected to fetch less than one-third of the amount.

The MSP for 2008-09 was Rs 1,000 per quintal, in 2009-10 Rs 1,080, in 2010-11 Rs 1,100,



These sacks of wheat have been dumped in the open for six years

in 2011-12 Rs 1,120 and in 2012-13 Rs 1,285. Sources said most of the wheat to be disposed of is only fit for industrial use or manure dumping. Wheat under the category of ma-

nure dumping fetches only 10% of the MSP.

In November, TOI had highlighted how wheat stacked in the open plinths near Rampura and Talwandi Sabo in Bathinda was rotting and foul smell emanating from it was causing problems to people living nearby. Now, PAFC has floated tenders to auction 1.46 lakh tonne wheat for the 2008-09 to 2012-13 period. Tenders will be opened on December 22. Markfed has floated tenders to auction 46,597 tonnes and the bids will be opened on December 14.

"Wheat is being allowed to rot, causing huge losses to state exchequer due to absence of scientific storage facilities. Every year during harvesting time, problem of storage crops up. Apart from that laxity of officials is also

responsible for wheat wastage. Money lost by the state government should be recovered from the persons responsible for it," said Narain Dutt, president of Inquilabi Kendra Punjab. Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) general secretary Sukhdev Singh Kokri said wheat should have been distributed among poor before it was allowed to rot.

PAFC managing director Kahan Singh Panu told TOI, "As the wheat is damaged to the extent that it is not fit for human consumption, we got permission from the Union government to auction it. The state government will look into fixing responsibility to recover the losses. The rotten wheat is expected to be sold at nearly one-third of the current MSP."

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Be it developed countries or emerging economies, environmental concerns are subservient to economic shift from the current market-driven system to one oriented towards ecological sustainability can help to



Performers wearing effigies of world leaders. (From left) German Chancellor Angela Merkel, China's President Xi Jinping, US President Barack Obama, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President François Hollande gather for a breakfast organised by Oxfam in the run up to the COP21 Summit in Paris. The menu reads: We wish more ambition at the negotiations table. AFP

Heed the global warning

PRITAM SINGH

❖❖ The institutions will have to at least devise energy-efficiency schemes and individuals will have to abandon the present craze of seeking happiness through acquisition of more and more goods as in consumerist lifestyles. ❖❖

PARIS has been the focus of global attention in the last few days due to terrorist atrocities and is now the focus of attention due to the global climate summit which is taking place there. Global warming caused by global climate change is the single-most important challenge humanity is facing today. It is a far bigger threat to humanity's survival than terrorism. Terrorists can kill only in hundreds or in thousands. Global warming will kill in millions. Political and military establishments have a vested interest in overstating the problem of global terrorism because there is a ring of urgency about it. From the viewpoint of humanity as a whole, what is more important is the threat of global warming. The urgent should not overtake the important.

Global warming is the increase in the average temperature of the earth's near-surface air and oceans. This can be due to natural reasons as well as human social activity. According to the UNO's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the main cause of global warming since the middle of the 20th century is human activity related to fossil fuel burning and deforestation. These human activities lead to increasing greenhouse gas concentrations, which result in trapping the sun's radiation in the earth's atmosphere, leading to warming of the earth. The main greenhouse gases are: Carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O), of which carbon dioxide is the most important.

The high increase in the generation of the greenhouse gases is a product of the manner in which our modern socio-economic system runs and our way of life shaped by this socio-economic system. Our global socio-economic system is governed by the logic of profit-making, reinvestment and continuous increase in economic growth. This logic demands intensified use of resources, especially energy, to carry on expanding production of commodities and services. In order to create expanding demand for this

expanding supply, it needs consumers to spend more and more on goods and services. Burgeoning supermarket malls backed by massive advertisement campaigns to increase sales is one of the most visible signs of the logic of the vicious circle of high demand and high supply aimed at profit maximisation. It is by understanding this logic of the capitalist economic system that one can make sense of the apparently absurd appeal made by George Bush to American citizens after the September 2001 terrorist attack. He had said, "Go shopping". Shopping is viewed as a tool to both increase demand as well as to instil a lifestyle of consumerist "therapy".

The rate at which global warming is taking place is frightening. The year 2015 is likely to be the hottest year since the earth temperature started being recorded in 1850. This is on top of the year 2014 having been the hottest year so far. According to scientific consensus, an average rise of more than 2 degree centigrade will be a tipping point for causing catastrophic and perhaps irreversible changes. An increase of 1 degree has already taken place. The consequences of such global warming will be the melting of ice-caps, rise in sea levels and flooding. Flooding destroys crops and lands, and contributes to food shortages.

Global warming can also lead to water shortages in some areas and even to desertification. This will further contribute to food shortages and deterioration of the sanitation systems. Conflicts over water use and food availability make the world more vulnerable to use of violence in dealing with these conflicts.

Some of the other consequences of global warming are deaths due to rising malaria epidemic, heat strokes and salmonella (food poisoning). According to the projections made by the Global Humanitarian Forum, a think tank set up by the former UN secretary general Kofi Annan, the increasing severe heat waves, floods, storms and forest fires will be responsible for as many as 500,000 deaths a year by 2030. The poverty and displacement caused by these changes will lead to an

unprecedented surge in a new category of refugees, the environmental refugees.

There are two key aspects of dealing with the challenge of global climate change: Mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation means reduction in greenhouse gases emissions, and adaptation means preparing for some of the inevitable consequences of global warming. From a mitigation point of view, research by the Potsdam Institute suggests that average emissions will need to be reduced by at least 60 percent of the 1990 baseline by 2030. This, in fact, means that the developed capitalist economies will have to reduce their emissions by 90 percent by 2030. Meeting this target will require a global agreement between the developed and the developing economies at the Paris summit. This will have implications for governments, institutions and individuals. Governments will have to develop a framework of greater reliance upon renewable sources of energy and a system of incentivising environmentally friendly economic activities and disincentivising environmentally damaging activities. The great environmental ethic of three Rs—reduce, reuse and recycle—should shape our lifestyles rather than the current consumerist lifestyle.

Adaptation systems need to be set up in anticipation of the harmful consequences of global warming that has already taken place. The health systems will need to be upgraded to deal with large-scale deaths of human beings. Rise in animal deaths will pollute water and air and increase the risk of diseases. Flood-control systems need to be developed in advance and resettlement policies need to be in place to accommodate environmental refugees. The developments at the Paris summit will be closely watched to see whether the global leadership rises up to this challenge by hammering out a treaty with legally binding emission-reduction targets or ends up in a disappointing patch-up of escape clauses.

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Violating r

KULDIP SINGH

THE ill-effects of global warming attributed largely to industrialisation, were taken seriously not the first time at the "Earth Summit 1992, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. participating countries resolved to undertake measures to reduce the volume of emissions of greenhouse gases to the level of 1990 by the year 2000.

The Kyoto Protocol of 1997, that became operative in 2005, reiterated the goals: the Rio Summit and fixed the target of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases to the tune of 5.2 per cent from the level of 1990, by the year 2012. It adopted the principle of "common but different responsibility," according to which countries that were prime culprit causing damage to the ecology would contribute more for its mitigation agenda. It was understood that rich industrialised countries would provide modern technology for switching over to cleaner source of energy, which was the key to halting global warming. However, success remained elusive as the volume of greenhouse gases continued to increase and damage to environment in alarming proportion. Such emissions have increased by a 16 per cent from the level of 1990.

We are witness to the reality that 14 of 14 hottest years on record occurred since 2000. Now 2015 is touted to be the hottest year. There is a spread fear of the world bearing the brunt of a rise in temperature beyond 2°C by the end of this century. Scientific evidence suggests that even if the current policies and commitments are implemented there are chances of temperature exceeding beyond the level world is trying to maintain.

After the Paris climate summit, it is time to visualise the reasons for failures of previous efforts since Paris summit is taking place at a time when the first commitment phase of the Kyoto Protocol has ended in 2012. Second phase will continue till 2020 when the new agenda worked out at Paris would take on. Ironically, the Kyoto Protocol which will be replaced by the most comprehensive arrangement based on the principle of justice to be worked out for facing challenges of climate change.

In fact, industrialised countries listed in the Annexure of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) were asked to ensure emission cuts on being legitimately identified as the major culprits. From this, their moral responsibility for the transboundary technology and providing financial and remedial measures. The US refused to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and other industrialised countries followed it by walking away from the regime from which the world had high hopes. Polluters, despite being under obligation to bear the burden, ran away from the responsibility and the rest of the world which were victims did not mean to bear the burden. This was the cardinal factor for the failure of subsequent efforts at Copenhagen in 2009 and the summits that followed.

The industrialised countries have run away from Kyoto Protocol and emerging economies like China and India having refused to accept legally binding emission cuts, there started search for a new climate agenda. In new paradigm, every country is to set its own emission reduction targets and work on remedial measures of its own. Mer