

# Govt bets on tech-driven farm insurance plan to beat droughts

Zia Haq

■ Zia.haq@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The Narendra Modi-led government has readied an ambitious technology-driven insurance plan to rescue the agriculture sector. With this, the government hopes it will blunt the biggest problem of farmers—the weather.

To roll out the plan, the government consulted US insurance firms and studied models in vogue in several developed economies. The Indian embassy in Washington helped the farm ministry with the plan.

The government currently runs a complex Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS), with its expensive premium but poor returns. Farm insurance has always been hard to sell, with only about 20 per cent of area under cultivation covered under some kind of insurance in



■ The government hopes the new insurance plan will blunt the biggest problem of farmers – the weather.

HT FILE

2014-15 and about 5 per cent of farmers purchasing it in areas where it is available.

The new scheme, likely to come up for Cabinet approval on Wednesday, is meant to be a lot simpler and farmer-friendly, said an official requesting anonymity.

The Radha Mohan Singh-led farm ministry has offered three

key changes for a better deal: uniform premium across the country depending on crop type, cheaper average premium, which means higher subsidy, and bigger compensation. The ministry has proposed an average premium of up to 2.5 per cent for foodgrains and oilseeds crops and 5 per cent for horticulture crops.

**The Times of India**

**Title : Co to be set up for rollout of river cleaning projects**

**Author : Vishwa Mohan**

**Location :**

**New Delhi:**

**Article Date : 01/12/2016**

With the Union cabinet last week deciding to establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to speed up the ongoing clean Ganga mission, the Centre will soon set up a company for implementation of river cleaning projects under the Public Private Partnership mode which will eventually construct and operationalise sewage treatment plants in all 118 towns/cities by 2018.

Principal secretaries of all riparian states and municipal commissioners of big civic bodies will be on the company's board.

There is a possibility that the existing National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) will itself be converted into a company under the Indian Companies Act 2013. The new company will have different verticals to look after different issues like sewage treatment, industrial discharge, river front development and surface cleaning among others. “A final decision will be taken by the committee, headed by the finance minister Arun Jaitley”, said Union water resources secretary Shashi Shekhar.

Asked about the exact roles of the two recently set up high-powered committees, including the one headed by Jaitley, Shekhar said that the first committee, headed by the finance minister, was a subcommittee of the Cabinet. He said any decision which was required to be taken to the Cabinet would first go to this sub-committee so that it would fast-track the decision making process while the second committee (headed by the transport minister Nitin Gadkari and water resources minister Uma Bharti and principal secretary to PM Nripendra Misra as members) would monitor the implementation of all projects.

All stakeholders, including state governments, will be apprised of the entire concept during second 'Ganga Manthan' a day-long brainstorming on the river cleaning and rejuvenation issue early next month.

The water resources ministry has also enlisted seven points as “issues for consideration” including legislation on Ganga and enforcement of polluters pay principle as additional measures for keeping the river clean. These issues will also be discussed during the 'Ganga Manthan' to bring the states on board and let stakeholders know the importance of stringent measures (including penalty) for keeping their rivers clean.

The new company will plan, structure, procure concessionaires and monitor implementation of the projects in a time-bound manner. It will also develop a market where treated water is used by industries, railways, power plants and municipal bodies within a radius of 50km of the sewage treatment plants (STPs).

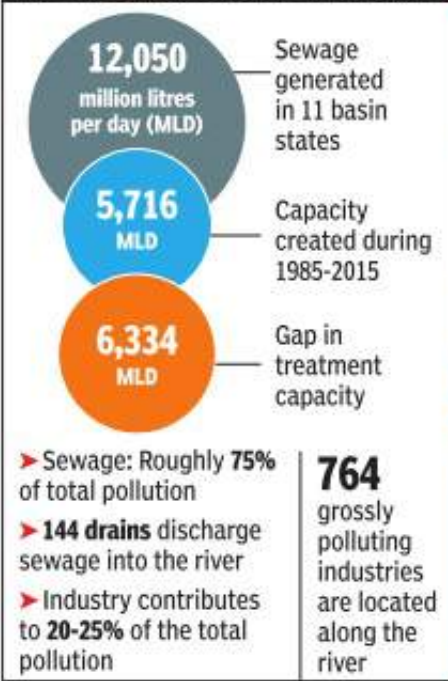
This new model is different from the existing one where the STPs are set up by the Centre and thereafter left for states to operate and maintain through municipal bodies which invariably fail to do their jobs. The old practice had cost the central government over Rs 4,168 crore in the past 30 years without showing any result.

Since it's now a paradigm shift in implementation of the Namami Ganga programme, involving Rs 20,000 crore during 2015-2020, the Centre has come out with a new timeline so that all 118 towns along the Ganga will get functional sewage treatment plants in a phased manner in three years.

For the full report, log on to <http://www.timesofindia.com>

# RIVER SUTRA

## GAP IN SEWAGE TREATMENT CAPACITY



## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- A legislation on Ganga (cleaning and rejuvenation under a central law)
- Constitution of an independent Ganga Authority under the legislation
- Enforcement of 'polluters pay' principle
- Fixing environmental flow for season and location (under the law)
- A binding agreement with states
- Ownership of Ganga river
- Zero discharge of sewage (treated as well as untreated) in Ganga



# Sankey tank shines in a city of polluted, dirty lakes

Naveen Menezes, Bengaluru, Jan 11, 2016, DHNS:



public.

**At a time when clearing sewage from most lakes in Bengaluru remains a challenge for the civic agencies, Sankey tank shows the way. Having earned compliments for its veritable urban biodiversity hotspot, Sankey tank has a spacious park with several amenities for the**

The Sankey tank and park attract more than 2,000 walkers every day. A spacious children's play area, broad walkways on three sides of the lake, chirping sounds of birds and that pleasant greenery bring visitors here. Then, there are 60 ducks, a new addition, and a special section for pigeons.

But that's not all. There is a plan to set up a full-fledged bird shelter given the increasing number of birds around the area, said Ranganath P V, general secretary of Sankey Park Walkers' Association.

Environmentalist Kiran T Kulkarni lauded the association for protecting the lake from losing its age-old glory.

A concrete jogging and walking track around the lake, divided by parallel slabs for flowers plants, is also in the offing. "We have started the work on one side at an estimated cost of Rs 1.1 crore. We will construct it in phases. There is a proposal to construct a bridge to connect all sides of the lake," an official in the Lake Development Authority said. "We are also working to upgrade the waste weir at a cost of Rs 50 lakh, which will prevent flooding and mixing with sewage."

## 'Rich in biodiversity'

Vijay Nishanth of Vruksha, a project that aims at quantifying the biodiversity through a scientific tree census and creating a biodiversity portal, feels the surroundings of Sankey tank are a veritable urban biodiversity hotspot with over 40 species of trees. "We mapped a total of 584 adult trees along with 140 saplings. There are 724 trees around the lake," he said, quoting a recent study.

Harini Nagendra, professor of sustainability at Azim Premji University, said the number of bird nests in the area indicated that it was rich in biodiversity. It has been home to slender loris, which is in the list of endangered animals, she said.

Nishanth, however, flagged a concern: sewage is getting into the lake behind the guesthouse on the western side.

S Krishnappa, Engineer-in-Chief, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), promised that the quality of water would be tested for any contamination.

"Compared to other lakes, this is well-maintained and remains free of sewage. We will definitely test the water to see if sewage has entered the lake," he added.

[Go to Top](#)

E-mail this Page Print this Page Bookmark

Like 1 Tweet 0

3 Comments **Deccan Herald**

Login

Recommend Share

Sort by Best



Join the discussion...

**raghuveer** • 9 hours ago

Sanky was a drinking water lake supplying water to water to bangalore city municipality. It was always clean

• Reply • Share

**knaraya936** • 20 hours ago

The people behind Sankey Tank have shown the way..should it not be possible to replicate their success for other lakes in the Bengaluru area?

## Videos



Man installs CCTV to expose wife



BJP, PDP to mutually decide next J-K...



Dozens killed in Islamic State attacks in...



HIV no bar for kidney transplant

[Subscribe - Deccan Herald's YouTube channel](#)

[more videos](#)

## Most Popular Stories now

Commented

Emailed

Viewed

- 22 more students deported from US
- 'Nobel winner's views on homoeopathy baseless'
- 'Mufflerman' Kejriwal in govt ad irks BJP, Cong
- Inquiry into DDCA affairs illegal: Centre
- Aamir Khan no more India tourism's brand ambassador
- Saudi man ties knot with Russian as per Hindu rituals in Guj
- SC questions practice banning entry of women at Sabarimala

## Photo Gallery



[more](#)



## Art campaign hopes to raise awareness on endangered lakes

Bengaluru, Jan 10, 2016, DHNS:



To raise awareness about the endangered lakes in the City, many artistes, both amateur and professional, came together under one roof on Saturday. They made art works reflecting the state of water bodies and their ecology on the Sankey tank premises.

The campaign, 'Ripples' by Art Matters saw about 100 art students from various colleges such as Karnataka Chitrakala Parishat, Bangalore University and Kala Mandir, among others taking part. They made paintings depicting the present condition of lakes, effects of encroachment and the future course of action.

About 30 professional artists also painted alongside the art students. Shivaprasad K Achar, Convenor, Art Matters, said: "Lakes are the ecosystems which support the urban areas to maintain an ecological balance. It is time to act before things go out of our hand. With regard to this, we held an awareness activity for the first time. We will soon exhibit the paintings made by the students and professional artists among citizens on a public platform."

Film director T S Nagabharana, who presided over the programme, gave away awards to ten selected art students and three professional artists for creating excellent paintings with meaningful messages.

Meanwhile, students and artists who participated with enthusiasm, shared their experience of taking part in the event with a social cause. Neeta M S, a student of Chitrakala Parishat, said that it was a refreshing experience for her.

She said: "Lakes are becoming victims of building encroachment and it is important to protect them for the ecological balance." The painting by Kanthraj, a professional artist, depicting housing on the lakes and also water as a distant dream in the future, grabbed many eyeballs.

[Go to Top](#)

[E-mail this Page](#) [Print this Page](#) [Bookmark](#)

Like 4 Tweet [G+1](#) 0

0 Comments [Deccan Herald](#)

[Recommend](#) [Share](#)

[Login](#)

Sort by Best



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

Weather  
Max: 30°C  
Min: 16°C



In Bengaluru  
Partially cloudy

[Archives](#) | [Jobs](#)



### Videos



Man installs CCTV to expose wife



BJP, PDP to mutually decide next J-K...



Dozens killed in Islamic State attacks in...



HIV no bar for kidney transplant

[Subscribe - Deccan Herald's YouTube channel](#)

[more videos](#)

### Most Popular Stories now

Commented Emailed Viewed

- 22 more students deported from US
- 'Nobel winner's views on homoeopathy baseless'
- 'Mufflerman' Kejriwal in govt ad irks BJP, Cong
- Inquiry into DDCA affairs illegal: Centre
- Aamir Khan no more India tourism's brand ambassador
- Saudi man ties knot with Russian as per Hindu rituals in Guj
- SC questions practice banning entry of women at Sabarimala

### Photo Gallery



Noted singer Hariharan performs in a musical programme 'Hriday Drishyam' at Iqbal Maidan in...

[more](#)

# The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Nation

## Fadnavis red-faced as cheques of aides for drought relief bounce

Published on: Jan 12 2016 1:37AM

**Shiv Kumar**

**Tribune News Service**

**Mumbai, January 11**

Several supporters of Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who queued up to contribute funds to a drought-relief programme, had issued dud cheques, state government officials have admitted.

The matter was brought to light last week when Nawab Malik of the Opposition Nationalist Congress Party pointed out that cheques issued by 32 supporters of the ruling party had bounced. Subsequently it was revealed by the CM's office that more than 100 cheques had bounced.

Some of the cheques were for amounts as low as Rs1,000. Some of the donors even asked their banks to stop payments after handing over the cheques at public functions.

"A lot of people posed for pictures with the Chief Minister while donating the cheques. The cheques were then dishonoured. The state government should file cheating cases against those whose cheques bounced," Malik said.

State government officials said they are getting in touch with donors to get fresh cheques issued. The Maharashtra government had unveiled the Jalyukta Shivar scheme under which water conservation work was taken up in more than 6,000 villages across the state during the last monsoons. Funds for the project were raised from public donations.

### Charity or photo-op?

- The NCP has pointed out that BJP supporters only posed for photos with the CM during the charity event
- The party said cheques given by 32 supporters had bounced, a count that later rose to 100
- Some of the cheques were for as low as Rs 1,000; in some cases, donors told banks to stop payment



You are here: [Home](#) » [City](#) » House committee lays bare neglect, misuse of lakes in City

## House committee lays bare neglect, misuse of lakes in City

Bengaluru, Jan 10, 2016, DHNS:

Some well maintained, while most in bad state, the panel says



The Karnataka Legislative Assembly committee, headed by Congress MLA K B Koliwad, has made several observations regarding the manner in which water bodies have been neglected and misused. This came after the committee visited various lakes in the City.

Details of certain lakes and their conditions are presented here.

Halagevaderahalli Lake, Rajarajeshwari Nagar:

The Halagevaderahalli tank, spread across 17 acres 10 guntas is maintained by BBMP. As much as 6 acres 9 guntas has been encroached upon. While 1 acre 28 guntas has been used for road construction, 4 acres 21 guntas have been encroached. To improve the condition of this live lake, a sum of Rs 1.70 crore has been spent. The committee has expressed its satisfaction over the lake condition. It has also suggested that an STP can be installed here to treat effluents from Vrushabhavati, so as to improve the lake.

Channasandra Lake II, Banasavadi

The committee has noticed demolition of some shops in the lake area. The extent of the lake is 42 acres 38 guntas. Of this, the BDA has formed a layout on 14 acres 27 guntas. Private persons have encroached upon 2 acres 39 guntas. The remaining 25 acres is in possession of brothers Katappa and Ponappa and a case is pending in this regard.

Koudenahalli Lake,  
Ramamurthy Nagar

This live lake has an area of 55 acres 10 guntas and rainwater harvesting is being done here. As much as 34 acres 10 guntas has been encroached. Of this, St Anne's College has encroached upon 10 acres 20 guntas and the matter is pending in court. Other structures include a government primary school, unauthorised houses, layouts and slums. The BBMP is managing the lake. The district authorities have asked for the encroachments to be cleared. Currently, private individuals are maintaining the lake and the committee has expressed its satisfaction over the status.

B Narayanapura Lake, Mahadevpura

The Narayanapura lake was dry when the committee visited it. The lake is spread over 15 acres 6 guntas and 7 acres 5 guntas has been encroached upon. BDA has taken 2 acres 20 guntas for ring road construction. A temple has come up on 25 guntas. There are illegal houses too. Of the encroached area, 1 acre has been reclaimed. The BDA has taken over the lake management. A sum of Rs 1.60 crore has been announced for the improvement of the lake and Rs 1.4 crore has been spent. The lake has not shown any sign of improvement.

Chinnappana Lake, Marathahalli

The lake is spread over 11 acres 34 guntas. Only one acre of the lake area needs to be reclaimed from encroachments. A sum of Rs two crore has been spent for improvement of the lake. Flow of effluents is diverted from the lake. The committee has expressed its satisfaction over the lake maintenance.

Sheelavantana Lake, Marathahalli

The lake extends over 19 acres 32 guntas and has lost 2 acres 37 guntas to encroachments. The cases pertaining to this are pending in court. A good number of developmental works have taken place here. The committee is of the view that suitable action should be taken to improve the lake.

### Videos



Man installs CCTV to expose wife



BJP, PDP to mutually decide next J-K...



Dozens killed in Islamic State attacks in...



HIV no bar for kidney transplant

Subscribe - Deccan Herald's YouTube channel

[more videos](#)

### Most Popular Stories now

Commented Emailed Viewed

- 22 more students deported from US
- 'Nobel winner's views on homoeopathy baseless'
- 'Mufflerman' Kejriwal in govt ad irks BJP, Cong
- Inquiry into DDCA affairs illegal: Centre
- Aamir Khan no more India tourism's brand ambassador
- Saudi man ties knot with Russian as per Hindu rituals in Guj
- SC questions practice banning entry of women at Sabarimala

### Photo Gallery



in performs in a musical

Workers pour [more](#)

**Kaigondanahalli Lake, Marathahalli**

The committee was witness to a well-maintained lake. The lake is spread across 49 acres 7 guntas. Of this, 7 acres which was encroached upon has been retclaimed. Rainwater harvesting is being done here. A sum of Rs 6.63 crore has been spent on improving the lake. The committee has expressed its happiness over its maintenance.

If all the lakes are improved similarly, then City could get back many of its lost lakes, the panel said.

[Go to Top](#)[E-mail this Page](#) [Print this Page](#) [Bookmark](#)Like 0 Tweet G+1 0**0 Comments****Deccan Herald**[Login](#) 1[Recommend](#)[Share](#)[Sort by Best](#) ▼

Be the first to comment.

[Subscribe](#)[Add Disqus to your site](#) [Add Disqus](#) [Add](#)[Privacy](#)[About Us](#) | [News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Supplements](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright 2014, The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd., 75, M.G Road, Post Box 5331, Bengaluru - 560001

Tel: +91 (80) 25880000 Fax No. +91 (80) 25880523