

News item/letter/article/editorial published on April 12, 2017 in the

Hindustan Times  
Statesman  
The Times of India (H.D.)  
Indian Express  
Tribune  
Hindustan (Hindi)

Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)  
Punjab Keshari (Hindi)  
The Hindu  
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)  
Deccan Chronicle  
Deccan Herald

M.F. Chronicle  
Aaj (Hindi)  
Indian Nation  
Nai Duniya (Hindi)  
The Times of India (A)  
Elite

and documented at Bhagirthi (English) & Publicity Section, CWC

# Punjab ignoring natural justice on SYL

12 April - T

C.B. SINGH SHEORAN

## ARYANA'S CASE

Punjab is disputing river water that is not collected on its territory while being reckless with its own ground water, which is also not being counted in the total resource availability.

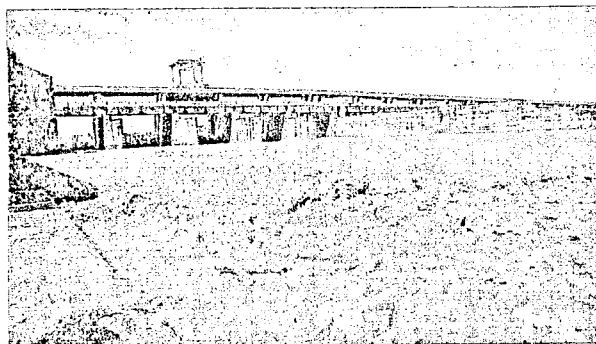
THE stand and contention of Punjab on the quantum of surplus waters of the Ravi and Beas and completion of the SYL channel in its territory suffers from fallacies on at least two counts — the international law of riparian rights and placing the Yamuna waters allocated to Haryana in the common pool for distribution.

The most repeated claim of riparian rights is hollow. These are applicable to sovereign states such as India or Pakistan. Geographical units carved out on administrative and political grounds within a sovereign state, such as Punjab, Haryana, or Himachal Pradesh, cannot claim such rights. Had there been rights in accordance with the claim of Punjab, then Himachal would have been the first riparian state, and thus could dictate terms to all downstream. Had that state been able to effect consumptive use of all water of all three eastern rivers, what would have been the fate and stand of Punjab?

Out of the 56,980 sq km of the total catchment area of the Sutlej 37,700 sq km falls in Tibet under China and only 19,280 sq km lies in Himachal, and even the Bhakra reservoir is located within that state.

Punjab politicians have been declaring that the state will not share even a drop. But Haryana is not seeking any drop that falls on the land of Punjab, rather it is seeking its share in the drops and ice flakes that fall on land outside Punjab. Punjab is not even able to harvest all water that falls in its own territory, and some of it flows to Pakistan. Had Punjab linked the Sutlej with the Ghaggar, as was done by Ferozeshah Tughlaq in the 14th century, Haryana would have received some of the water.

As for the Yamuna waters, the quantum of allocation is irrelevant till the completion of the construction of three storage reservoirs/dams, all beyond the reach of Haryana, namely the Lakhwar-Vyasi, Renuka and Kishau. The work has been going on at a snail's pace. Haryana utilises the Yamuna waters to the full extent possi-



**GOING WASTE:** The Hathnikund barrage in Yamunanagar. (Right) Agitators gather in Ambala to march towards the Haryana-Punjab border at Shambhu on the SYL issue. PTI

ble during monsoon, but that is a very short period. So the allocated share of Haryana, which Punjab wants to be included in the common pool, is an illusion.

The Haryana area of the then Punjab had developed in anticipation infrastructure for the utilisation all of Yamuna waters well before the Reorganisation of Punjab in 1966, rather in the pre-Partition era under the WJC Extension Projects. It is that very system which is at present being used; through which Bhakra water is taken to the Yamuna command area during emergencies.

The dispute is on the distribution of only surplus water, and not on the total 33 MAF water of the three eastern rivers. Similarly, there cannot be any dispute on the Yamuna, where no surplus water is available. To drag this river into the conflict does not bear logic.

So far only surface water has dominated the scene, but the picture would not be clear if ground water availability is overlooked. According to the CGWB figures, Punjab has an annually replenishable ground-water reservoir of more than 16 MAF whereas in Haryana it is less than 8 MAF. Unfortunately, there is overdraft in both states. In Punjab the draft is 28.25 MAF, where 12.75 lakh electric pumping

(EP) sets and 1.5 lakh diesel pumping (DP) sets have been installed, that is, one tube-well for every five-acre holding. In Haryana, the draft is more than 10.50 MAF with about 4 lakh EP sets, majority being on shallow wells; and 2.5 DP sets. The strange thing is that the rate of average annual fall in water table is only 4 ft in Punjab, whereas that in Haryana is 26 ft!

The tragedy with Haryana is that on the one hand Punjab is denying it utilisation of the water that goes waste during monsoon, and on the other hand Rajasthan has unilaterally blocked the three rivers, namely Sahibi, Krishanawati and Dohan, which had been recharging south Haryana's ground water reservoir. Consequently, south Haryana is facing acute shortage of even drinking water and tube-wells as deep as 1,200 ft have been installed.

Punjab has failed in enhancing its ground-water reservoir, notwithstanding the three perennial rivers flowing through it. The recharging could have been easily done by constructing inundation canals and other structures like reverse wells.

A glance at alignments on the map would reveal that for feeding central and south Haryana, the Anandpur Sahib Hydrel Channel (ASHC)-SYL route is

## Unfair considerations

- Punjab receives its river waters from Himachal, so the riparian rights claim is hollow.
- The Yamuna waters quantum is irrelevant till structures to utilise it are not completed, and these are outside Haryana.
- Punjab is denying Haryana water that goes waste during monsoon.
- The picture cannot be complete if ground-water availability is overlooked. Punjab has far more ground-water recharge, and its farmers prefer tubewell.
- If decreased quantum of surplus water is kept in mind, then Haryana's share comes to 2.95 MAF, out of which approximately 1.62 MAF is being drawn. Punjab is disputing only 1.33 MAF, which if delivered will enable Haryana to utilise the whole 2.95 MAF in an equitable manner.



comparatively shorter than the existing Nangal Hydrel Channel (NHC)-Bhakra Main Line (BML)-Narwana Branch (NB)-Narwana Branch Karnal Link (NBKL). For Haryana, thus, the importance of SYL is twofold. First, it would efficiently carry Sutlej waters equivalent to Haryana's share in the surplus Ravi-Beas waters. Second, it is an alternative route to carry Bhakra water under such circumstances as occurrence of a mishap on any segment of the NHC-BML-NB-NBKL system. Both of these can be run simultaneously as well to carry the Sutlej-Beas waters whenever it is in excess of storage at Bhakra, and which is not divertible to the Sirhind Feeder, Rajasthan Canal and the Gang Canal taking off at Harike Patan Barrage near Ferozepur. The water

thus carried would be useful in recharging the hugely depleted ground water reservoir of south Haryana.

Surveys on the utilisation pattern of canal water in Punjab have indicated that whatever may be the official contention, the fact is that its farmers prefer tube-well irrigation for two obvious reasons. One, they do not have to wait for their weekly 'wari' (turn) according to the 'warabandi para' (turn-fixing sheet) for canal water. Two, the electricity is free, so they just have to switch on the button according to their convenience. In some areas even watercourses do not exist to carry canal water from the outlets installed on distributaries. The maximum water requirement in Punjab is during paddy plantation; after that only nominal quantum is needed. But Haryana is always in need, even during monsoon, as the average annual rainfall in its southern tract is only 300 mm.

It is also true that the quantum of surplus water has decreased over the years and as per the 1981-2013 flow series the available surplus volume is only 13.38 MAF, instead of previously estimated figures of 15.85 MAF and 17.17 MAF. Keeping this in view, Haryana's share on pro rata basis comes out to about 2.95 MAF, out of which approximately 1.62 MAF is being drawn through the existing system. The hue and cry by Punjab is for only 1.33 MAF, which if delivered will enable Haryana to utilise the whole 2.95 MAF in an equitable manner.

Punjab should heed the observation of Supreme Court that the issue of quantum should not be made a pre-condition in making the SYL functional. By doing so, Punjab would get at least two direct benefits. First, it would generate employment potential for Punjabis at the cost of Haryana. Second, the 122 km-long channel would act as a recharging water body without incurring any expenditure for the state.

*The writer is a retired Chief Engineer of the Irrigation Department, Haryana, and author of "Dynamic Story of the Bhakra".*

News item/letter/article/editorial published on April-12-2017 in the

Hindustan Times  
Statesman  
The Times of India (N.D.)  
Indian Express  
Tribune  
Hindustan (Hindi)

Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)  
Punjab Keshari (Hindi)  
The Hindu  
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)  
Deccan Chronicle  
Deccan Herald

M.P.Chronicle  
A a j (Hindi)  
Indian Nation  
Nai Duniya (Hindi)  
The Times of India (A)  
Blitz

and documented at Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section, CWC.

## नर्मदा को जीवित व्यक्ति का दर्जा दिए जाने की मांग पर सरकार को छह सप्ताह की मोहलत

April-12-2017

जबलपुर, (वार्ता): मध्यप्रदेश उच्च न्यायालय ने नर्मदा नदी को जीवित व्यक्ति का दर्जा दिए जाने की मांग को लेकर दायर जनहित याचिका पर राज्य सरकार को छह सप्ताह के अंदर जवाब प्रस्तुत करने के आदेश दिए हैं। उच्च न्यायालय के मुख्य न्यायाधीश हेमंत गुप्ता और न्यायाधीश सुजल पॉल की युगलपीठ ने याचिकाकर्ता मुकेश जैन की याचिका पर सुनवाई के दौरान राज्य सरकार की ओर से समय प्रदान करने के आग्रह को स्वीकार करते हुए यह आदेश दिए हैं।

याचिका में बताया गया है कि नर्मदा नदी अमरकंटक से निकलकर गुजरात के भारूच तक कुल 1312 का सफर तय करती है। प्रदेश में इस नदी के 70 प्रतिशत जल के साथ कई जिलों में पेयजल की सप्लाई भी होती है। इतना ही नहीं लगभग 4 हजार मैगावॉट हाईड्रो बिजली का उत्पादन नर्मदा जल से होता है। नर्मदा प्रदेश की जीवनप्रदायनी नदी है। यह नदी हिन्दुओं

की आस्था का केन्द्र है। याचिका में बताया गया है कि अवैध रेत उत्खनन से नदी के जलीय जंतु की मौत हो रही है। डेरियों से निकलने वाले अवशेष नदी में मिल रहे हैं, जिसके कारण जल प्रदूषित हो रहा है। अझोला जैसी खतरनाक खरपतवार नदी में तेजी से बढ़ रही है। जिसके कारण नदी में जल प्रदूषण की मात्रा बढ़ रही। इसका अस्तित्व खतरे में आता जा रहा है। नदी किराने लगे उद्योगों से निकलने वाले दूषित केमिकल वाले अवशेष को भी नदी में छोड़ा जा रहा है।

याचिका में मांग की गयी है कि नर्मदा नदी को लिविंग एन्टिटी को दर्जा देते हुए उसके किनारे परिक्रमा पथ का निर्माण और परिक्रमा पथ के किनारे पौधा व जड़ी-बूटी की नर्सरी स्थापित की जाये। नर्मदा नदी के किनारे शराब और नशीले पदार्थ पर प्रतिबंध लगाने के साथ ही नर्मदा नदी के संरक्षण के लिए नर्मदा मैनेजमेंट कमेटी का गठन किया जाये।