

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

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

P. Mahram
12.3.18
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

Deputy Director (Publication)

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For information of Chairman & Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned.
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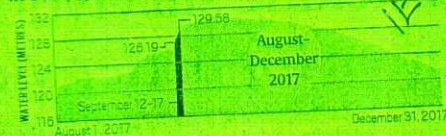
Madhya Pradesh govt released surge of water for Narmada dam inauguration, then shut tap

SOWMIYAASHOK
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2017, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sardar Sarovar Dam in Narmada district's Kevadia, the water level in the reservoir was 129.58 m, just one metre short of the all-time high it has ever reached. It was five weeks before the Gujarat elections.

Official records show the

IN 5 DAYS, WATER LEVEL ROSE BY 3.39 METRES



Source: Narmada Control Authority

high level that day was achieved mainly because BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh released an

unusual amount of water from upstream dams over five days until the inauguration.

In fact, on three of those five days, records show, the rate of flow into the reservoir was five times the limit — 0.3 metres in 48 hours" for initial filling — set by the Central Water Commission (CWC), the apex water regulatory body.

The surge stopped the day of the ceremony (see charts).

While a former chairman of the CWC described the unprecedented release of water over those five days as optics for the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Narmada

inauguration ceremony, officials associated with the dam said it was part of a dam safety exercise and that the timing was just "a coincidence".

Today, with Gujarat staring at a harsh summer, the state government has announced that it will stop supplying water from the dam for irrigation of crops from March 15.

Now consider what official records of the Narmada Control Authority (NCA) show about the unusual surge in flow of water from September 12-17, 2017:

■ Levels swelled by 3.39 m in those five days. In contrast, it took 28 days, from August 1-28, 2017, for the level to rise by about 2 m. It then took 15 days, from August 28-September 12, for the reservoir to swell by 3.24 m.

■ The live storage of the reservoir gained 777 million cubic metres (MCM) of water. MP released 720.8 MCM in this period. Live storage is the portion of water that can be released for irrigation, and supply through power stations.

■ On average, 19,31,400 litres per second flowed into the reservoir, as compared to an average of 3,63,300 litres per second the previous week — a nearly six-fold jump.

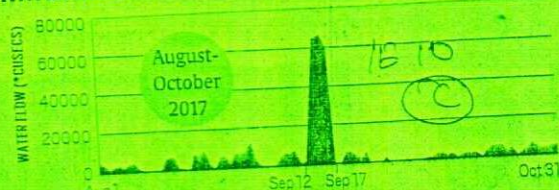
■ The level began declining a week after, touching a peak of 130.75 metres on September 25 — the full reservoir level (FRL) is 138.68 metres.

When contacted, a senior official of the Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited (SSNNL) said the water was released for safety inspections — the first time since the gates were lowered on June 17, 2017.

"Dam safety inspections were necessary by maintaining reservoir levels as per Indian Standard Codal provisions for the first-time filling of the dam and as decided in the 51st meeting of the Sardar Sarovar Reservoir Regulation Committee held on June 27, 2017, in New Delhi," said SSNNL's general manager in-charge (tech and coord) A K Sharma.

"Therefore, Gujarat had requested to release its share of the utilisable water in the Narmada Basin so that testing could be undertaken," he said in an emailed response. The spike is just a coincidence, said

WATER RELEASE FROM MADHYA PRADESH



* Cusec: a unit of flow of water equal to one cubic foot per second

an official of the Narmada Control Authority (NCA), set up to monitor the sharing of Narmada water.

"The dam was filled in accordance with a filling schedule to conduct a dam safety exercise to check inundation levels," said the official, who did not wish to be identified.

Despite repeated attempts by *The Indian Express*, Lal Singh Arya, MP Minister of State for Narmada Valley Development, were not available for comment. Rajneesh Vaish, vice chairman, Narmada Valley Development Corporation, declined comment.

In a statement Friday, Nitin Patel, Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister and in-charge of Narmada, acknowledged that the allocation of the river's water to Gujarat is not linked with what is available in the Sardar Sarovar dam, but on the total available in the entire basin, particularly in MP.

"In the current year, due to installation of gates, the storage of water in Sardar Sarovar dam has increased. However, due to less rainfall, other dams of Madhya Pradesh, like Indirasagar, Bargi, Tawa and other medium-size dams, have witnessed significant reduction of water storage... This clearly indicates that our share of water depends on the storage of water by MP," Patel said.

According to former CWC chief A K Bajaj, the release of water made it appear as if "they (authorities) wanted to show the Prime Minister that there was plenty of water in the reservoir".

Referring to the spike, Bajaj said, "This clearly looks like an effort to increase water levels in the reservoir to FRL (138.68 metres) by a certain targeted date and since both state governments are under the same party, the MP government may

have obliged Gujarat."

The water level in the dam's reservoir is dependent on two factors: upstream release from MP and rainfall in the intermediate catchment area.

Data show that MP and Gujarat registered deficit rainfall in August and September. The upper catchment area of the Narmada in western MP received 173.7 mm in August as against the monthly average of 308.7 mm. East Gujarat received 179.7 mm in August, against an average of 282.7 mm.

In September, western MP received 151.4, against the monthly average of 170.4 mm, and east Gujarat received 67.2 mm, as against the average of 160 mm. More specifically, in the week before the dam's inauguration, there was heavy rainfall only on September 11, as measured as 'spot rainfall' in one upstream dam in MP, with light to moderate rainfall on some days in other locations.

The Sardar Sarovar Dam received an average of 5.32 mm as 'spot rainfall' between September 12-17, 2017. The dam is expected to irrigate 1.8 million hectares in Gujarat benefiting 1 million farmers with a canal network of approximately 75,000 km length within the state.

"The higher the water levels, more area between the sea and the canal level can be irrigated, benefiting more farmers across Gujarat. Compared to other rivers, the area of the main Narmada river is very limited. It is only the side branches and tributaries that can be used effectively for irrigation," said G K Bhat, founder of Taru, an environmental consultancy based in Ahmedabad.



(Clockwise from top) Large tracts of land which were previously submerged have emerged in Antras village; a temple and other structures are now visible; Dulji Rubya Bhil's old house is still under water

Rising... village land, temple, trees

Around where the dam stands, the landscape is changing again as the water levels fall

SATISH JHA

DULJI Rubya Bhil is frail, a thick network of veins running along his arms and legs. Dressed in shorts, and a khaki shirt held together by two buttons, Dulji says he doesn't know his age clearly. "You guess. I was very young and strong when this dam came up and my house got drowned. But life hasn't changed much," he says, sitting in the makeshift tent that serves as his house, on a hilltop in the tribal village of Antras in Narmada district.

The blue tarpaulin canopy of the tent is tattered, exposing his charpoy and other possessions — bundles of firewood and a few utensils, filled with foodgrains, maize and rice, or Narmada water, which he uses to cook and to drink.

Much of Antras village was submerged in the 1990s when the dam came up. Dulji's family was given 10 acres in Makadi village, an hour's drive over the hills, as part of the resettlement package. But while his three sons and two daughters grew up in Makadi, Dulji stayed put in Antras, which is now accessible only by boat from Kevadia, where

the Sardar Sarovar Dam stands. He has not left the village for over two years now. Dulji says he can only remember his elder son's name — "we used to call him Kanti". But he doesn't regret his decision to stay back in Antras. "I like living here. I belong here."

Then, a month ago, came another change. For the first time since the dam was built, the water began receding. Houses and land mass that had gone under water emerged, though not Dulji's old house.

Throughout the four-hour boat journey from Kevadia to Antras, the receding Narmada reveals other such long-hidden 'secrets' — trees, which are now skeletons, temple domes, and forlorn mounds.

Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd (SSNNL) records show that more than 37,000 hectares of land, 13,000 hectares of forest and 12,869 hectares of riverbed and waste land were submerged by the rising waters when the dam came up. More than 250 villages in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat were affected.

At Antras, the Forest Department has engaged around 20 people to chop the dead trees that have emerged. Khetia Nuri Padvi, 45, estimates they have cut "more than 5,000

trees since we began 10 days ago". He is being paid Rs 200 a day. Padvi, who belongs to Donel village, which falls on the other side of the Narmada, in Maharashtra, claims to have seen these trees last when he was a teenager. "Most of these trees are *mahudo* (whose flowers are used to make a local tribal brew)".

In Hafeshwar, a temple now stands halfway up from the water, along with five



Workers at Kevadia, where the Sardar Sarovar Dam stands

smaller domes, and a building nearby. A new Shiva temple had been built in place of this ancient one in the village, located around 80 km Kevadia. In the nearby denuded hills, Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) has been digging for minerals like zinc.

Kamsi M Bhil, 28, remembers going to the old temple, once surrounded by neem trees, as a child. The earthmovers came when he was in Class 6 or 7, he recalls. "Gradually the temple went under."

Boatman Naresh Rathva, a Dungi Bhil tribe from the same village, says the temple emerged around Shivratri, about a month ago. "When the temple top came out, we painted it and put up a flag," he says.

Rathva recalls that when the waters had risen after the dam was built, many villagers had moved, except those who stayed on top of the hills.

Looking at the land that has emerged in his village, Dulji, however, doesn't think those who left will return, including his family. They are used to better facilities like piped drinking water and canals for irrigation at the new places now, he says.

SARDAR SAROVAR DAM

■ Of the 30 major dams, 135 medium dams and about 3,000 minor dams along the 1,312 km of Narmada, only Sardar Sarovar is in Gujarat.

■ While the foundation stone was laid by then PM Jawaharlal Nehru in 1961, construction began in 1987, when the project finally got environmental nod from the Rajiv Gandhi government.

■ The dam inundated 1.12 lakh hectares, the biggest such submergence in the country, displacing about 1.25 lakh people. The World Bank withdrew from the project in 1994, when the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) drew its attention to environmental and rehabilitation issues.

■ The reservoir occupies 37,000 hectares, has a linear stretch of 214 km and an average width of 1.77 km.

■ In June 2014, the Narmada Control Authority approved raising the height of the dam, from 121.92 m to 138.68 m, despite the NBA saying that more villages would be submerged. In September 2017, PM Modi "dedicated the dam to the nation"

■ The Full Reservoir Level of the Sardar Sarovar Dam is currently 138.68 m (455 ft). The Maximum Water Level is 140.21 m, while Minimum Draw Down Level is 110.64 m.

■ This year, the Narmada Control Authority has declared that only 14.66 MAF of the water would be available to the states instead of 28 MAF. Gujarat's share of 4.71 MAF is its lowest ever since 2005-6

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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When a river recedes

With a water crisis looming, Gujarat will soon stop supplying Narmada waters for irrigation. For farmers who depend on the canals that bring water to their fields, that's bad news. **PARIMAL DABHI & AVINASH NAIR** on the uneasy wait for March 15, when the supply will dry up

PHOTOGRAPHS: JAVED RAJA & BHUPENDRA RANA

THE SOIL is flaky, not a good sign, says Bhawansinh Chauhan, sitting on his haunches in his paddy field that lies along the Fatehwadi canal in Goraj village, in Gujarat's Ahmedabad district. The crop is now nearly a metre high, but Chauhan is worried that if the government goes ahead with its "threat" and stops supplying Narmada water to the canal, his entire crop will be ruined.

"I had taken a loan of Rs 9 lakh to sow paddy on my 80 bighas and another loan to buy a tractor. If my crop fails, I will have no option but to sell my land," says Chauhan, 55.

On January 12, long before summer set in, the Gujarat government issued an advertisement saying it would stop supplying Narmada waters to irrigate summer crops, and advised farmers not to sow them.

The reason: a crisis in the Narmada river basin this water year (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018). As a result, Gujarat, which usually gets 9 Million Acre Feet (MAF) from the Narmada river valley annually, has got about 45 per cent less.

According to the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal's final award in 1979, 28 MAF of water from the Narmada river basin can be utilised by the partner states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan every year. This year, however, the Narmada Control Authority, a body set up by the tribunal to manage waters, declared that only 14.66 MAF would be available, a decision made on the basis of rainfall in the months of July, August and September. Gujarat's share of 4.71 MAF is its lowest ever since 2005-6.

According to a senior officer in the state-owned Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd's (SSNNL) Canals Department, only 0.03 MAF of that 4.71 MAF remains for distribution. And the reservoir level is down to a dangerously low 107.1 metres — too low for water to be diverted to the canals.

Farmers in the 18.45-lakh-hectare Narmada Command Area, where the canal network is mandated to take water under the project, are worried. And angry. They accuse the state government of going back on its election promise and say the announcement came too late; many of them had already sown their summer crops.

As on February 26, 2018, over 1.41 lakh hectares in the command area had standing summer crops. The March 15 deadline hangs ominously over these parts.

■■■

Barely months ago, after the radial gates were installed on the Sardar Sarovar Dam, its height went up to 138.68 metres, from the earlier 121.92 metres, increasing the storage in the reservoir by an additional 1.48 MAF.

That should have been good news for the farmers of Gujarat; instead, the water scarcity has meant that the government had to stop supplying Narmada water for irrigation to the districts of Surendranagar, Botad, Morbi and Ahmedabad from February 15, a month ahead of the deadline. Another announcement followed, saying drinking water from Narmada would be provided till July 31.

Though on request from the Gujarat government, Rajasthan and Maharashtra parted with their share of Narmada waters, Madhya Pradesh turned down the request, citing rain deficit in the Narmada basin area.

As an emergency measure, on February 20, the Gujarat government began drawing dead water — water in the reservoir that cannot be drained using the dam's outlets and can only be pumped out — from the Sardar Sarovar dam through the Irrigation By Pass Tunnel (IBPT). IBPT is a component of the dam which was not part of the original project, but was included after the then government headed by Keshubhai Patel moved a proposal to facilitate supply of the dam's 'dead water' to the canals during emergency. Since it was constructed in 2000-1, IBPT has never been used to provide drinking water to Gujarat except on trial. But this year, say SSNNL sources, around 0.3 MAF 'dead water' has already been drawn from the dam.

So how did this crisis come about?

According to the Gujarat government, it is the result of poor rainfall in the catchment areas of the Narmada, around 97 per cent of which falls in Madhya Pradesh. In 2017, Madhya Pradesh received 27.69 per cent less than the average rainfall.

Besides, say SSNNL officials, the state's increased dependence

According to the SSNNL, 10,000 villages and 167 urban centres of Gujarat depend on the Narmada for their drinking water.

Critics, however, blame the government for not using the water judiciously, even accusing it of diverting water to the Sabarmati riverfront, considered a showpiece of the state government. The 11.5-kilometre-long riverfront needs an estimated 1 crore cubic metre of water and a part of this is fed by the Narmada. The water from the riverfront is further diverted to farmers in villages downstream the Sabarmati.

On March 4, the government stopped releasing water to the Sabarmati riverfront, only to restart it a day later after farmers near Sanand, 25 km downstream from the riverfront, protested.

Chauhan, the farmer who owns 80 bighas in Goraj village, was among those who protested. "For over 15 years, the government has been supplying Narmada water to this region by diverting water from the Sabarmati riverfront. Before the elections, BJP leaders had assured us that the supply would not be disrupted and even asked us to go ahead and plant paddy on our fields. How can they now say they will stop water by March 15?" says Chauhan.

Y.K. Alagh, who was executive vice chairman of the Narmada Planning Group that made the Sardar Sarovar Development Plan in the 1980s, says the government shouldn't have released water for the riverfront this year. "Gujarat is a water-scarce state and Narmada is its only major water source. In such a situation, every single drop of water should have been used effectively," he says.

The government has responded by saying that the water has been used judiciously, with Chief Minister Vijay Rupani telling *The Sunday Express*, "This year, owing to less water in the Narmada catchment areas, we have got only around 50 per cent of our usual share. These allegations, that we didn't use water properly, are all baseless. We have not used a single drop of water more than what we used last year. In fact, by increasing the dam height, we could store more water in the dam this year. We will answer any question related to Narmada in the Assembly."

"We have made proper arrangements to make sure that the entire Gujarat gets enough drinking water till July 31. And we are committed to providing Narmada water for irrigation till March 15," he added.

Writing in the government's fortnightly mouthpiece *Gujarat*, SSNNL officer Joshi says, "It's a fact that this year we have got less water. But, in addition to that, it will be a big mistake to believe Narmada as an unlimited and perennial source. And therefore, it is the need of the hour to explore more alternatives of water management, to develop more water storage, and to reuse old water temples like wells and step-wells, to prevent elements who waste water and to optimise use of every single drop of water."

CM Rupani agrees. "Yes, we are highly dependent on Narmada. But, what to do? In Saurashtra, there is no other source (of water)," he says.

■■■

Jatin Patel, 42, is "not very worried" about the March 15 deadline. His three-acre field lies along the Narmada Main Canal, which takes water all the way to Rajasthan, a non-riparian state whose share of 0.50 MAF cannot be turned off, according to the tribunal's order.

So Patel knows his "perennial source of water" will never run dry. "The March 15 deadline will affect only those farmers who have their farms near smaller canals, where the flow of water will be regulated. All of us living near the main canal can continue to draw water illegally," he says, confidently.

Patel has just arrived at his field, riding a motorcycle with a five-litre, yellow carboy filled with diesel fastened to its side. He soon pours the diesel into a running pump that is drawing water from the main canal.

In the absence of sub-canals to bring water from the canal to their fields, farmers such as Patel have for years been drawing water illegally. All along the main canal are PVC pipes that snake their way into the canal, from which water is pumped out.

As he supervises the labourers on his farm, Patel says, "I harvested cotton and, a month ago, planted jowar on my three acres.



These allegations, that we didn't use water properly, are all baseless. We have not used a single drop of water more than what we used last year."

VIJAY RUPANI
GUJARAT CHIEF MINISTER

Hindustan Times
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Centre studying two models for Cauvery water sharing ^{11-DH}

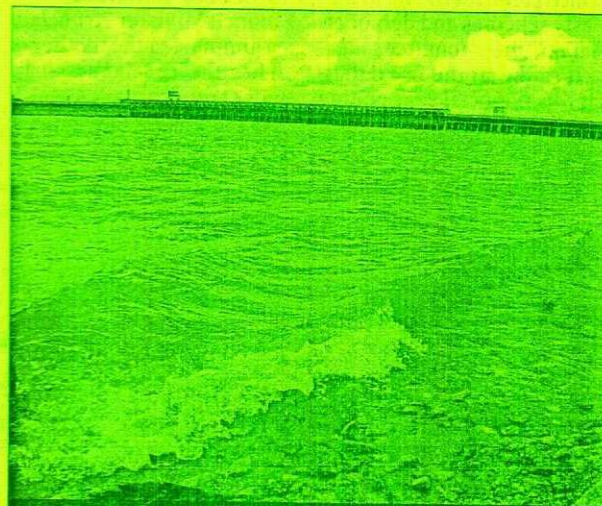
Looks at working of Bhakra Board, Narmada Control Authority

Jith Athrad

NEW DELHI: With the apex court on February 16 asking the Centre to set up a scheme to implement its order on allocation of Cauvery water among riparian states within six weeks, the Centre is studying two models - Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) and the Narmada Control Authority (NCA).

All the Cauvery basin states are suggesting the Centre to allow the respective states to maintain physical assets such as dams and that the scheme should only monitor the release of water from upper riparian states to lower riparian states. The Union Ministry of Water Resources will prepare structure of the scheme after taking the views from the states, Ministry Secretary U.P. Singh told *DH*.

The BBMB is engaged in regulation of water and power supply from the Bhakra



The Supreme Court, on February 16, asked the Centre to set up a scheme to implement its order on allocation of Cauvery water among riparian states within six weeks. *DH* FILE PHOTO

Nangal and Beas projects to Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Chandigarh. The NCA is a body with representatives from Madhya Pradesh, Guja-

rat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and the Centre.

Both the models are slightly different from each other. The BBMB has taken over the assets such as reservoirs where-

as, under the NCA model, the assets continue to be with the respective state governments, but the responsibility of regulation, release and supervision is with the NCA, Singh said.

The Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal had, in the 2007 award, recommended setting up a Cauvery Management Board (CMB) with a chairman, who would be an officer of the chief engineer's rank (with 20 years of experience). The tribunal had said there would be two members (chief engineers with 15 years of experience each) - one from the agriculture department and the other from the water resources department - and a board secretary.

They would be full-time members, the tribunal had said and recommended two part-time engineers from the central government, of the rank of chief engineer, and a commissioner. The four states would also have representations through part-time mem-

bers, it had recommended.

"After taking the views from the states, the Centre will prepare a draft of the scheme and place it before the meeting of the chief ministers of basin states for final approval, he said, adding that the chief ministers' meeting would be convened after the ministry finalises the draft.

The Supreme Court had, on February 16, increased the 270 tmcft share of Cauvery water for Karnataka by 14.75 tmcft and reduced Tamil Nadu's share, while compensating the latter by allowing extraction of 10 tmcft groundwater from the river basin, saying the issue of drinking water had to be placed on a "higher pedestal".

By virtue of the apex court verdict, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry would be annually entitled to 404.25 tmcft, 284.75 tmcft, 30 tmcft and 7 tmcft of Cauvery water respectively out of a total of 740 tmcft.

DH News Service

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DDA blocks 1,000 tonnes of debris from reaching Yamuna

HALTED Since Sept 2017, patrolling along the river bank has prevented over 250 cases of dumping

Joydeep Thakur

joydeep.thakur@ht.com

NEW DELHI: At least 1,000 metric tonnes of construction debris and solid waste would have been dumped on the Yamuna floodplains in the past six months if the security personnel deployed by the Delhi Development Authority to patrol the river hadn't prevented the same.

"Round the clock monitoring of the 25 km stretch between Wazirabad Bridge and Kalindi has not just led to the detection of more than 150 trucks trying to dump construction debris and solid waste, but several attempts of sand mining and withdrawing groundwater from the floodplains to supply some hotels in east Delhi were also thwarted," said a senior official of the DDA's eastern division.

A truck can carry around four to seven metric tonnes of municipal waste and around nine to ten metric tonnes of construction debris. On an average, Delhi produces around 4,000-5,000 metric tonnes of concrete waste and around 10,000 metric tonnes of municipal waste every day.

The DDA had deployed a security agency from September 2017 to patrol both banks of the river on the 25 km stretch on an experimental basis.

More than 250 cases, including encroachment by slum dwellers, sand mining, garbage burning and attempts to dump debris were reported. The police were informed and complaints were lodged.

"While the maximum number of cases detected were those of attempts to dump debris, at least 85 cases of sand mining, 13 cases of encroachments, 10 cases of open garbage burning and six cases of lifting groundwater were also reported. The patrolling teams also spotted at least



Patrolling the Yamuna

■ Number of cases reported



■ The DDA had hired a security agency from September 2017 to patrol both banks of the river on the 25 km stretch on an experimental basis. HT PHOTOS

four dead bodies, which were floating down the river," said PK Bhattacharya, security officer of the agency.

Most of the cases were detected in Kalindi Kunj, Geeta Colony, Batla House and Usmanpur.

"We have received quite a few complaints from the DDA regarding dumping of concrete

debris in the Yamuna. Actions were taken according to the Environment (Protection) Act. The accused people were issued challans," said a senior officer of the Geeta Colony police station.

"Dumping of debris damages the biodiversity of the floodplain and restrict the river's movement, thereby making the banks more vulnerable to floods.

It also restricts the groundwater recharge. There could be contamination of groundwater from the waste too," said AK Gosain, a professor of civil engineering department at IIT Delhi. Gosain was also a member of the committee set up by the NGT to inspect whether there was any damage in the floodplains after the Art of Living's culture festi-

val in 2016.

The National Green Tribunal in a series of orders over the past few years had banned sand mining, dumping debris and garbage burning in the Yamuna floodplains and the river.

Hindustan Times had earlier reported about a road that was built across the river using concrete debris allegedly by sand mafia. The DDA had razed the road and had even found evidence of sand mafia on the riverine island below the metro railway bridge between Yamuna Bank and Indraprastha stations.

In 2013, a committee formed by the NGT had found at least 90,000 cubic metres of debris and other wastes on the banks of the Yamuna.

Later, in 2015, the green court had even pulled up the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and the Central Public Works Department for dumping waste in the river.

"Most of the people we have intercepted over the past few months were daily labourers. We could not ascertain whether the debris belonged to any government construction site or private builders. But those who were illegally lifting groundwater through pumps claimed that they supply water to a few hotels in east Delhi," said Ramesh Singh, in-charge of one of the patrolling teams.

The DDA has also discovered around 200-odd shanties in at least 15-20 places on the 25 km stretch. While a few have already been removed, the rest would be razed later this month.

The private security agency has already approached the DDA so that at least one armed guard could be deployed with each team. At present, each team comprises of five guards who are only armed with batons, a torch and a binocular.

12/3/18

M.P.Chronicle
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Delhi third in 'overexploiting' its groundwater resources

• htreporters@hindustantimes.com

HT FILE PHOTO

The 2016 report had stated that out of the 13,491 million cubic metres of groundwater in Delhi, 10,284 MCM, or 76%, was brackish or saline. The report had recommended that if the saline water resource is utilised after proper treatment then it may cut down the demand for fresh water.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 11/3/18 in the

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The Hindu
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)
Deccan Chronicle
Deccan Herald

M.P. Chronicle
Aaj (Hindi)
Indian Nation
Nai Duniya (Hindi)
The Times of India (A)
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Miffed DMK seeks special session on Cauvery issue

Terms meeting convened by Union Water Resources ministry over the issue an 'eye-wash' M-11

PTI

CHENNAI, 10 MARCH

Opposition DMK today described as an "eye-wash" a meeting convened by Union Water Resources ministry with stakeholder states on Cauvery issue on Friday and called for a special session of Tamil Nadu Assembly to discuss the river water dispute.

DMK Working President and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly M K Stalin wrote to Chief Minister K Palaniswami urging that a special session should be held before the budget session scheduled to start next week, especially in light of "step-motherly attitude by the Centre" shown towards the state on the inter-state dispute involving poll-bound Karnataka.

In his letter, Stalin recalled that he had placed the same demand with Palaniswami

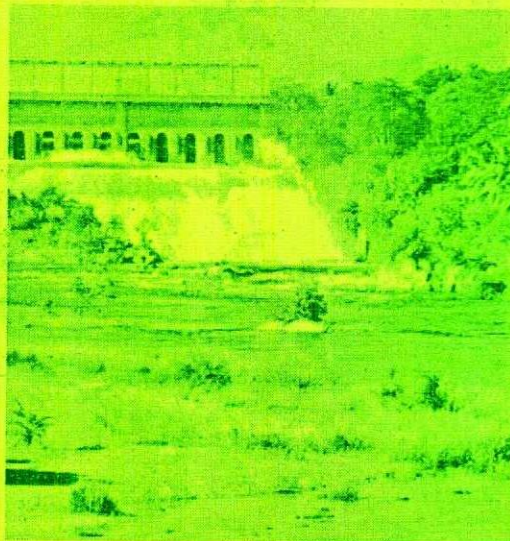
during a meeting between the two on March three in order to reiterate Tamil Nadu's stand on Cauvery.

Tamil Nadu wanted the Centre to constitute the Cauvery Management Board (CMB) as directed by the Supreme Court, which had recently pronounced its verdict on the inter-state dispute involving Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry.

On 22 February, an all party meet chaired by Palaniswami decided that the chief minister will lead a delegation of leaders of all parties, farmers and MPs from the state to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Cauvery issue.

The meet had also resolved to urge Modi to immediately set up the CMB and Cauvery Water Regulatory Authority as per the apex courts order to set up the bodies within six weeks.

In his letter today, Stalin said that while the prime min-



ister was yet to meet the proposed all-party delegation, and that the panel has been asked to meet Union

Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari first, "now only an officials-level meeting an eye-wash drama done

with electoral motives, has been conducted by the Centre," he alleged.

"The Central government has insulted the overall sentiments of Tamil Nadu on this very important issue. The government not willing to meet all-party leaders from Tamil Nadu is against democratic ethos," Stalin said in the letter. He pointed out that three weeks have passed since the Supreme Court verdict, but the Centre "has not come forward to constitute CMB".

He also wanted to know if the state government officials present at yesterday's meeting in New Delhi had "opposed" Water Resources Ministry Secretary U P Singh's remarks that the apex court had in its order not used the words Cauvery Management Board. The Ministry had held the meeting on Friday in New Delhi with officials from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on

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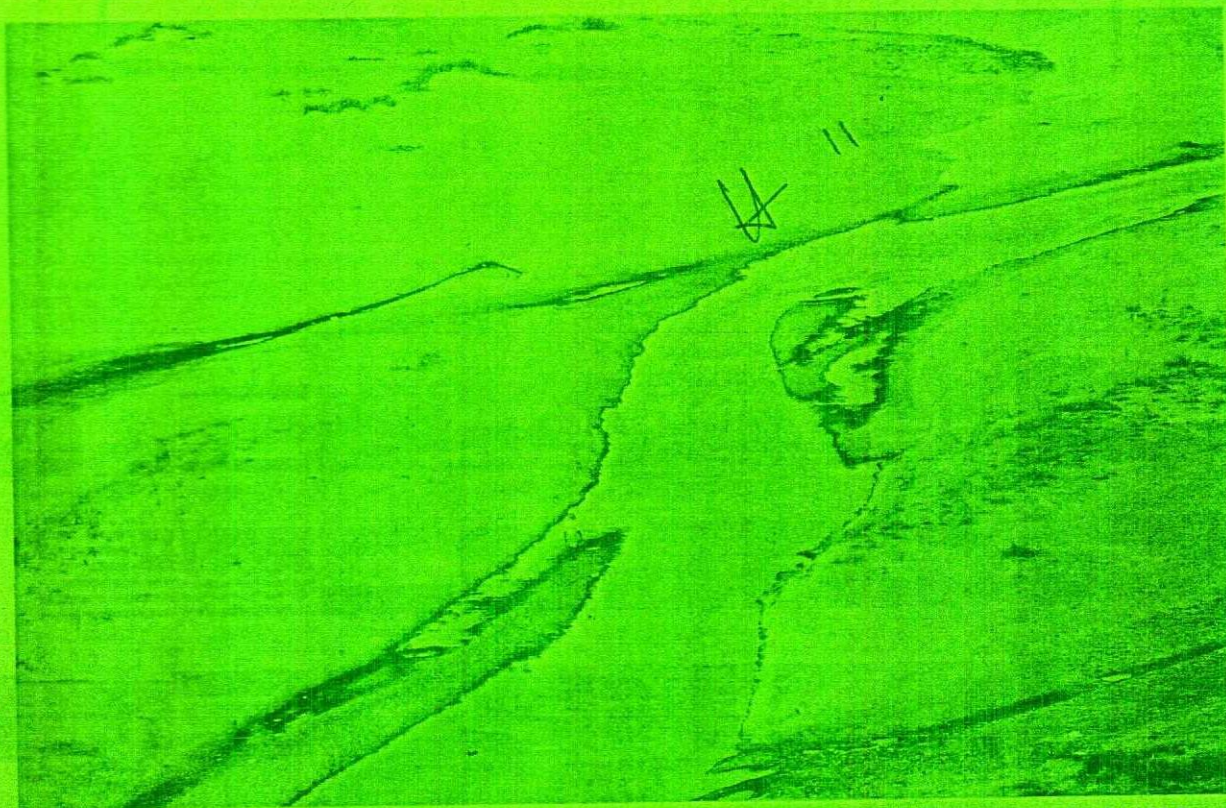
Hindustan Times
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Fast drying up



Shrinking blue: A view of river Bharathapuzha in Palakkad, which dried up early this summer. The mercury has touched 39.5 degrees Celsius in Kerala. ■ K. K. MUSTAFAH

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The micro-irrigation challenge

SRIROOP CHAUDHURI

With the run-up time for this year's assembly polls in several states contracting fast, and stage for the 2019 finals already in sight, the recent Union Budget attempted some ambitious allocations in the agriculture sector. Over Rs 5,000 crore was allocated to micro-irrigation, up by 276 per cent from the UPA-II regime (2009-14) - long overdue in the backdrop of unprecedented crop failure in the past couple of years and burgeoning agrarian unrest with dire socio-economic ramifications.

This was a highly praiseworthy move indeed. Globally, most nations are now increasingly leaning to micro-irrigation-based strategies owing to huge water-energy savings leading to substantial economic gains on input. A 2016 study by Grant Thornton India LLP, in collaboration with the Indian Agricultural Institute (IAI) and FICCI estimated that micro-irrigation can curtail current energy demand in the agriculture sector by about 30 per cent, and on fertilizer expenses by about 28 per cent, besides increasing opportunities of introducing newer crops.

But the million dollar question is, are the aspirations grounded in reality?

As a first reality check, the Thornton report suggests that at the current coverage rate - 0.5 million hectare/annum - it will take another 100 years to provide 'nationwide' micro-irrigation support. Should the government wish to round it up by 2025, current coverage rate should be jacked up to about 2 million hectare/annum, and then keep raising it by at least 20 per cent on a year-on-year basis.

Is this achievable, given our current situation of extreme power-water shortage?

Recent releases of the International Energy Agency (IEA) project intense power shortages in India for coming decades, attributable largely to water shortage. Water is used as a coolant in coal-fired power plants. With at least 19 states

under acute water shortage (affecting livelihoods of 330 million people), functioning of these plants is becoming increasingly challenging, pitting in turn, nation's power supply framework at the very core.

In 2016, there was nationwide loss of over seven billion units of power, as a recent Greenpeace report estimates. Several major power plants were forced to shut down, triggering widespread power supply crises and financial losses. A FICCI report estimated that in 2013, power shortages cost 0.4 per cent of (USD 68 billion). In 2012 there was a loss of about 12,000 MW of power. With hydroelectric capacity strained to the limits due to reduced stream-flow, demand-supply imbalance kept surging owing to constant operation of air-conditioners and irrigation pumps.

Dire electricity crunch - marked by aberrant voltage fluctuations, rampant pilferage (illegal diversions/conversions), lack of proper metering - are already major hitches to irrigation pumping in India, and by the same token, could be greatest obstacles to the aspirations for expanding micro-irrigation in the country.

Farmers tend to keep pumps turned on 24/7. Cases are known where the system has been automated so that pumping resumes as soon as electricity returns. Such actions deplete both electricity and groundwater resources. As water-levels drop owing to aggressive withdrawal, in a vicious negative feedback loop, it demands for irrigation pumps run round the clock to tap deeper reserves, thus straining both power and water sector to the limits. Eco-environmental challenges ensuing from growing dimensions of such water-energy nexus in the irrigation sector assumes added significance with severe drought alert in several states coupled with increasing land degradation-desertification interfering with daily livelihood opportunities of millions.

But apart from these technical challenges, there are policy concerns that need to be sorted out first. For example, micro-



irrigation schemes have repeatedly changed outfits (or been 'subsumed' under multiple schemes) over time - beginning with the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Use of Plastic in Agriculture (1992) and followed by Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program (AIBP, 1996); National Horticulture Mission (2005); Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Micro-Irrigation (2006); Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (2007); National Mission on Micro-Irrigation (NMMI, 2010); National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (2014) and finally to its present form, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) in 2015.

The question is whether amidst merging and re-merging through the years, has the impact of micro-irrigation as a stand-alone programme been 'diluted'? Opinions are emerging that such transitions may have kept us from desired level of capacity building - a dedicated team of professionals skilled/trained specifically to address micro-irrigation related demands (research and development), and/or systems to back it up by necessary IT support. The latter is of utmost importance for having real-time monitoring of transactions and geo-tagging - two key elements for successful implementation of micro-irrigation projects.

Other hindrances include, (1) delays in subsidy disbursement in some states - largely because of approving installation of equipment when the

funds for subsidy aren't yet available, which often causes a shortage of funds, and in turn, delays in subsidy payments and uncertainty for the suppliers of micro-irrigation systems; (2) lack of widespread private financing in micro-irrigation projects (NITI Aayog only began inviting proposals from private sector in 2016); and (3) no 'easy' financing mechanism for farmers to adopt micro-irrigation, where collateral stays within the farmers' means.

The last-mentioned issue raises questions on economic viability. Yet in India, like in many developing countries, micro-irrigation peripherals are quite expensive for the small-holding communities. With effective farm-sizes diminishing and farm output/income depreciating, chances of nationwide adoption of micro-irrigation is limited by financial constraints of potential users. Under the PMKSY, there is now a 60:40 cost-sharing agreement between the government and farmers (90:10 in NE states). But is this enough?

Till now, micro-irrigation has been a tool for wealthier clans and with about 18 per cent GST on supplies, it has become more so in recent times. Moreover, for poorer farmers (small-holder and/or female-farmers or female-headed households), it is still unviable as government schemes and financial assistance programmes barely (if at all) cover re-procurement of equipment in the event of the

sophisticated system becoming obsolete before the stipulated period of next assistance. Added to this is lack in support for maintenance (for example, rodent attack on piping, pore-clogging) and operation.

Another challenge that seeks serious policy intervention is the 'mismatch' between timing of micro-irrigation supports available to the users, and seasonal cropping patterns. Micro-irrigation schemes are yet not operational year-round (available for only five months on average), which means there are likely risks that farmers may miss peak of the cropping season, be unable to enjoy true benefits and thus, gradually become disinterested.

Overall, multidimensional challenges, ranging from negative corollaries between the water and energy sectors to lags in policy framework, tarnish future prospects of expansion of micro-irrigation network in India. Much depends on how best we can turn challenges into opportunities and come up with innovative solutions in the coming years.

Denominators of success may include thorough re-appraisal of farmers' subsidy/credit schemes, especially ones targeted for micro-irrigation; capping central subsidies to states doing well while hiking them for those lagging behind; encourage private financing; increase support staff, both at central and state-level, and jack up IT support (a key propelling force for Haryana, AP, Gujarat and Maharashtra to make them national leaders in micro-irrigation), and make provisions for year-round operational support.

But first and foremost, attempts to subsume micro-irrigation schemes under other agrarian schemes should stop. It is time to realise the need to make micro-irrigation the core of future rural economic growth and developmental paradigms.

The writer is faculty of environmental and geospatial modeling studies and the co-Director of the Center for Environment, Sustainability and Human Development (CESH) at the OP Jindal Global University Sonapat, Haryana.

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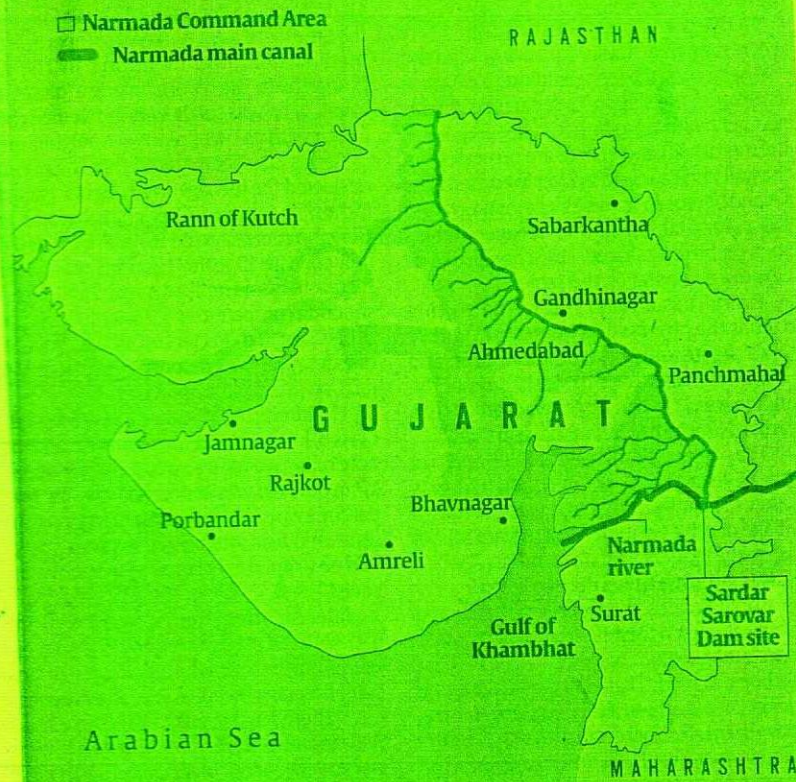
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NARMADA, GUJARAT'S LIFELINE



SHARING THE WATERS

■ In 1979, the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal, set up to determine sharing of the Narmada river waters, ruled that 28 Million Acre Feet (MAF) of water from the river and its basin could be utilised by the four states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. MAF is the volume of water that would cover 1 million acres to a depth of 1 foot

■ The tribunal also pegged the water dependability at 75 per cent, which means that for every 100 years, in 75 of them, the river would be able to provide 28 MAF of water to the four states. This year is one of those 25 bad years

■ Of the 28 MAF, the tribunal awarded 18.25 MAF to Madhya Pradesh, 9 MAF to Gujarat, 0.25 MAF to Maharashtra and 0.50 MAF to Rajasthan. During lean years, the water is to be divided accordingly by the Narmada Control Authority (NCA), a body with representation of all the stakeholders and the Central government

■ This year has seen the lowest availability of water, with NCA pegging it at 14.66 MAF. It beats the previous record low of 19.11 MAF in 2008-9. In the following years, it has been 21.72 MAF in 2009-10 and 22.21 MAF in 2010-11, the leanest years since the NCA was formed

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‘देश में जल ग्रिड का जाल बिछाए जाने की जरूरत’ है-

नई दिल्ली | विशेष संवाददाता

गडकरी बोले 10-3-18

जल संसाधन और गंगा संरक्षण मंत्री नितिन गडकरी ने कहा कि पावरग्रिड की तर्ज पर देश में जल ग्रिड का जाल बिछाने की जरूरत है। भारत में जल संसाधनों की योजना और प्रबंधन का अभाव है। जल ग्रिड का जाल बिछाने के लिए सस्ती वैकल्पिक प्रौद्योगिकी की आवश्यकता है।

गडकरी ने अधिक मोटाई वाले पाइप के इस्तेमाल पर आयोजित अंतरराष्ट्रीय कार्यशाला का उद्घाटन करते हुए कहा कि 25 से 30 फीसदी कृषि क्षेत्र से जुड़े

- जल संसाधनों की योजना और प्रबंधन का अभाव है
- जल ग्रिड के लिए सस्ती वैकल्पिक प्रौद्योगिकी जरूरी

कामगार शहरों की ओर पलायन कर रहे हैं क्योंकि गांवों में सिंचाई संबंधी समस्याओं का समाधान करना पड़ता है। गडकरी ने कहा कि मध्य प्रदेश ने ड्रिप सिंचाई से कृषि क्षेत्र में 23% विकास दर हासिल की है। जबकि राष्ट्रीय औसत महज चार फीसदी है।

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चार लाख हेक्टेयर में होगी सिंचाई नर्मदा-पार्वती-काली सिंध लिंक प्रोजेक्ट का काम जल्द



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12-3-18
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चार चरणों में
पूरा होगा काम

भोपाल. मालवा की दो महत्वपूर्ण नदियों को नर्मदा नदी से लिंक करने वाले दोनों प्रोजेक्ट का काम जल्द शुरू होगा। नर्मदा-पार्वती और नर्मदा-काली सिंध लिंक योजना की प्रशासनिक अनुमतियां हो गई हैं। टेंडर प्रक्रिया इसी महीने पूरी हो जाएगी। अगले दो महीनों में काम शुरू होने की संभावना है। दोनों योजनाओं से मालवा के करीब चार लाख हेक्टेयर में सिंचाई होगी।

प्राधिकरण के अधिकारियों का कहना है कि नर्मदा-पार्वती लिंक प्रोजेक्ट का काम चार चरणों में होगा। नर्मदा-पार्वती लिंक प्रोजेक्ट के पहले दो चरणों का काम 2022 और तीसरे व चौथे चरण का काम 2024 में पूरा करने का लक्ष्य है।

यह प्रोजेक्ट चार चरण में पूरा किया जाएगा। पहले दो चरणों की पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति, प्रशासकीय स्वीकृति सहित अन्य आवश्यक मंजूरीयां मिल गई हैं। पहले चरण की 3415 और दूसरे पर 4131 करोड़ रुपए की डीपीआर तैयार की गई है। पहले दो चरणों में दो लाख हेक्टेयर में सिंचाई होगी। इस प्रोजेक्ट के पूरा होने पर दो लाख हेक्टेयर क्षेत्र में सिंचाई होगी। इसके पहले चरण की 3490 और दूसरे चरण की 4407 करोड़ रुपए की डीपीआर तैयार की गई है।

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कावेरी मसले पर हित का ध्यान रखेंगे: सीएम

सचिवालय में हुई आपात बैठक

चेन्नई. मुख्यमंत्री एडपाडी के. पलनीस्वामी ने शनिवार को स्पष्ट कर दिया कि कावेरी नदी के जल को लेकर तमिलनाडु के अधिकारों को सुनिश्चित करने में कोई कसर बाकी नहीं रखी जाएगी। राज्य के हक के संरक्षण के लिए हरसंभव उपाय किए जाएंगे।

नई दिल्ली में शुक्रवार को कावेरी बेसिन के राज्यों के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों की बैठक हुई। इस

बैठक में कावेरी प्रबंधन बोर्ड को लेकर संशय की स्थिति थी लेकिन राज्यों ने निगरानी व्यवस्था को लेकर सहमति दिखाई थी। तमिलनाडु कावेरी बोर्ड के गठन की मांग कर रहा है। दिल्ली की बैठक के बाद सीएम पलनीस्वामी ने उच्चस्तरीय अधिकारियों से इस मसले पर विचार-विमर्श किया।

मुख्यमंत्री ने एक वक्तव्य में कहा तमिलनाडु के सांसद नई दिल्ली में कावेरी प्रबंधन बोर्ड की मांग को लेकर विरोध प्रदर्शन कर रहे हैं। सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने हाल में आदेश दिया

था कि केंद्र सरकार सीएमबी का गठन करे। उसके पास इसके अलावा अन्य कोई विकल्प शेष नहीं है।

सीएम ने केंद्र सरकार को सीएमबी को लेकर इशारा किया कि शीर्ष अदालत ने अपने अंतिम फैसले में इसके गठन के आदेश दे दिए हैं और अब इस बारे में सोचने के लिए कुछ शेष नहीं है। उनका यह बयान उस वक्त आया है जब कर्नाटक ने नई दिल्ली में हुई बैठक में सीएमबी के गठन को लेकर असहमति जताई।

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बुन्देलखण्ड में पानी का संकट... गड्ढा खोद कर बुझा रहे अपनी प्यास



पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क

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हमीरपुर। गर्मी के दस्तक देते ही बुन्देलखण्ड में पीने के पानी के लिए मारामारी शुरू हो जाती है, और यह सिलसिला आदिकाल से लेकर अब तक चला आ रहा है। सरकारें आती हैं और चली जाती हैं, बुन्देलखण्ड में पेयजल समस्या से निपटने के लिए तमाम घोषणाएं भी की जाती रही हैं और अब भी की जा रही हैं, लेकिन यह समस्या जस की तस बनी हुई है, और गर्मी आते ही मुंह खोल कर खड़ी हो जाती है।

तस्वीरें हमीरपुर में मोदहा ब्लाक क्षेत्र के नायकपुरवा की हैं, पांच

हजार की आबादी वाले इस गांव में पीने के पानी की समस्या खड़ी हो गई है, और इसी से ऊब कर लोग बाल्टी डब्बा और घड़ा लेकर सड़कों पर उतर आये हैं, और पानी की मांग को लेकर सड़क जाम कर दिया है, इनका कहना है कि जब तक प्रशासन का कोई नुमाइंदा यहां पहुंच कर लिखित रूप से इनकी समस्या का निदान नहीं करता, यह प्रदर्शन जारी रहेगा। प्रदर्शन कर रहे इन लोगों का कहना है, पेयजल समस्या से निपटने के लिए एक साल पहले ही पांच करोड़ चालीस लाख रुपया पास हो चुका था, लेकिन काम अभी तक नहीं हुआ, यहां के लोग सूखी हुई इस नदी की तलहटी में गड्ढा खोद कर पानी निकालते हैं और अपने गले को तर करने के लिए मजबूर हैं, अब प्रशासन का कोई नुमाइंदा यहां आये और बताये की यह काम कब शुरू होगा।

41 त्रिका - 11-3-18