

गंगा पर पावर प्रोजेक्ट्स को मंजूरी से उमा नाखुश

■ प्रमुख संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

जल संसाधन मंत्री उमा भारती के ऐतराज के बावजूद पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने गंगा पर पांच हाइड्रो पावर प्रोजेक्ट्स के लिए मंजूरी दे दी है। इस फैसले से उमा भारती नाखुश बताई जा रही हैं। गौरतलब है कि इस मसले पर वह पर्यावरण मंत्री प्रकाश जावड़ेकर को मेल भी भेज चुकी हैं। पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने इन प्रोजेक्ट्स को मंजूरी देने की बात सुप्रीम कोर्ट में दिए गए एक हलफनामे के जरिए जाहिर की है। कोर्ट ने उत्तराखंड में 2013 में हुई तबाही के बाद गंगा पर प्रस्तावित कई जल विद्युत परियोजनाओं पर रोक लगा दी थी। इसी मसले पर पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने चंद रोज पहले अदालत में एफिडेविट दिया है। उमा भारती ने जावड़ेकर को इसी महीने के शुरू में कोर्ट में इस बाबत हलफनामा न देने को कहा था। उनका कहना था कि इस मसले पर इंटर मिनिस्टीरियल

ग्रुप (आईजीएम) की रिपोर्ट आने का इंतजार करना चाहिए।

पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने जिन पांच परियोजनाओं को हरी झंडी दिखाई है, वे गंगा के ऊपरी क्षेत्र में प्रस्तावित हैं। इनमें लाता तपोवन, खिरौनी

गंगा और भ्यूंडर गंगा प्रोजेक्ट को निर्माण की मंजूरी दी गई है। इसके साथ ही कोटली भेल और अलकनंदा परियोजना को

संशोधनों के साथ मंजूर किया गया है। सूत्र बताते हैं कि उमा भारती ने इसी महीने की 5 तारीख को जावड़ेकर को एक मेल भेजी थी। इसमें आग्रह किया गया था कि इस मसले पर आईजीएम की रिपोर्ट आने का इंतजार किया जाना चाहिए। इस ग्रुप को जल संसाधन मंत्रालय ने अभी तक अपनी रिपोर्ट नहीं सौंपी है। 5 जनवरी को ही पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने एफिडेविट जल संसाधन मंत्रालय से शेयर किया था।

मामले पर पर्यावरण मंत्री प्रकाश जावड़ेकर को भेजा था ई-मेल

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नेच-२०-१-१४



यमुना में अमोनिया बढ़ा, पानी की सप्लाई में दिक्कत

■ वस, नई दिल्ली : यमुना में एक बार फिर इंडस्ट्रियल पल्यूशन लेवल काफी हाई हो गया है और जल बोर्ड के लैब टेस्टिंग में अमोनिया पाया गया है। अमोनिया पाए जाने की वजह से जल बोर्ड के पानी के प्रोडक्शन पर असर हुआ है। जल बोर्ड के अनुसार मंगलवार की सुबह यमुना में पल्यूशन लेवल बढ़ गया और इसकी वजह से वजीराबाद और चंद्रावल वॉटर ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट में पानी के प्रोडक्शन में कमी आई है। इस वजह से बुधवार की सुबह कई इलाकों में पानी सप्लाई पर असर होगा और पानी का प्रेशर भी लो रहेगा। जल बोर्ड के अनुसार पूरा एनडीएमसी एरिया, नॉर्थ दिल्ली, नॉर्थ वेस्ट दिल्ली, सेंट्रल दिल्ली और इसके आसपास के इलाकों में पानी के सप्लाई पर असर होगा।

यमुना में प्रदूषण बढ़ा जल संकट गहराएगा

नई दिल्ली | प्रमुख संवाददाता

समस्या

यमुना नदी में प्रदूषण का स्तर तेजी से बढ़ गया है। इसकी वजह से वजीराबाद व चंद्रावल प्लांट की आपूर्ति प्रभावित हो गई है। इसका असर वीवीआईपी इलाकों प्रधानमंत्री आवास, राष्ट्रपति भवन, सांसद फ्लैट समेत एक तिहाई दिल्ली में रहेगा।

आपूर्ति सामान्य होने तक तक यह कटौती रहेगी। अमोनिया की वजह से पानी की बर्बादी हो रही है। अमोनिया का

- दक्षिणी दिल्ली के वीवीआईपी एरिया में रहेगा संकट
- करीब एक तिहाई दिल्ली में आपूर्ति हो सकती है प्रभावित

स्तर बढ़ने की वजह पानीपत के पास से नदी में दूषित पानी डाला जाना है। हरियाणा के बाद एवं नियंत्रण विभाग को जानकारी दी गई है। इस मामले को केंद्र सरकार के संज्ञान में भी डाला जाएगा।

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उत्तर भारत में शीतलहर जारी, कुछ हिस्सों में हुई बारिश

नई दिल्ली, (भाषा): उत्तर भारत में आज शीतलहर का असर जारी रहा और उत्तर प्रदेश एवं राजस्थान के कुछ हिस्सों में बारिश और गरज के साथ छीटें पड़ें। साथ ही, कोहरे के कारण सड़क एवं रेल यातायात प्रभावित हुआ।

विमानों का परिचालन सामान्य रहा जबकि दिल्ली आने वाली 19 ट्रेनें अपने निर्धारित समय से देरी से चलीं। मौसम विभाग के एक अधिकारी ने बताया, “अधिकतम तापमान सामान्य से दो डिग्री सेल्सियस नीचे 15.7 डिग्री सेल्सियस और न्यूनतम तापमान सामान्य से एक डिग्री सेल्सियस

अधिक 8.9 डिग्री सेल्सियस दर्ज किया गया।” उत्तर प्रदेश के कुछ हिस्सों में हल्की से भारी बारिश और गरज के साथ छीटें पड़े जबकि विभिन्न स्थानों पर रात के तापमान में बढ़ोतरी दर्ज की गयी।

कश्मीर के करगिल का न्यूनतम तापमान शून्य से 11.4 डिग्री सेल्सियस नीचे जबकि लेह शहर का न्यूनतम तापमान शून्य से 11.1 डिग्री सेल्सियस नीचे दर्ज किया गया। राजस्थान के कुछ इलाकों में बारिश होने के बावजूद शीतलहर का असर जारी है। बूंदी और टोंक में कल दो मिलीमीटर और 1.6 मिलीमीटर बारिश हुई।

Shouldn't come a cropper

The crop insurance plan promises a tech-friendly package and higher risk-sharing by the government

Faster. Better. Cheaper. The magic three words that are seen as a sign of strength in business seem to have entered the lexicon of moribund agricultural insurance in India with the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana approved by the cabinet last week. The scheme, which subsumes two current ones, has many ingredients that look promising. However, given the size of India's farm sector, in which an estimated 119 million cultivators battle the elements in a monsoon-dependent economy, we have to see how it fares at the ground level. True to his style, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheme will bring in smartphones to capture and upload crop-cutting data to estimate losses, involve private insurance companies and use the increasingly popular direct benefit transfer (DBT) method to put money directly into the accounts of suffering farmers. That is good news in a land that has seen farmer suicides and agrarian distress.

One hopes all this will cut down insurance frauds. Packaging apart, the real benefits lie in increased risk-sharing by the government. The scheme, which kicks off with the next summer crop, is expected to cover half of India's cropped area over the next three years, more than double the current level (India's cropped area is now about 195 million hectares). Budgetary allocation to subsidise crop insurance will be increased to ₹7,750 crore in 2018-19 from ₹2,823 crore in the current year. There is no cap on the subsidy on premiums, which has hitherto restricted compensation to a fraction of incurred losses. Farmers will now pay only 2% of the insured amount against the current 2.5-3.5% for kharif (summer) crops and continue to pay 1.5% for rabi (winter) crops. In sum, the new scheme aims for higher subsidies, wider coverage and efficient delivery.

But some issues may loom on risk measurement in an activity that is vulnerable to climate change, a new global threat. Also, more subsidies essentially put the tab on the taxpayer's account. Can we look at adding some of India's famous expertise in information technology and the emerging field of analytics to sharpen risk measurement? Mr Modi's gambit to woo farmers as vital state elections loom could also do with more of his love for technology

The Times of India

Title : Diamond trader tries to take a river to his village

Author : Vijaysinh Parmar

Location :

Ingorala (Amreli)

Article Date : 01/20/2016

A BUSINESSMAN AND A BUREAUCRAT SET OUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD AROUND THEM

The clatter of earth-moving machines and dumpers can be heard even in the dead of night in this remote village of Amreli district. Three machines and three dumpers are working 24x7 since three months to deepen and widen a small river that can become a lifeline for hundreds of water-starved farmers.

There is no scope for any let-up in this work as 65-yearold Jeram Thesia can walk onto the river bed any time during the night. Thesia, a diamond trader in Surat and native of Ingorala (Thesia), is spending Rs 15 crore from his own pocket to deepen the 10-km stretch of Thebi river and rejuvenate his birthplace that is crying for water.

“Three months back, the river was just 2-foot-deep and 70-foot-wide. We have now dug it up to 25 ft and widened it to nearly 700 ft. The entire stretch will be brimming with water during rains in the next two years,” Thesia, promoter of JJ Exports Pvt Ltd, told TOI.

Thesia, better known as ‘River Man’ in Amreli, said “Around 20 villages in the 5 km stretch on both sides of the river will benefit once the river is deepened. Underground water tables will rise and there will be water in the wells,” he said.

Despite a bypass surgery two years ago and being diabetic, he sleeps barely for six hours. “I only dream of uplifting my native village,” he said.

As per estimate, nearly 70,000 bigha land will be benefited once the entire 10km river stretch is deepened and widened.

Tiku Darbar, a farmer in Ingorala, said, “I was about to start deepening my farm well to get more underground water. But when I heard that Thebi river is being deepened, I abandoned the plan as the well will be automatically recharged.”



Jeram Thesia and his wife

Poor Ganga

By: [Express News Service](#) | Published: January 20, 2016 12:00 am



Despite thousands of crores being spent towards improving the Ganga's condition, little ever gets done and no one is ever held responsible. (Source: PTI)

If there is a phrase that captures why cleaning or managing the Ganga has remained an intractable problem since the start of the formal attempts to do so in the mid-1980s, it is "bureaucratic quagmire". Essentially, from start to finish, any proposal regarding the Ganga has had to satisfy, and has required the active cooperation of no less than seven to nine departments, both at the Central and state levels. As a result, despite thousands of crores being spent towards improving the Ganga's condition, little ever gets done and no one is ever held responsible. Something similar is being repeated in the current NDA rule with the ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation, headed by [Uma Bharti](#), engaged in a very public confrontation with the ministry of environment and forests, headed by Prakash Javadekar, in a matter pending before the Supreme Court.

The current controversy, about the fate of six hydel projects in the Upper Ganga, started when the Supreme Court, in the aftermath of the Uttarakhand floods, prohibited the setting up of any new HEPs in the state. In February 2015, a committee of the environment ministry argued against them. But in October, another expert body set up by the environment ministry, which included the Central Water Commission, that falls under the water resources ministry, overturned the first committee's recommendation. Later, in December 2015, yet another committee — this time led by the secretary of the water resources ministry — reverted to the earlier decision against setting up the HEPs. Now, yet again, the environment ministry, against the clearly stated position of the water resources ministry and Bharti, has gone ahead and given its nod to five of the six projects in question, according to an affidavit it submitted in the apex court. Evidently, this tussle is far from over and this will not only impede the government's plans of rejuvenating the Ganga but also smudge the policy clarity that businesses have been demanding in India.

In his first Independence Day speech, Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) had sharply criticised the chronic "disunity and conflict" among different government departments during UPA rule: "It appeared that everyone has its own fiefdom. One department is taking on the other department... to the extent that two departments of the same government are fighting against each other by approaching Supreme Court". Modi had said that he had "started making efforts for razing those walls". Clearly, he has a long way to go.

The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Himachal

Snowfall in Shimla brings cheer to visitors

Published on: Jan 20 2016 12:30AM



Tourists enjoy snowfall in Shimla on Tuesday. The Queen of Hills received season's first snowfall on December 23, 2015. Photo: Amit Kanwar

Bhanu P Lohumi

Tribune News Service

Shimla, January 19

Shimla today witnessed another spell of moderate snowfall. The sky remained overcast, with the state capital's temperature hovering around the freezing point.

Snow-covered roads, rooftops and trees looked splendid. Tourists and the locals were seen hurling snowballs at each other.

Snowflakes in Kufri, Fagu and Narkanda hit the traffic, with vehicles skidding off roads. While the sky remained overcast in Manali, the upper areas of Solang, Mari, Rohtang Pass, Koksar and other high altitude areas experienced moderate snowfall.

Kalpa in Kinnaur district received 10 cm of fresh snow while the state capital recorded 3 cm of snow. The lower hills of the state had light showers. Keylong in Lahaul-Spiti district recorded minus 5.7 degree Celsius while Kalpa and Manali recorded minus 3.6 degree Celsius and minus 1.6 degree Celsius. Solan, Sundernagar and Bhuntar shivered at zero degree Celsius, 0.6 degree Celsius and 0.9 degree Celsius while Shimla recorded a low of 1.6 degree Celsius followed by Una 3.0 degree Celsius, Nahan 5.1 degree Celsius and Dharamsala 5.8 degree Celsius.

Fog enveloped the lower hills while thick ground frost was seen in mid and higher hills. The high altitude tribal areas groaned under arctic conditions with minimum temperature staying between minus 10 and minus 18 degree Celsius. All natural sources of water have frozen.

The maximum temperature dropped to 4.2 degree Celsius at Keylong while Una recorded a high of 18.4 degree Celsius followed by Bhuntar 17.5 degree Celsius, Sundernagar 17.4 degree Celsius, Nahan 17.0 degree Celsius, Solan 16.8 degree Celsius, Dharamsala 13.6 degree Celsius, Shimla 12.0 degree Celsius and Kalpa 8.0 degree Celsius.

“The snowfall and showers may bring some relief to farmers, but its too late,” said farm experts. Hoteliers and local businessmen are happy and hopeful of doing a brisk business.



Mercury may dip further

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 19 January

The national capital is expected to witness intensified chilly weather where in minimum temperature may plunge further during the next two to three days, predicted an official of the Indian Meteorological Department.

On Tuesday, the city witnessed cloudy weather with moderate fog over most parts disrupting rail services even as the minimum temperature settled at 8.9 degrees Celsius, two notches above the season's average.

While flight operations were not affected, poor visibility delayed 14 trains this morning. "Relative humidity was recorded at 97 per cent at 8:30 AM," a MeT official said.

According to the official, visibility was recorded to be 300 metres both at 5.30 AM and 8:30 AM at Safdarjung

observatory. At Palam observatory, visibility was reported at less than 50 metres at 5:30 AM and improved to 300 metres three hours later.

This change in the weather can be attributed to change in wind pattern on account of a Western Disturbance affecting Jammu and Kashmir and a confluence zone marked over Madhya Pradesh, explained the official.

The weatherman has predicted a possibility of moderate to dense fog tomorrow morning. "Moderate fog will continue to grip the city, with dense fog expected at few places. But sky will be generally clear with good sunshine and windy afternoon," the official added.

Yesterday, maximum temperature was recorded at 19 degrees Celsius and minimum 6 degrees Celsius for the first time this winter, a notch below the season's average.

Perspective

The
NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY

Some distance travelled, but a long way to go

S K Sarkar

The 'Water for Life Decade' 2005-2015, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2003, aimed to promote action-oriented activities and policies for long-term sustainable management of water resources, and to improve sanitation for meeting internationally agreed goals. The Millennium Development Goals pursued during this decade are now being carried forward through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Post 2015, the components of SDG Goal 6 would cover safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, water quality, water-related ecosystem, integrated water resources management, and water efficiency.

The global picture in the water and sanitation sector, although improved through various actions of UN Member States, still looks dismal; every 15 seconds a child dies from preventable water-borne diseases, more than one in three people have no access to improved sanitation, one in seven still defecates in the open, over 80 per cent of waste water worldwide is dumped untreated into water supplies, two-thirds of the world's population could face water stress by 2025, more than 70 per cent of total water consumption is for agriculture where water-use efficiency is very low, and finally, the effect of climate change and urbanization will impact the water cycle, including vital ground water resources.

Major achievements of the water decade at global level include undertaking a global action plan for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program during 2005-15; specific five year sanitation drive; giving renewed focus to IWRM (Integrated Water Resources Management) using various 'decade themes' such as water security, food security, water and energy, water quality,



water and sustainable development; creating an environment-enabling corporate sector to participate in the water and sanitation sector; involving political process of Nation States at central level for solving water and sanitation issues, and creating global institutions for water cooperation.

However, the key challenges faced include building and implementing a mechanism to bring sustainable water and sanitation to remaining unserved people in many nations, requiring a political process for taking stock of progress of SDGs, creating a forum to support better donor coordination at global level, etc.

India, like other countries, has been a part of the Water Decade's sustained global efforts. It achieved the Millennium Development Goals for safe water access, but could not achieve the sanitation target. Even today, about 73 million work days are lost each year when workers become ill through use of dirty water; more than 1,000 children below the age of 5 die every day due to poor water and sanitation, in notified urban slums (one in 6 Indians live in urban slums) 17 per cent of the population lacks access to improved sanitation (which is 51 per cent in non-notified slums), more than half the world's open defecators live in

India, and a significant portion of the population does not use toilets despite having access to them. In this context the clarion call of the Prime Minister for undertaking Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is timely for making India open defecation free by October 2019.

On other fronts such as trans-boundary water cooperation, India has not ratified the UN International Watercourse Convention (effective from 17 August 2014) and has progressed little with China and other riparian neighbours in resolving water-related issues. Even within India, the water cooperation among the States is mired with

court cases, because of ineffective dispute resolution platform under the existing River Boards Act 1956. On water quality, of ground water or surface water, the improvement is insignificant. Schemes such as ground water mapping and management, and the Namami Gange of the central government are yet to have visible impact on the ground. India needs to walk many miles before satisfactory results are achieved.

Nevertheless, the Water Decade has brought water and sanitation issues as India's central focus; created awareness among various stakeholders for treating their availability as a human right and necessary for ensuring human dignity; incentivised donor communities to work with governments and civil societies to design solutions for ensuring safe access to water; improved sanitation for all sections of the society; catalysed the corporate sector to undertake water and sanitation activities through their CSR funds; created awareness of the vital links in the food-water-energy nexus; deepened understanding of the linkage between ecosystems, water, and food production; taught us that different dimensions of inequality, such as gender, in the provision of basic sanitation and hygiene services would require different ways of programming, and also highlighted the need for water cooperation based on the principles of 'equitable and reasonable use' and 'the obligation not to cause significant harm to neighbours'.

Hopefully renewed effort will be seen in the years ahead for achieving the global sustainable development goals including SDG 6.

THE WRITER IS A DISTINGUISHED FELLOW AND DIRECTOR, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION IN THE NEW DELHI AND A FORMER SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, GOVT. OF INDIA.

CROSSWORD

NO 26516

MELTING POT ARATI R JERATH