

LS passes National Waterways Bill

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 21 December

The Lok Sabha today passed a key Bill piloted by Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari that would ensure developing 101 waterways and in the long run contribute towards the growth of manufacturing sector and the success of the ambitious 'Make in India' programme.

The government said it was aiming to garner Rs 1 lakh crore to fund projects to provide low-cost river transportation as the 'Make-in-India' dream will not be realised if logistics costs are not reduced.

"... So waterways are being given priority. We want to work with state government support. If some state governments says they do not want to work, we will not work. We will work with co-operation of states," Mr Gadkari said.

Citing the "success stories" of Europe as well as China in the use of waterways, Mr Gadkari said India is lagging behind and outlined how the government is now developing national waterways to cut logistics cost, make Indian industry competitive and help developing smart townships along the rivers.

Replying to a debate on The National Waterways Bill, 2015, he sought the support of states in this endeavour.

The House later passed the Bill by voice vote after approval of the official amend-

ments, mostly of technical nature, and rejecting an amendment proposed by N K Premachandran (RSP).

Others who participated in the debate were Trinamul MP Dr Ratna De Nag who said the Centre should immediately consider connecting Nabadwip and Mayapur with Kolkata via waterways as they see a lot of tourist flow.

Mr Gadkari said his ministry is working to develop three more major ports, besides the existing 12 as the aim is to reduce the logistic cost with a view to promote exports, generate employment, boost tourism and growth.

Responding to members' questions over funding of the ambitious waterways projects, the minister said he is aiming to garner Rs 1 lakh crore through innovative methods. This would include a Rs 50,000 crore loan from World Bank, investment of profits of shipping PSUs into a subsidiary company and obtaining dollar loan at cheaper rates, besides seeking funds from the Budget.

He said his ministry has hired foreign consultants to seek technical expertise for construction of water ports.

Talking about the measures being taken, the Minister said in two years' time Ganga will look clean, logistics cost will reduce to 15 per cent from 30 per cent, market competition will increase and a new township will be set up along river.

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Elders discuss floods, want farmers' panel

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 21 December

Members in the Rajya Sabha across the political spectrum today took up the cause of farmers hit by recent natural calamities and demanded establishment of a Farmers' Commission to take care of their interests.

Initiating a short-duration discussion on the 'Serious situation arising due to floods and drought in the country', Mr KC Tyagi, JD (U), said it was an irony that the government, while "running from pillar to post" to pass the GST Bill, never took any such initiative on the issue of Minimum Support Price for farmers. He said the government should fulfill the promise on MSP it had made in its election manifesto.

He said large portions of land have remained uncultivated in a number of states denying production of wheat in 24 lakh hectares. Only 40 per cent of land is irrigated while the remaining 60 per cent is at the mercy of rains, Mr Tyagi said.

The earning of farmers

'It was an irony that the government, while "running from pillar to post" to pass the GST Bill, never took any such initiative on the issue of Minimum Support Price for farmers'

has not gone up while the salary of even a fourth grade employee is a minimum Rs 42,000 as per the 7th pay commission report.

The government should form a Kisan Ayog and make NCP chief and former Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar its chairman, Mr Tyagi said. He also said the views of farm leaders should be taken into account as feedback.

Mr Basawraj Patil (BJP) backed the demand for a Kisan Aayog saying some such arrangement should be there for farmers on the line of a pay commission for government employees. He also supported cow protection saying no cow should die in the absence of fodder and water as it is the "soul" of the nation.

Floating bodies, funerals on banks main causes of Ganga pollution: ITBP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, 21 December

Hundreds of floating bodies of humans and animals, funeral on the banks and less flow of water in the mainstream are among the major causes of pollution of the Ganga river, an ITBP expedition team has reported.

A special team of the border guarding force which started the 'Swachh Ganga' river rafting mission on October 2 from Devprayag in Uttarakhand to Gangasagar in the Bay of Bengal as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Namami Gange' project, was today flagged-in by Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju at a special event here.

During the 2,350-km long expedition covering states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police teams noticed at least 20 human bodies floating in the Ganga mainstream, 200 carcasses of various



animals and about 100 half-burnt or un-burnt human bodies which were lying near the banks of the holy river.

The teams, led by ITBP Commandant Surinder Khatri, also found that "90 per cent of Ganga water was diverted for irrigation" leading to a situation where there was not enough water in the main-

stream.

The squad, during its 72-day long voyage, also tested and handed over to the authorities concerned the samples of Ganga water from 50 big and small cities it passed through as it found harmful traces of Nitrate, Phosphate, Ammonia, Fluoride and Chloride in the water.

"These reports will now be submitted to the Union Home Ministry and other concerned ministries for further action," ITBP Director General Krishna Chaudhary said.

MoS Rijiju said pollution and effluents in Ganga are like a "black spot" as he lauded the efforts made by the force personnel in not only undertaking the voyage but also analysing its pollutants.

While the ITBP teams found that there was a lot of soil erosion on Ganga's banks, they found that the wood used for lighting funeral pyres on the banks of the river was also contributing to its pollution.

"Fishing and hunting of tortoises from the river are being done in excess even as fishermen use fine net in order to have a better catch," Khatri said, adding the teams could not spot any Gangetic alligator but could see about 1,200 dolphins specific to the eco-system of this life-giving river of the country.



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Chennai floods not linked to global warming: Prakash Javadekar

TNN | Dec 22, 2015, 03:37 AM IST

*Environment minister Prakash Javadekar.*

NEW DELHI: Days after the Chennai floods caught global attention during the just concluded Paris conference where world leaders linked such extreme weather conditions to climate change, the government on Monday said the unusual rainfall that occurred in Tamil Nadu was a "highly localised" event and its attribution to global warming is "not established".

"Extreme rainfall that occurred over coastal districts of Tamil Nadu is highly localised and is part of the natural variability of the Indian monsoon system. Although some studies have reported an increase in frequency and intensity of extremes in rainfall during the past 40-50 years, their attribution to global warming is not established," environment minister Prakash Javadekar said in reply to a question in Parliament.

Many world leaders, including US secretary of state John Kerry and French foreign minister Laurent Fabius, had referred to the Chennai floods while making a strong case for a global climate deal to save the world from similar weather events in future.

Javadekar in his written response said the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and assessment methodology used in India have indicated that extreme rainfall events are likely to be more frequent in the later part of the 21st century.

"As regards (to) other extreme weather phenomenon, there are many other reasons for their occurrence which may not be related to climate change," he said.

He said the Northeast monsoon season during October-December is the chief rainy season for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and during November, three large-scale weather systems affected both the places causing extensive rainfall activity over the region.

"The Earth System Science Organisation (ESSO)- IMD has predicted above normal rainfall in excess of 111% of the long period average in its forecast outlook for 2015 Northeast Monsoon season rainfall over the southern peninsula," the minister said.

Noting that floods occur due to the hydrological response of heavy rainfall, Javadekar said that its manifestation needs to be assessed by the local authorities.

"In this (Chennai floods) case, three days advance warnings were issued for placing emergency planning response action by the local authorities," he said.

The environment minister also referred to "non-climatic reasons" for flooding in cities and industries located in high risk locations, particularly coastal and riverine areas. These reasons include lack of proper urban planning, demographic pressures, improper sewage disposal and drainage systems, and encroachment of land.

"As per some reports, the rains and the excess water released from the dam at Chembarambakkam resulted in the flooding of Adyar, its banks and inundated its floodplain," he said.

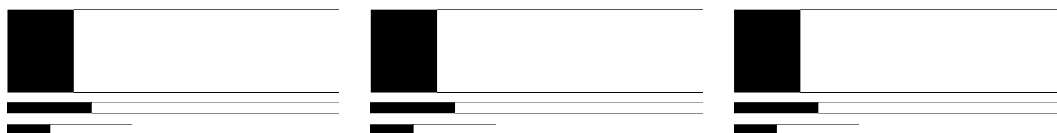
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दिल्ली से यमुना के रास्ते ताजमहल

नई दिल्ली, (भाषा): देश में जलमार्गों की कमी को स्वीकारते हुए सरकार ने कहा कि वह दिन दूर नहीं जब दिल्ली से यमुना के रास्ते सैलानी ताज महल देखने जाएंगे और इलाहाबाद से पश्चिम बंगाल के हल्दिया की 1620 किलोमीटर की

दूरी 120 किलोमीटर प्रति घंटे की रफ्तार से पूरी की जा सकेगी।

केंद्रीय भूतल परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्री नितिन गडकरी ने लोकसभा में बताया कि जलमार्गों के लिए उपग्रह से लिंक वाली 'नदी सूचना प्रणाली' तैयार की गयी है

जिसका उद्घाटन अगले आठ दिन के अंदर संसद से ही किया जाएगा। उन्होंने देश में 101 जलमार्गों को विकसित करने के प्रावधान वाले 'राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग विधेयक 2015' पर हुई चर्चा का जवाब देते हुए सदन में कहा कि उनका उद्देश्य इन

परियोजनाओं के लिए एक लाख करोड़ रुपये की राशि जुटाने का है। गडकरी ने परियोजना के लिए इतनी बड़ी रकम जुटाने संबंधी सदस्यों की जिज्ञासाओं पर कहा कि 50,000 करोड़ रुपये की राशि विश्व बैंक और एडीबी से मिल चुकी है।

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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पारा गिरने से श्रीनगर में डल झील, तालाब, नदी और नल का पानी बर्फ बना

पश्चिमी विक्षोभ से ठंड कम होगी

बदला मौसम

नई दिल्ली | हिन्दुस्तान टीन

मंगलवार से उत्तर-पश्चिमी भारत के मैदानी इलाकों में मौसम में बदलाव महसूस होगा। जम्मू-कश्मीर पहुंचने वाले पश्चिमी विक्षोभ के कारण दिल्ली/एनसीआर और अड़ोस-पड़ोस के राज्यों में शीतलहर में कुछ कमी आएगी। प्रदूषण बढ़ेगा। कोहरा अपना रंग दिखाएगा। फसलों को पाला लगने की संभावना बढ़ेगी।

निजी मौसम एजेंसी स्काईमेट वेदर के वरिष्ठ मौसम विज्ञानी महेश पलावत के मुताबिक तापमान में कुछ बढ़ोतरी दर्ज की जाएगी। उत्तर भारत के पर्वतीय भागों को 22 दिसम्बर से नया पश्चिमी विक्षोभ प्रभावित करने वाला है। लिहाजा अत्यधिक तापमान में कुछ गिरावट और न्यूनतम तापमान में बढ़ोतरी होगी। इससे शीतलहर में कमी आने की संभावना है।

बदलेगा हवाओं का रुख: विक्षोभ के कारण उत्तर भारत के मैदानी राज्यों में हवा का रुख भी बदलेगा। इस समय इन भागों में हवाएं उत्तर-पश्चिम दिशा से आ रही हैं। ये बदलकर दक्षिण-पूर्वी या दक्षिण-पश्चिमी हो जाएंगी। मौसम में आने वाले इस बदलाव और हवा की गति कम होने से दिल्ली समेत उत्तर भारत के मैदानी भागों में मध्यम से घना कोहरा छाने की संभावना है।



श्रीनगर में सोमवार को बर्फ से जमी निगिन झील। • तस्वीम अंबाबी

दिल्ली में बढ़ सकता है प्रदूषण

दिल्ली में बीते कई दिनों से उत्तर-पश्चिमी शुष्क हवाओं के कारण वातावरण में नमी कम थी। इससे प्रदूषण के कण हवा की निचली सतह पर टिक नहीं पा रहे थे। परिणामस्वरूप बीते कई दिनों से स्वच्छ वातावरण और साफ हवा के कारण प्रदूषण से कुछ राहत थी। स्काईमेट के अनुसार 24 घंटों के पश्चात हवा के रुख में बदलाव से यहां के वातावरण में नमी बढ़ जाएगी। हवा में नमी बढ़ने और कोहरा छाने से दिल्लीवालों को प्रदूषण फिर मुश्किल में डालेगा। दिल्ली में 22 और 23 दिसम्बर को दिन में भी वातावरण धुंधला बना रहेगा।

24 दिसंबर के बाद फिर लौट आएगी सर्दी

पश्चिमी विक्षोभ उत्तर भारत से 24 दिसंबर तक आगे निकल जाएगा। इससे उत्तर भारत के मैदानी भागों में हवा का रुख फिर से बदलकर उत्तर-पश्चिमी हो जाएगा। हवा के रुख में बदलाव से 24 दिसम्बर के बाद दिल्ली और इसके आसपास के शहरों में तापमान फिर गिरेगा। इससे सर्दी बढ़ जाएगी। साथ ही प्रदूषण भी कम हो जाएगा।

पारा शून्य से नीचे, डल झील जमी

श्रीनगर। जम्मू-कश्मीर की राजधानी श्रीनगर में न्यूनतम तापमान शून्य से 5.6 डिग्री नीचे चले जाने के कारण डल झील जम गई है। रविवार रात इस मौसम की सबसे सर्द रही। लद्दाख क्षेत्र के लेह में सोमवार को इस मौसम की सर्वाधिक

ठंड रही रहा, जहां न्यूनतम तापमान शून्य से नीचे 15.1 डिग्री सेल्सियस दर्ज किया गया। लोगों को अगले 72 घंटों तक लोगों को ठंड से निजात नहीं मिल पाएगी। पारा गिरने से नल, नदी और तालाबों में पानी जम गया है।