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Blitz

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

ONGC, IMF tie up to clean three Ganga tributaries

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: State-run explorer ONGC signed an agreement with Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) on Monday for launching expeditions to clean up source of three of Ganga's tributaries — Bhagirathi, Alaknanda and Pindari — in Uttarakhand.

According to ONGC director (HR) D D Misra, the programme is part of ONGC's commitment to the government's Swachh Bharat programme and aims at ensuring revitalising the Himalayas — the symbol of "our ecosystem".

The project envisages removing hazardous waste generated by tourists at different spots of Himalayas. The company has already completed such clean-up drives in several Himalayan glaciers.

The latest project, 'Cleanathon Himalaya', will leverage the respective competence of ONGC and IMF to clean up the upper reaches of the Himalayas. For Bhagirathi river, the expedition will cover a stretch of 22 km spanning Gangotri, Chirbasa, Bhojbasa, Gaumukh and Tapovan Base Camp. For Alaknanda, it will cover the Mana-Laxmi Van-Chakrateertha-Neelkanth base camp, covering a 25-km stretch. The Pindari expedition will cover 21 km of the Kharkiya-Khati-Dwali-Pindari-Base Camp stretch.

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Alert in Bengal as rivers swell; rain fury unabated

GRIM SITUATION Six districts worst hit; disaster management teams swing into action in states facing floods. Army and IAF called in for rescue and relief operations in some places

HT Correspondents

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KOLKATA/MIDNAPORE/BERHAMPORE: Continuous heavy rainfall since Sunday inundated large parts of West Bengal, prompting the government to sound an alert on Monday afternoon as water level in more than a dozen rivers kept rising.

State and national highways were inundated and damaged at several places, cutting off a number of district towns and villages.

The worst affected districts included Birbhum, West Midnapore, East Midnapore, Murshidabad, Bankura and Howrah. The Met department has predicted more rainfall till Wednesday.

Life in Kolkata was affected as several important roads remained submerged since Sunday evening.

Anticipating a crisis, the government set up a special control room at Nabanna, the state secretariat. "All employees of the disaster management and irrigation departments and chief medical officers have been asked to report for duty. Leaves have been cancelled," said irrigation minister Rajib Banerjee.

Banerjee said he was in constant touch with officials of the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) so that the government could get information before water was released from the reservoirs at any of DVC's river barages.

In Murshidabad district, more than 50 villages in Kandi sub-division were completely inundated and thousands of people displaced. "The situation is equally critical in Khargram, Bharatpur and Barwan blocks. In Bharatpur, around 200 families are trapped in their homes. We have started distributing relief material and food," the minister said.

In West Midnapore district, the Kanshabati, Shilabati and Keleghai rivers were flowing at danger level, officials said on Monday afternoon.

As a result, vast parts of Ghatal, Chandrakona, Keshpur,



■ Rescue work under way after a jeep was swept away in Kherwada area, Udaipur, in Rajasthan on Monday. (Below) A family is rescued from a flooded locality in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

PTI/HT PHOTO

Debra, Pingla and Sabang remained submerged.

In Birbhum district, vast areas of Labhpur and Sainthia got inundated, cutting off highway links between towns.

NORTH GUJARAT HIT

Torrential rains pounded parts of north Gujarat on Monday, with overflowing reservoirs and rivers causing floods in Banaskantha and Patan districts, prompting the government to put the state on high alert. Army, IAF and NDRF teams have been called in for rescue and relief operations. About 2,200 people have been shifted to safer places and over 460 others rescued.

ODISHA GEARS UP

The Odisha government has rushed ODRAF personnel and dispatched dry food to two northern districts in view of a possible flood-like situation due to rising water level in some rivers.

"One Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) team each has been rushed to Keonjhar and Bhadrak districts, special relief commissioner (SRC) BP Sethi said. "We are fully prepared to deal with a possible flood-like situation in the northern region of



the state," the SRC said.

The threat of a flood-like situation looms large with the water level of Baitarani, Subarnarekha and Budhabalang rising steadily.

RAJ SCHOOLS SHUT

Heavy rainfall over the past three days has triggered a flood-like situation in four districts of Rajasthan as authorities sounded an alert and closed schools in many areas.

In Barmer, Jalore and Sirohi and Pali districts, people said many areas were marooned and lots of makeshift structures damaged due to thunderstorms and heavy rains. In the capital Jaipur, many areas were submerged

even on Monday and local residents reported having to wade through knee-to waist-deep water.

102 MM RAIN IN J'KHAND

Incessant rain for past four days due to depression in Bay of Bengal has inundated many pockets of Jamshedpur, Galudih, Koderma and low lying areas.

Jharkhand has received 102 mm rainfall in last four days, 66 mm from Sunday evening to Monday evening. People living along river basins and areas close to water reservoirs are panicky even though the government said there was nothing to worry.

(With agency inputs)

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Clean Yamuna plan entering phase 2

MAILI SE NIRMAL YAMUNA The first phase of the project plans to bring down pollution levels in the Najafgarh and Delhi Gate drains. The second phase will tackle Shahdara, Barapullah and other outlets

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The second phase of the 'Maili se Nirmal Yamuna Revitalisation Project 2017', which aims to bring down pollution levels in the river in Delhi, is expected to take off soon, the National Green Tribunal was informed on Monday.

The Yamuna receives around 74% of its pollution load in its 22-km stretch between Wazirabad and Okhla. Of this, 67% of the pollution emanates from the Najafgarh and Delhi Gate drains. The rest is from the smaller drains.

The first phase of the project aims to bring down pollution levels in the Najafgarh drain and Delhi Gate drains. The second phase will tackle the Shahdara, Barapullah and other drains.

"We appreciate the efforts and direct that the work on phase-I, which has already started, should not be stopped. The action plan for phase-II has been submitted. We direct the stakeholders to submit their responses on

the action plan within three weeks," said a bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar.

The NGT was hearing a petition filed by environmentalist Manoj Misra who argued that the green body should monitor the project.

The NGT was informed that at least 14 sewage treatment plants would be commissioned by May 2019 in phase-I.

These would treat around 67% of the river pollution comes from the two major drains.

The project is running ahead of its schedule, the NGT was informed on Monday.

There are 21 major wastewater drains in NCT-Delhi out of which 18 drains join Yamuna river and 3 join the Agra/Gurgaon canal.

Sources in the Delhi Jal Board said that in phase-II, the government would crack down on polluting industries.

"As most of the smaller drains are located in areas where sewage lines are available, these would be connected to the STPs to bring down pollution in the river

The government also plans to dredge and desilt the drains," said a senior official of the DJB.

The NGT directed the governments of Haryana, UP, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh to organise a meeting on August 8 to discuss how to tackle pollution in the Yamuna and all its tributaries.

In its earlier hearing, the bench had observed: "Time is not far when the people of Delhi would be able to walk across the banks of the river Yamuna without breathing stinking air. They would not have to fear while entering the river on auspicious occasions or otherwise and the river would become a site of tourism for entire Delhi."

At present, as part of Yamuna Action Plan III, an initiative under the centre's 'Namami Gange' programme, the rehabilitation and modernisation of STPs of a total of 814 MLD capacity at Okhla, Kondli and Rithala and the construction of a new 136-MLD capacity sewage treatment plant at Okhla are already under way.

Plan to revive most polluted river

The Delhi Jal Board has submitted its action plan on phase II of the Maili se Nirmal Yamuna Revitalisation Plan, 2017, to the National Green Tribunal. The plan is targeting Delhi drains.

22 km Yamuna's stretch in Delhi - Wazirabad to Okhla
2% of river's total length is in Delhi
74% Delhi's share in Yamuna's pollution
21 major wastewater drains in NCT-Delhi



■ The Yamuna is India's most polluted river.

HT FILE PHOTO

Maili se Nirmal Yamuna Revitalisation plan

Phase I deals with Najafgarh drain and Delhi Gate drain which contributes 67% of the pollution

■ 14 STPs to be built in Phase I to tackle sewage of Najafgarh and Delhi Gate drain

■ Work on Phase I is on full swing (working ahead of schedule)

Phase II would tackle rest of the drains, including Shahdara and Barapullah drains

■ 67% of Yamuna's pollution to come down after May 2019 once the 14 STPs come up

→ Action plan on Phase II is ready and submitted to NGT

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NGT ultimatum on Yamuna squatters

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Monday gave the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) three days to file their status report on Phase-I of clearing of encroachments and illegal constructions in the Yamuna floodplains. The tribunal also asked the Delhi government as to why the lake at Purana Qila was drained and directed them to submit a report on the same.

A bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar said that no extension would be granted to the DDA and that the report should be filed in three days itself, adding that no carelessness will be tolerated in the project to clean up the river Yamuna which is currently in Phase-I.

In the last hearing, DDA had informed the green panel that demarcation of the Yamuna floodplains on the Delhi-UP stretch had been completed and the report will be filed soon. The green panel had earlier levied a fine of Rs 5,000 on polluters in the Yamuna and constituted a committee, with representatives from DDA and the National Mission for Clean Ganga, which were to submit reports to NGT at regular intervals.

The next hearing is listed for August 9.

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Over 15,000 people relocated in Gujarat

State continues to be on high alert as the meteorological department has forecast more rains



Grim situation: A submerged bridge in north Gujarat on Monday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

MAHESH LANGA
AHMEDABAD

After Saurashtra, its now the turn of the North Gujarat region to bear the brunt of incessant rainfall. Heavy flooding in several areas has forced the State authorities to shift people out of low lying areas. Several hundred stranded people have been rescued.

On Monday, the authorities relocated more than 15000 people in North Gujarat districts, mostly in Banaskantha, to safer areas. The NDRF, Air Force, BSF and the Army were joined by other agencies in the rescue

of more than 500 stranded people.

The State continues to be on high alert as the meteorological department has forecast more rains. Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani conducted two aerial surveys and held meetings with officials. He also briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the situation.

Relief work hit

Meanwhile, the continuing rainfall affected the rescue work of the Indian Air Force. Many of its choppers could not take off and those that did were forced to return to

the base. A Defence aircraft loaded with relief material and food packets had to return due to heavy rains in Banaskantha district. The district administration has sounded a high alert and advised people not to venture out. Schools and colleges have been asked to remain closed on Tuesday.

The national highway passing through the district was closed. So too were over a dozen State highways.

The death toll this monsoon has touched 72. Around 1,000 animals have also died in floods and other rain-related incidents.

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Monsoon weakens across Karnataka

Rainfall in south interior parts, crucial to the Cauvery Basin, remains deficient

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

There is good and bad news on the Karnataka monsoon front. Going by the rainfall statistics so far, two parts of Karnataka have received "normal rainfall" — north interior Karnataka and coastal Karnataka. But rainfall in south interior Karnataka, crucial to the Cauvery Basin, remains "deficient."

On July 19, the monsoon covered the entire State for the first time since the season began. However, it is said to have weakened across the State now. "The essential systems required for the monsoon to progress is absent. It rains when there is an off-shore trough that travels across the Western



Falling short: Karnataka has received a total of 344 mm so far, which is 16% lower than normal. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ghats, covering Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, which is absent now," said S.M. Metri, Director, IMD Karnataka. The weak rainfall in coastal Karnataka had also affected the pro-

spect of rainfall in south interior Karnataka, he added.

Karnataka has received a total of 344 mm so far, which is 16% lower than normal (412 mm). However, Mr. Metri said anything above

19% was considered normal, which meant the State overall had a normal monsoon.

Three regions

However, the story is different when the three regions are dissected. North interior Karnataka has fared well with 199 mm rainfall so far against the normal 205 mm. Coastal Karnataka has received 1,563 mm against the normal 1,788 mm. However, south interior Karnataka has received only 224 mm rainfall against the normal 312 mm, which points to a deficient rainfall.

The IMD predicts an "improvement" in the next two days, though the monsoon is expected to remain weak on Tuesday too.

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गंगा सफाई सिर्फ सरकार के बूते संभव नहीं : उमा

कवायद

नई दिल्ली | विशेष संवाददाता

केन्द्र सरकार ने कहा है कि गंगा सफाई के लिए न्यायमूर्ति मणि परियोजना के तहत प्रयासों का अंतिम वर्ष 2018 से नजर आने लगेगा। उन्होंने कहा कि गंगा सफाई केवल सरकार के बूते संभव नहीं है। सरकार की भूमिका निर्माण कार्य तक है। गंगा को साफ रखने के लिए लोगों की भागीदारी भी जरूरी है।

केन्द्रीय जल संसाधन, नदी विकास और गंगा संरक्षण मंत्री उमा भारती ने राज्यसभा में कहा कि सरकार गंगा नदी संरक्षण को गति देने तथा इस मार्ग में आने वाली अड़चनों को दूर करने को एक कानून लाने पर विचार कर रही है।

गंगा कानून का मसौदा तैयार : राज्यसभा में पूछे गए प्रश्नों के जवाब में उमा भारती ने कहा, सरकार गंगा कानून लाने पर विचार कर रही है। संसद में लाने से पहले इस कानून के मसौदे को राज्यों के साथ साझा किया जाएगा। न्यायमूर्ति गिरिधर मालवीय की अध्यक्षता वाली समिति को इस कानून का मसौदा बनाने की जिम्मेदारी दी गई थी। उन्होंने इसपर अपनी रिपोर्ट मंत्रालय को सौंप दी है।

राज्यों ने की थी मांग

केन्द्रीय मंत्री ने कहा कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता में हुई एक बैठक में राज्यों ने मांग की थी कि गंगा संरक्षण के काम में आ रही अड़चनों को दूर करने के लिए एक कानून बनाया जाए। इसलिए सरकार इस कानून पर विचार कर रही है।

घाटों पर अदालत की अनुमति से काम

बनारस के घाटों विशेषकर मणिकर्णिका घाट के बारे में पूछे गए पूरक प्रश्नों के उत्तर में उन्होंने कहा कि इनसे कोई भी छेड़छाड़ या बदलाव करने से पहले उच्च न्यायालय की अनुमति लेनी पड़ती है।

गंगा टेम्स या राइन जैसी नहीं : उमा भारती ने कहा कि गंगा की स्थिति टेम्स या राइन जैसी नहीं है कि एक बार साफ कर दिया और हमेशा के लिए साफ रहेगी। गंगा में प्रतिदिन 20 लाख लोग डुबकी लगाते हैं। 50-60 साल पहले जिस तरह गंगा स्वच्छ रहती थी उसी तरह की स्वच्छता को फिर से कायम करने के लिए जागरुकता के प्रयास होंगे।