

In last lap, breakthrough on key climate change issue in sight



EXPRESS IN PARIS

AMITABH SINHA
DECEMBER 8

A KEY compromise by developing countries, including India, on one of the finance provisions is in the offing and it could become the turning point at the Paris climate change conference.

It is learnt that developing countries were ready to accommodate a provision in the agreement that would ask them to offer climate finance if they were "in a position to do so" or were "willing to do so". But they would agree to such a provision only if it was a voluntary requirement and if developed countries explicitly pledge to raise at least US\$ 100 billion every year after 2020 as promised.

The developed countries

had, at the 2009 Copenhagen climate conference, said they would "mobilise" \$ 100 billion every year from 2020. Six years on, developed nations have not been able to raise the full amount of the first tranche. As a result, the commitment to raise \$ 100 billion in every subsequent year after that has been under doubt. US negotiators, while repeatedly saying that developed countries will fulfil their commitments in the post-2020 period, have shied away from mentioning the \$ 100 billion figure.

Instead, US and other countries have been pushing for a provision that will also ask developing countries to contribute to climate finance in a "voluntary" manner. Developing countries have so far been rejecting any such proposal, citing the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that mandates a group of 25 rich and industrialised countries only to provide climate finance. Developed countries have been arguing that the need for climate finance was well beyond \$ 100 billion and it would be good if developing

countries also contribute.

Developing countries now agree on the concept of such a provision but are working on the language that would not make it binding for them, like developed nations, to provide finance.

The BASIC grouping of countries, comprising India, China, Brazil and South Africa, Tuesday gave indications that they might agree to such an understanding.

"We will also do our bit (to provide climate finance), bilaterally. China has already helped through south-south cooperation. We have been helping our neighbours. But these are strictly our bilateral and voluntary actions," Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

China's climate change representative Xie Zhenhua agreed with this formulation, saying "the more (the money on offer), the better".

"We would like the scale of climate finance to go further up. We urge developed countries to fulfil their obligation..., while the developing countries, on a voluntary basis, can also contribute...,," Xie said.

1.5 degree Celsius target still on table

AMITABH SINHA
PARIS, DECEMBER 8

THE GOAL to keep earth's rising temperatures to within 1.5 degree Celsius of pre-industrial times, as against 2 degree on which there is greater consensus, got a fresh lease of life Tuesday with the BASIC group of countries saying they had not shut that option out.

At the climate change conference in Paris, the BASIC group, consisting of India, China, Brazil and South Africa, said it was very "mindful" of the concerns of island states and other vulnerable countries, which have been asking for a 1.5 degree target for several years. "This is an issue of concern for them (small island states and others). This is also an issue of concern for Brazil and other BASIC countries. I would like to say that we are actually discussing this matter and I can assure you that

we will come with a joint position on this issue during this conference," said Brazil's Environment Minister Edna Bomo Malewa.

The small island states, which fear being drowned by rising sea levels due to climate change, had met French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, who is presiding over the conference, over the weekend to urge him to get the world to agree on a 1.5 degree target. Fabius had supported the idea.

Currently, there is greater consensus around the 2 degree target among the developed world and larger countries because a 1.5 degree pathway will force them to cut greenhouse gas emissions more sharply and take stricter action to shift to a low-carbon economy. The current negotiating text has both 2 degree and 1.5 degree as options for the global goal. But India has been saying that it would not oppose a 1.5 degree target if a consensus builds around it.

Cuddalore still under water thousands remain cut off

SRUTHISAGAR YAMUNAN
& R. SIVARAMAN

CHENNAI/CUDDALORE: Relief works shifted to the next phase in Chennai with the government focussing on rehabilitation and controlling disease outbreaks, while in Cuddalore, vast tracts remained under water.

The flow of materials to Cuddalore was regulated, but thousands of residents in remote areas, cut off by waters, continued to complain that they were being left out.

In a major respite to the large rural population in Cuddalore, the district administration has restarted the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) with the labour force set to be utilised for unclogging waterways and sanitary work.

However, inundation continued in many parts of the district on Tuesday with about 30,000 persons languishing in relief camps and 1.25 lakh accessing food in 71 government



People load a fishing vessel onto a lorry after a rescue operation at Tiruvottriyur in Chennai. The northern parts of the city have complained of neglect in relief.

— PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

centres. The Hindu had reported on Tuesday about the flooding of close to an estimated 55,000 hectares of cropping land and how the lack of MNREGS works had made the rural population dependent on relief materials.

Senior IAS officer Gagan-deep Singh Bedi, who is overseeing the relief operations in Cuddalore, said officials were instructed to provide work to

at least 200 persons in every habitation. This would help put money in their hands to meet crucial expenses, the IAS officer said.

Officials said levels in all water bodies were under control. On Tuesday, parts of the district received mild rainfall.



All possible administrative and legal options will be explored by the State to ensure the safety of the Mullaperiyar dam.

DOMMEN CHANDY

Chief Minister



explored by the State to ensure the safety of the dam. The government, he added, would constitute an international study team to assess the risks posed by the old dam.

Earlier moving the motion, Ms. Bijimol alleged that the government remained helpless and on the defensive as Tamil Nadu continued to flout dam safety regulations. Revenue Minister Adoor Prakash informed the Assembly that preparations for disaster management were in place.

In the light of the government's explanation, Speaker N. Sakthan denied leave for discussion on the adjournment motion.

'Move NHRC'

Leader of the Opposition V.S. Achuthanandan urged the government to move the National Human Rights Commission against Tamil Nadu's failure to comply with dam safety norms. He said any attempt to raise the permissible water level in the reservoir to 152 ft would inundate large tracts of forestland.

3 spillway shutters lifted

Three spillway shutters of the Mullaperiyar dam were lifted by half a foot at 10 a.m. on Tuesday following a surge in inflow.

The water level was 141.78 ft at 5 p.m. on Tuesday. Against an inflow of 2,600 cusecs, Tamil Nadu drew 2,000 cusecs while 600 cusecs were released into the Idukki reservoir through the Periyar river, a senior official of the Kerala State Electricity Board in charge of the Mullaperiyar dam told *The Hindu*.

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Jaya's compensation an insult, say flood-hit

Anger spilled out after the chief minister on Monday announced financial assistance of Rs 10,000 for those who lost their huts, allocation of 10,000 tenements and an aid of Rs 5,000 for families hit by the deluge.

"The compensation is very meagre. The government should think of the rise in prices and revise the compensation. That would be helpful. Rs 5,000 will not get anything, especially after we have lost all our belongings," said Chennai resident Nagalaksmi. "All our identification cards are gone and if any one creates a problem, we have nothing to show."

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DMK treasurer and former deputy chief minister MK Stalin criticised the compensation announced while visiting flood-

Jaya's compensation an insult, say flood-hit

KV Lakshmana

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa's announcement of ₹5,000 to ₹10,000 in financial assistance for those whose homes have been hit by the state's devastating floods has sparked anger among locals, with many terming it an "insult".

The issue is threatening to snowball into a major political controversy ahead of next year's assembly election with opposition parties including the DMK trying to stoke the people's disappointment to unseat the AIAIDMK government.

Life was limping back to normalcy in Chennai and surrounding areas on Tuesday with rain abating, as focus shifted to relief measures and prevention



■ A boy puts his school books out to dry as floodwaters recede in Chennai. With the rain abating, focus has shifted to prevention of epidemic. AFP

muck and stagnant water.

But people whose dwellings and belongings were wrecked by the deluge expressed their disappointment with the state government's promised compensation, saying it was highly inadequate.

"It is better if the government gives nothing rather than insult us this way," Suthivel Armugam, a 45-year-old farmer from Cuddalore district, told a television channel.

The government should pay a

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compensation of ₹25,000 per acre to farmers if it is serious about taking care of them, he said.

The discontent among the people has been heightened by the fact that many have seen relief coming in from NGOs and individual donors rather than any government agency.

Ramani is a homemaker from Chennai's Ekkaduthangal area, where a clutch of TV channels have their offices which were also inundated, forcing them to suspend telecast for three days.

"The water started coming in and within half an hour our entire house was flooded and belongings submerged," she said. "There was no time for us to react. We just tried to get out. And today, there is nothing at all."

Jaya's

A LINE IN THE WATER

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Curbs on construction on the Ganga must be part of a larger effort to keep alive the river ecosystem

AN INTER-MINISTERIAL GROUP, including Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and Power Minister Piyush Goyal, has decided, in principle, that no new construction would be allowed on the River Ganga or any of its tributaries. The decision, to be conveyed to the Supreme Court on January 20, has been taken to ensure the river's minimum environmental flow and protect the ecosystem that depends on it. This is a welcome move for two reasons. One, it shows the acknowledgement, among policymakers, of the intricate set of factors that must be taken into account to keep alive and rejuvenate a river system like the Ganga. Two, in the past, policymakers have shied away from calling a halt to power projects that clearly threatened delicately balanced and even critically endangered river ecosystems. On this occasion, Bharti has offered to compensate the six hydroelectric power projects (HEPs) to be built on the Alaknanda and Bhagirathi river basins in Uttarakhand, out of the Rs 20,000 crore approved for Namami Gange. The decision revives hope of not only rejuvenating the Ganga, but also of averting tragedies like the Uttarakhand floods in 2013.

The sequence of events that led to the decision, however, illustrates how government departments often work at cross purposes. In the aftermath of the floods, the Supreme Court had prohibited the setting up of any new HEPs in Uttarakhand. In February this year, a four-member committee of the environment ministry evaluating the cluster of six HEPs argued against them. In October, another expert body set up by the environment ministry, which included the Central Water Commission (which comes under the water resources ministry), overturned the first committee's recommendation. And now, yet another five-member committee — this time led by the secretary of the water resources ministry — has reverted to the earlier decision against setting up the HEPs.

A large part of the problem is the lack of adequate information about ecological flows. There is hardly any regulation in this regard and guidelines about what is optimal or desirable are sketchy. There is little in terms of mapping of aquatic fauna. Drawing a line on HEPs is just one element in the effort to arrest the decline. The Centre might also want to relook at other schemes that show more ambition than ecological sense — like the proposed linking of 101 rivers across the country.

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FULL COVERAGE

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असंभव लक्ष्य की ओर जलवायु सम्मेलन

पैरिस Live

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■ **पैरिस :** असंभव लक्ष्य यानी तापमान बढ़ोतरी को डेढ़ डिग्री सेल्सियस तक सीमित रखना। पैरिस जलवायु सम्मेलन ऐसे ही समझौते की तरफ बढ़ रहा है। यह मांग दुनिया के सबसे गरीब और समुद्र द्वीपीय देशों की थी। विकसित देशों ने इसको हवा दी, ताकि चीन व भारत को इन देशों के समूह एलडीसी व ओएसिस से अलग किया जा सके। मंगलवार को पहली बार बेसिक देशों की संयुक्त प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में चीन व भारत ने भी यह कहकर हरी झंडी दिखा दी कि बेसिक देश इस पर विचार कर रहे हैं।

सम्मेलन में एक तरफ दुनिया को तबाही से बचाने की कोशिश है तो दूसरी तरफ अंतरराष्ट्रीय सियासत। राजनीति तबाही से बचाने के उपायों पर भारी है। यही वजह है कि बेसिक देश भी डेढ़ डिग्री पर विचार करने की बात कह रहे हैं। बेसिक समूह में भारत, चीन, दक्षिण अफ्रीका और ब्राजील हैं। इन देशों के पर्यावरण मंत्रियों ने दावा किया कि हम समग्र और कानूनी रूप से बाध्य समझौते के लिए एकमत हैं। बशर्ते समझौता यूएनएफसीसी कन्वेंशन पर आधारित हो। यानी विकसित देश प्रदूषण की अपनी ऐतिहासिक जिम्मेदारी को समझते हुए विकासशील देशों की जरूरतों को पूरा करें।

दो और डेढ़ डिग्री का गणित : जलवायु सम्मेलन में साल 2100 तक तापमान बढ़ोतरी को दो डिग्री से नीचे रखने के लक्ष्यों पर बात होती रही है।



**तापमान बढ़ोतरी को
डेढ़ डिग्री पर रोकने की
कोशिश**

पर वैज्ञानिक आकलन कहते हैं कि अभी दुनिया में कार्बन उत्सर्जन की जो रफ्तार है, उससे यह बढ़ोतरी तीन डिग्री तक पहुंच सकती है। ऐसे में सबसे गरीब और समुद्र किनारे द्वीपीय देशों के समूहों को सबसे ज्यादा खतरा है। वह चाहते हैं कि यह लक्ष्य दो डिग्री से घटाकर डेढ़ डिग्री कर दिया जाए।

असंभव क्यों है डेढ़ डिग्री : सीएसई उपमहानिदेशक चंद्रभूषण का कहना है कि यह झूठा लक्ष्य है। विश्लेषणों से पता चला है कि अब तापमान में 550 मिलियन टन कार्बन का उत्सर्जन हो सकता है। अभी तक डिवेलप और विकासशील देशों ने 2030 तक के लिए कार्बन कटौती के जो लक्ष्य दिए हैं, उन्हें पूरा भी कर दिया जाए, तो 2030 तक 750 मिलियन टन कार्बन उत्सर्जित हो जाएगा। ऐसे में डेढ़ डिग्री की बात करना ही बेमानी है। वहीं जलवायु परिवर्तन के दीर्घकालिक प्रभावों की गणना के लिए भारत आठ क्लाइमेट ऑब्जर्वेटरी स्थापित करेगा।

आज बारिश की उम्मीद, फिर कोहरा करेगा परेशान

■ नगर संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

राजधानी में 12 दिसंबर से तापमान गिरना शुरू हो सकता है। मौसम विभाग ने कहा कि अगले दो दिनों में दिल्ली और आसपास के इलाकों में सुबह के वक्त घना कोहरा छा सकता है। 12 दिसंबर से मिनिमम टेंपरेचर गिरने लगेगा। इसके 8 से 9 डिग्री तक जाने का अनुमान है। बुधवार को हल्की बारिश होने की संभावना है। इससे भी तापमान गिर सकता है। मंगलवार को सफदरजंग में सुबह 7:30 बजे कोहरे की वजह से विजिबिलिटी 300 मीटर तक जा पहुंची। वहीं मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा है कि 12 दिसंबर के बाद घना कोहरा छाने से विजिबिलिटी 100 मीटर तक हो सकती है।

मंगलवार को सफदरजंग में मैक्सिमम टेंपरेचर 26.9 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ, यह नॉर्मल से तीन डिग्री ज्यादा रहा। वहीं मिनिमम टेंपरेचर नॉर्मल से तीन डिग्री ज्यादा के साथ 12 डिग्री रहा। दिल्ली के कुछ इलाकों में सुबह के वक्त तापमान और भी कम दर्ज हुआ। मुगेशपुर में मिनिमम टेंपरेचर 9.4 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ। हवा में मैक्सिमम ह्यूमिडिटी 97 पैसेंट थी। मिनिमम ह्यूमिडिटी 48 पैसेंट रहा। मौसम विभाग ने अपने बुलेटिन में कहा कि बुधवार को आसमान में बादल छाप रह सकते हैं। कुछ जगहों में घना कोहरा छा सकता है। मैक्सिमम टेंपरेचर 26 डिग्री और मिनिमम टेंपरेचर 12 डिग्री रहने का अनुमान है।

मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा कि वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस उत्तर भारत में पहुंच चुका है।



■ 12 दिसंबर के बाद घना कोहरा छाने से विजिबिलिटी 100 मीटर तक हो सकती है

■ वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस उत्तर भारत पहुंचा, इससे पहाड़ी इलाकों में बर्फबारी की संभावना

■ पहाड़ी इलाकों में बर्फबारी से दिल्ली और आसपास के इलाकों में मौसम ठंडा रह सकता है

इससे पहाड़ी इलाकों में बर्फबारी हो सकती है। बर्फबारी होने से मौसम के पैटर्न में बदलाव होगा। पहाड़ी इलाकों में बर्फबारी होने से दिल्ली और आसपास के मैदानी

इलाकों की तरफ उत्तर पश्चिम दिशा से ठंडी हवाएं नमी के साथ पहुंचेंगी। इससे मौसम ठंडा रह सकता है। तापमान भी 12 दिसंबर से गिरने लगेगा। मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा कि दो दिनों के बाद रात के वक्त भी कोहरा छा सकता है। धुंध जैसा माहौल यानी स्मॉग रात के वक्त भी रहने की संभावना है। सुबह और रात के वक्त ठंड और भी बढ़ सकती है। साथ ही इस बार वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस पहले की तुलना में बेहतर तीव्रता का आया है। इसके असर से तापमान गिरने की संभावना है। स्काइमेट के मुताबिक नया वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस 12 दिसंबर से हटने लगेगा। इससे दिल्ली-एनसीआर, उत्तर प्रदेश, पंजाब, हरियाणा के साथ पहाड़ी इलाकों में भी असर पड़ेगा। कोहरा बढ़ने से विजिबिलिटी 100 मीटर तक जा सकती है जिससे ट्रेफिक में समस्या आ सकती है।

Mullaperiyar dam issue: Kerala to approach supreme court



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, 8 December

With the water level at Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala inching towards the supreme court permitted level of 142 feet and Tamil Nadu opening the spillway shutters of the dam without informing Kerala, Kerala government on Tuesday said it would move the Supreme Court soon over the issue.

The state government on Tuesday decided to file a petition in the Supreme Court complaining that reservoir supervisory committee had opened the dam shutters and released water to Periyar river on Monday night without the mandatory 12 hours prior notice to Kerala. Replying to a notice for adjournment motion by E S Bijimol of CPI on the anxiety and fear of the people living near the Mullaperiyar dam, chief minister Oommen chandy told the assembly, though Kerala had informed Tamil Nadu two days ago about the high inflow of water to the dam and wanted it to draw maximum water, their response was lukewarm.

He said the only way before Kerala to solve the issue is to move court. Stating that Tamil Nadu government is not taking into account the condition of the people living near the dam, he said this attitude of Tamil Nadu towards Kerala was unfortunate and condemnable. He further said he would take up this issue with the prime minister during his Delhi visit on 9, 10 December.

As the water level at Mullaperiyar dam was touching the maximum permitted level of 142 feet, eight of its spillway shutters were opened by Tamil Nadu on Monday night without informing Kerala.

These shutters were closed on Tuesday morning after there was a decrease in the water levels. However, three spillways were opened on Tuesday morning following the rise of water level in the dam. Around five houses in areas like Vallakkadavu were inundated, according to sources.

The 120-year-old dam, though situated in Kerala's Idukki district, is owned, maintained and operated by Tamil Nadu.

» TODAY'S PAPER » NATIONAL

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Mullaperiyar safety: Kerala to move Supreme Court against Tamil Nadu

• [T. Nandakumar](#)*Oommen Chandy to seek intervention of Narendra Modi and Uma Bharti on the dam issue*

Water from the Mullaperiyar dam being released through the Erachipalam stream, near Kumily, to the Vaigai reservoir on Monday.

As heavy rain brought the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam closer to the permissible limit of 142 feet, the Kerala government told the Assembly on Tuesday that it was preparing to move the Supreme Court against Tamil Nadu for the failure to comply with dam safety regulations.

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy told the House that the issue would be taken up with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Water Resources Uma Bharti later this week. He was intervening during the discussion on the notice for an adjournment motion moved by E.S. Bijimol and others.

Replying to the motion, State Water Resources Minister P.J. Joseph said the government would file a petition in the Supreme Court pointing out that the dam supervisory committee had opened the spillway shutters to release excess water into the Periyar river on Monday night without observing the operational schedule mandating 12-hour prior notice to Kerala.

Drawing attention to the heavy rain lashing the catchment area, he said a torrential downpour like the one experienced by Chennai recently could pose a danger to the 120-year-old dam.

Mr. Chandy said it was unfortunate that Tamil Nadu had adopted an indifferent attitude to Kerala's request to draw more water from the dam in the light of the rising water level in the reservoir. "Though we had conveyed our anxiety about the safety of the dam, their response was not favourable," he told the House.

In the light of the government's explanation, Speaker N. Sakthianth denied leave for discussion on the adjournment motion.

3 spillway shutters lifted

Three spillway shutters of the Mullaperiyar dam were lifted by half a foot at 10 a.m. on Tuesday following a surge in inflow. The water level was 141.78 ft at 5 p.m. on Tuesday. Against an inflow of 2,600 cusecs, Tamil Nadu drew 2,000 cusecs while 600 cusecs were released into the Idukki reservoir through the Periyar river, a senior official of the Kerala State Electricity Board in charge of the Mullaperiyar dam told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Chandy said it was unfortunate that T.N. had adopted an indifferent attitude to Kerala's request to draw more water from the dam in the light of the rising water level in the reservoir.

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The Times of India**Title : Delay in opening sluice gates caused flooding****Author :****Location :****Chennai****Article Date : 12/09/2015**

The flood that ravaged Chennai last week was not a natural disaster, but one caused by the state bureaucracy's failure to regulate release of water from Chembarambakkam reservoir in the outskirts of the city. Those privy to developments in the state secretariat during the last week of November say that in the wake of international agencies predicting 500mm of rain for Chennai on December 1 and 2, public works department (PWD) officials had advised the secretary and other senior bureaucrats to bring down the water level in the reservoir from 22ft to below 18ft so the lake could absorb heavy inflow four days later.

But the proposal to release lake water was caught in bureaucratic red tape. Sources said the PWD secretary waited for chief secretary's nod to open the sluice gates -and whose nod the chief secretary was waiting for still remains a mystery. In effect, the disaster caused in Punjab by heavy release of water from the Bhakra Nangal dam two years ago was repeated in Chennai.

Orders to open the Chembarambakkam sluice gates -rather flood gates -were not received till the city received was pounded with rain and the reservoir started overflowing. "The state administration maintained that the release from the reservoir into Adyar river was only 33,500 cusecs (cubic feet per second; 1 cubic ft is 28.3 litres of water), which is the maximum capacity of the gates, from December 1 night onwards. But the actual release was more than double that, and nobody has any idea how much it was because water was overflowing from Chembarambakkam after the reservoir reached its full capacity of 24 feet. The problem was compounded as Athannur lake breached, releasing about 5,000 cusecs into the Adyar," said a highly placed source in PWD.

"The city has paid the price for having a bunch of bureaucrats who don't have the guts to act on their own. We were lucky that the reservoir, despite overflowing, did not breach," said an senior official, who was coordinating rescue operations. Madras Institute of Development Studies professor S Janakarajan said the administration should not have viewed Chembarambakkam in isolation. The lake and Adyar river are connected to about 200 tanks, he said. Even if 33,500 cusecs had been released from Chembarambakkam, by the time the water reached Saidapet, it would have swelled to 60,000 cusecs because of additional flow from other water bodies enroute.

The magnitude of the disaster was more as no advisory was issued to people living in low-lying areas, warning them that their homes could get flooded. Chennai police officers were instructed to keep their cell phones switched off (much before phone towers went down) and hence, people in distress could not seek help by reaching out to officials in their locality.

TOI's repeated efforts to get responses from the authorities went in vain. Some pertinent questions that remain unanswered are: Whose orders were the bureaucrats waiting for to open the sluices? Will anybody be held responsible for the lapses? And, at least now, will the government put a standard operating procedure in place to keep reservoirs at safe levels? Will a better system be evolved to warn people living on river banks before gates are opened?



Rahul Gandhi with flood-hit people in Chennai.
For Alive steps, see P 2

The Times of India

Title : 'Glaciers in Everest have shrunk by 28% in 40 years'

Author :

Location :

Beijing:

Article Date : 12/09/2015

Glaciers on Mount Everest, source of major Asian rivers like Brahmaputra, have shrunk by 28% over the past 40 years due to climate change, according to a report.

The glacial shrinkage area is compared to the measurements taken in the 1970s in the report released by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Hunan University of Science and Technology , and Mount Qomolangma Snow Leopard Conservation Centre.

The glacial area on the south slope of the world's highest mountain, in Nepal, has decreased by 26% since the 1980s, the report said.

Part of the report also said Everest, known as Mount Qomolangma in Tibet, has been getting warmer for the past 50 years.

Kang Shichang, a researcher with the State Key Laboratory of Cryospheric Sciences under the CAS, said the data was based on long-term remote sensing and on-site monitoring.

At present, there are 1,476 glaciers in China's Mt Qomolangma national nature reserve, covering 2,030 square kilometres, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The shrinking glaciers have resulted in swelling of glacial lakes and higher river levels downstream, Kang, who has led several glacier inspection teams, said.

Remote sensing data showed that the area of a glacial lake in Mount Everest nature reserve increased from about 100 square kilometres in 1990 to 114 square kilometres in 2013, Kang said.

Mount Everest is the source of a number of major Asian rivers, including Brahmaputra and Ganges.

Earlier in May , a group of international researchers had warned that the estimated 5,500 glaciers in the Hindu KushHimalayan region -site of many of the world's tallest peaks, including Mount Everest - could reduce their volume by 70-99% by 2100, with dire consequences for farming and hydropower generation downstream.



Mount Everest has been getting warmer for the past 50 years, giving rise to glacial lakes and raising river levels downstream, says a report

HT SPOTLIGHT

CHENNAI FLOODS

Chennai limps back to normalcy

MAMMOTH TASK Sanitation workers start cleaning up as fears of disease spreads in area

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CHENNAI: Sanitation workers were facing a mammoth task on Tuesday of cleaning up Chennai and neighbouring areas as mounds of muck and fetid pools of water sparked fears of disease in the aftermath of Tamil Nadu's worst flooding in over a century.

Shops opened shutters in some areas that were limping back to normalcy though the weather office predicted heavy rains in the coastal parts of the state and its capital due to low pressure in the Bay of Bengal.

Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi toured the rain-battered parts of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and urged the state and central governments to be "more responsive" to the people's plight.

"I want to tell the government of Tamil Nadu and the government of India that they need to do a lot more for the people of the state," he said while also distributing relief materials.

"They need to be much more responsive. The people of Tamil Nadu and Chennai are suffering. The state government and the national government need to respond to this and take action as fast as possible," the Congress vice-president said.

Nearly 300 people have died across the southern state since it was hit by unprecedented rain on December 1 that left large sections of Chennai under up to eight feet of water, trapped people on rooftops with no communication and washed away thousands of houses as well as property worth crores.

Though the sun was shining bright for the second consecutive day, stagnant sewage water from choked drains was posing a major health hazard in areas like T Nagar, turning into breeding grounds for mosquitoes and

They need to be much more responsive. The people of Tamil Nadu and Chennai are suffering. The state government and the national government need to respond to this and take action as fast as possible.

RAHUL GANDHI, Congress vice-president



■ Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi meets people affected by floods at Mudichur, Chennai on Tuesday. PTI

other posts.

The city's municipal corporation said 10,000 tonnes of garbage has been removed over the past two days with nearly 30,000 personnel pressed into service.

Many Chennai residents have started returning to their homes as waters receded across the city but educational institutions will remain closed until Wednesday.

Chief minister J Jayalitha announced the government will distribute 2,000 tonnes of bleaching powder and one crore chlorine tablets to people in rain-hit parts of the state, including Chennai, to disinfect affected places and purify drinking water.

The northern district of Cuddalore, however, continued to be badly affected, with rescue teams being rushed there over fears of further damage.

(With agency inputs)

Tamil Nadu economy takes a hit of thousands of crores

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CHENNAI: Chennai's worst floods in recorded history may have sunk business worth thousands of crores of rupees, economists said on Tuesday, as the industry started counting the losses in a city known as the hub of automobile and IT companies.

Tamil Nadu's capital had turned into a virtual water world after the heaviest rainfall in a century led to massive flooding last week in the country's fourth most populous city, termed a "disaster" by Union home minister Rajnath Singh.

Though an exact assessment of the losses are yet to be arrived at, two industry bodies — the CII and ASSOCHAM — have estimated the losses to be in around ₹15,000 crore due to halt in industrial production for nearly a week.

Losses of the MSMEs located in industrial estates could be around ₹1,000 crore.

Sources said that insurance claims by industries for ₹1,500 crore have already been filed and more are in the pipeline.



■ Tamil actor and director Radhakrishnan Parthiban helps people affected by floods at Virugambakkam in Chennai on Tuesday. PTI

Industry watchers and economists expressed doubts over the fate of the ₹2.5 lakh crore investment MoUs that chief minister J Jayalitha announced at the recently held global investors' meet, after the flooding exposed the city's poor infrastructure.

For all the strong factors used to lure Tamil Nadu as an investment destination, the collapse of infrastructure comes as a confidence duster for the investor, said a senior executive of an MNC unwilling to be quoted.

flood diary

COGNIZANT GIVES ₹260 CR FOR FLOOD RELIEF

BENGALURU: Information technology major Cognizant on Tuesday announced that it is committing ₹260 crore (\$40 million) towards the relief of victims of the Chennai floods. Cognizant, which is one of Chennai's largest employers with more than 60,000 employees in 11 facilities, said it will take a multi-pronged approach to support relief and longer-term rehabilitation measures in the city. The \$10 million (\$65 crore) of funding is targeted to help the residents of Chennai through direct grants to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund.

FDDI to get IIT like status; will grant degrees on its own

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NEW DELHI: The students of Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI), who have been campaigning for clarity on the legality of their degrees for some time, will soon have reasons to rejoice.

The Centre, sources said, has drafted a bill that will give the institute the status of "Institute of national importance" similar to the IITs, thus enabling it to grant degrees and diplomas on its own.

"The commerce ministry has circulated the draft bill with the human resource development ministry for its comments and it will be sent to the cabinet for its approval soon," an official said.

The University Grant Commission (UGC) had recently termed its tie up with Rajabhat based Meerut university that granted degrees to its students, illegal.

The UGC directive, which said the Meerut University could not grant degrees to any institute out of its territorial jurisdiction as it was violation of the UGC act, had put the future of thousands of FDDI's students in jeopardy.

The Noida based institute which comes under the administrative control of the commerce ministry runs eight campuses across the country and provides certificates in many courses.

Govt to review UPA decision to cancel land given to RSS affiliates

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NEW DELHI: The Modi government is reviewing a UPA decision to cancel the allotment of land to 29 religious, social and cultural organisations affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on the grounds that rules were not followed.

The Union urban development (UD) ministry this week set up a two-member committee of retired IAS officers — former highways secretary LK Joshi and former urban development secretary M Ramachandran — to review if the decision to cancel the allotments was justified. The committee has to submit its report by March 2016.

Sources said if the committee concluded that the cancellation was not justified, the ministry could seek its revocation by the court where a case is pending on the issue. "A majority of the allottees whose land was cancelled have moved court. So the ministry will have to approach the court for asking a final call once the committee submits its report," a senior government official said.

In 2004, the then UPA government cancelled the allotments based on recommendations by a one-member inquiry committee headed by retired IAS officer

Yogesh Chandra.

The allotments were made between 1998-1999 and September 2004 by the then Atal Behari Vajpayee-led NDA government. The Chandra committee examined some 100 cases of land allotted to various organisations.

In 32 cases, the committee observed the allotments were made "without due regard to the stipulated procedure". The UPA government finally cancelled 29 such allotments including those made to organisations such as Mukherjee Smriti Nyas, Vishwa Samvad Kendra, Dharm Yatra Mahasamgh and Akhil Bhartiya Vamasi Kalyan Ashram.

Soon after the NDA came to power in May 2014, many of the organisations whose allotments were cancelled approached urban development minister M Venkaiah Naidu to review their case.

"Since the matter is in court the ministry sought the opinion of the Attorney General in August on whether it can review, case-by-case, the decision taken by the previous government. Once the AG gave his view that the ministry could review it, the ministry decided to set up a committee," another government official said.

14 killed as speeding train hits SUV at unmanned rly crossing

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RAIPUR: Fourteen people were killed on Monday night when a Bolero at an unmanned railway crossing near Lapanga was rammed by a speeding train about 50 km from Jharkhand's capital Ranchi.

Ranchi police superintendent M Tamliwan confirmed the deaths. The 13025 Howrah-Bhopal express had left Barkakana station around 9.30 pm and was speeding at the unmanned level crossing when a Bolero attempted to cross over. The train rammed into the car, killing all 14 passengers on the spot,

which included seven children, four women and three men. By the time the train driver applied the breaks, the Bolero had been dragged for about a kilometre.

Chief minister Raghubar Das, who expressed shock and condolences, sought a detailed report from the Ranchi administration authorities. He also announced ₹1 lakh as compensation for the surviving family members of each of the deceased.

TRAIN RAMS INTO ANOTHER, 1 KILLED

PALVAL: At least one person was killed and several others injured

when a local train rammed into the Lokmanya Tilak Express in foggy conditions in Haryana's Palwal district on Tuesday morning.

The driver of the local Palwal-Ghorabhad EMU was killed, while the assistant driver of the train and guard of the express train were injured in the mishap.

An earlier report from IANS put the number of injured at around 100. The report also said the injured were admitted to hospitals in Palwal and Faridabad.

There was fog in the morning and the EMU driver probably could not see the signal," Sharma said.

HTC & AGENCIES

NATIONAL

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Parliament to pass resolution on Chennai floods

- [National Bureau](#)



"Parliamentary Affairs Minister M.Venkaiah Naidu suggested the measure and it was heartily supported by all members," said a senior BJP MP.

A resolution expressing solidarity with the people of Tamil Nadu after the Chennai floods is likely to be moved in Parliament where MPs from all parties would be contribution a share of their salary to flood relief efforts. BJP MPs were informed of this at the party's parliamentary group meet and was endorsed by all MPs, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Parliamentary Affairs Minister M.Venkaiah Naidu suggested the measure and it was heartily supported by all members," said a senior MP of the party.

Mr.Modi asked all party MPs to highlight the fact that "no previous government" had given Dalit icon B.R. Ambedkar so much respect as the current regime.

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Schools, colleges to remain closed in Chennai

• Staff Reporter



The Hindu

Heavy rains continue to lash the city, urging officials to keep the schools and colleges shut.

Schools and colleges in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts will remain closed on Monday. The decision was taken by the Collectors of the three districts on account of rain that has continued to lash the city over the weekend.

An official communication from the three district Collector's office was issued to this effect.

Educations institutions will remain closed in Cuddalore, Villupuram and Tiruvannamalai districts too.

In Tuticorin district, a holiday has been declared for Tuticorin Taluk alone, officials said.

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