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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.

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26.5.17
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

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Nai Duniya (Hindi)
The Times of India (A)
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Nainital lake level 18ft below normal

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Nainital's glistening eye is drying up this summer. The water level in Naini lake, from which the town in the panoramic Kumaon Hills derives its name, has fallen by an unprecedented 18 feet below the normal level this summer.

Environmental experts are worried and tourists are dismayed.

At Tallital, the southern end of the lake, there is a "zero" mark. The depth of the lake and water level are measured from this mark. "In the monsoon, the water level reaches 12 feet above the zero mark, which delineates the normal water level. At pre-



The shrinking lake is the hill station's only source of water

sent, the level is 18 feet below the mark considered normal," Vishal Singh, a senior research scholar from the Centre for Ecology Development and Research (Cedar), said.

"One has to only look at

how the shoreline of the lake has receded. This year seems exceptionally bad," boatman Rajendra Prasad Shilpi, 50, said, standing by the lake that is Nainital's only source of water.

Experts have blamed illegal construction, felling of trees, concretisation of the catchment area and destruction of natural springs. "Of the 60 natural springs in the city that recharged the lake, only 30 exist today, and even those have an alarmingly decreased water flow," Ajay Singh Rawat, former head of Kumaun University's history department, said.

"The level of water in the body is reported to be 18 feet below normal, something I have never witnessed. The lake is going to turn into a mere pond if strict steps are not taken," Rawat said. He has been campaigning for long to save the jewel of Nainital.

► Thousands join drive, P 23

Hundreds join 'Save Naini' campaign

► Continued from P 1

Irrigation department (Kumaon Zone) chief engineer DCS Khetwal said, "The water level has been declining continuously."

In the past few summers, the water level had been recorded at three to four feet below zero. Last May, the level of water was two feet below zero. In the 1970s, when the quaint town was emerging as a popular shooting destination for Bollywood and real estate developers had started arriving, the water level in the summer would be measured at one foot below the zero mark.

Another contributing factor, experts pointed out, was the neglect of Sukhatal, which recharges more than 50% of the lake. "Despite strong evidence through research conduct-



The water level in Naini lake has fallen an unprecedented 18 feet below the normal level this summer

ed by the National Institute of Hydrology approximately 20 years ago about the importance of Sukhatal, it was blatantly neglected by the authorities," Vishal Singh of Cedar said. A 2015 study by Cedar, in collaboration with Cambridge University, found Sukhatal provides more than 40% subsurface flow to Naini lake round the year, including in the drier months. Sukhatal can absorb large amounts of rainwater due to its topography, which includes

limestone and dolomite.

After Ajay Singh Rawat filed a PIL in the Uttarakhand high court in 2012 requesting the court to convert Nainital into an eco-sensitive zone in order to save the area's ecosystem, the court last year ordered IIT Roorkee to submit a detailed project report about the beautification and recharge of the Sukhatal area.

Experts also said the town and the lake are unable to meet the needs of a burgeoning population and

the increased tourist inflow. "The consumption of water in the hill town has increased manifold. Earlier, it was around 6-7 MLD per day; it has now shot up to 16 MLD," Rawat said.

There has been no comprehensive research in the last two decades of the changes required to preserve the lake and surrounding water bodies.

The dire state of the eye-shaped water body has prompted concerned citizens to launch a petition on change.org urging chief minister T S Rawat to save the lake. The petition has garnered more than a thousand signatures in a few weeks, including those of celebrities such as singer Shubha Mudgal. A barefoot march is also being organised in the city on June 3 to raise awareness of the need to save the lake.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on May-26-5-2017 in the

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Uma sets off on Ganga trip to assess cleaning projects

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TTO 26

New Delhi: A week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi reviewed progress of the 'Namami Gange' programme, water resources minister Uma Bharati on Thursday set off on a tour to monitor execution of projects and will visit over 25 towns/cities in five states along the river's mainstem.

During her fortnight-long trip, called 'Ganga Nirikshan Abhiyan', from Ganga Sagar in West Bengal to Gangotri in Uttarakhand, Bharati will also interact with stakeholders including local people and NGOs during 'Ganga Chaulpal' (meeting on Ganga) to find out how to involve them in making the ambitious river cleaning mission a success.

Bharati's trip comes amid



ON SWACHH MISSION

reports of slow progress on Ganga cleaning projects. Though officials had claimed during the review meeting last week that the programme had made good progress, figures shared by the water resources ministry recently told a different story. TOI had earlier reported that only 13 out of 145 Ganga cleaning projects were completed by March, indicating that a lot more needed to be done to complete the gigantic task by October 2018 — the deadline Bharati has set to make the river

free from most pollutants.

Ministry officials, however, said implementation of projects would pick up now as Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh had elected BJP governments and they would be more cooperative.

"We need a lot of coordination on the ground which was earlier missing," an official said.

As the PM has stressed on the need to increase public awareness and participation in cleaning the Ganga, Bharati will focus on monitoring while trying to turn the river cleaning programme into a mass movement.

In the review meeting, Modi was informed about a survey carried out by Central Pollution Control Board which showed that there were 1,109 grossly polluting industries along the river instead of 764 identified earlier.

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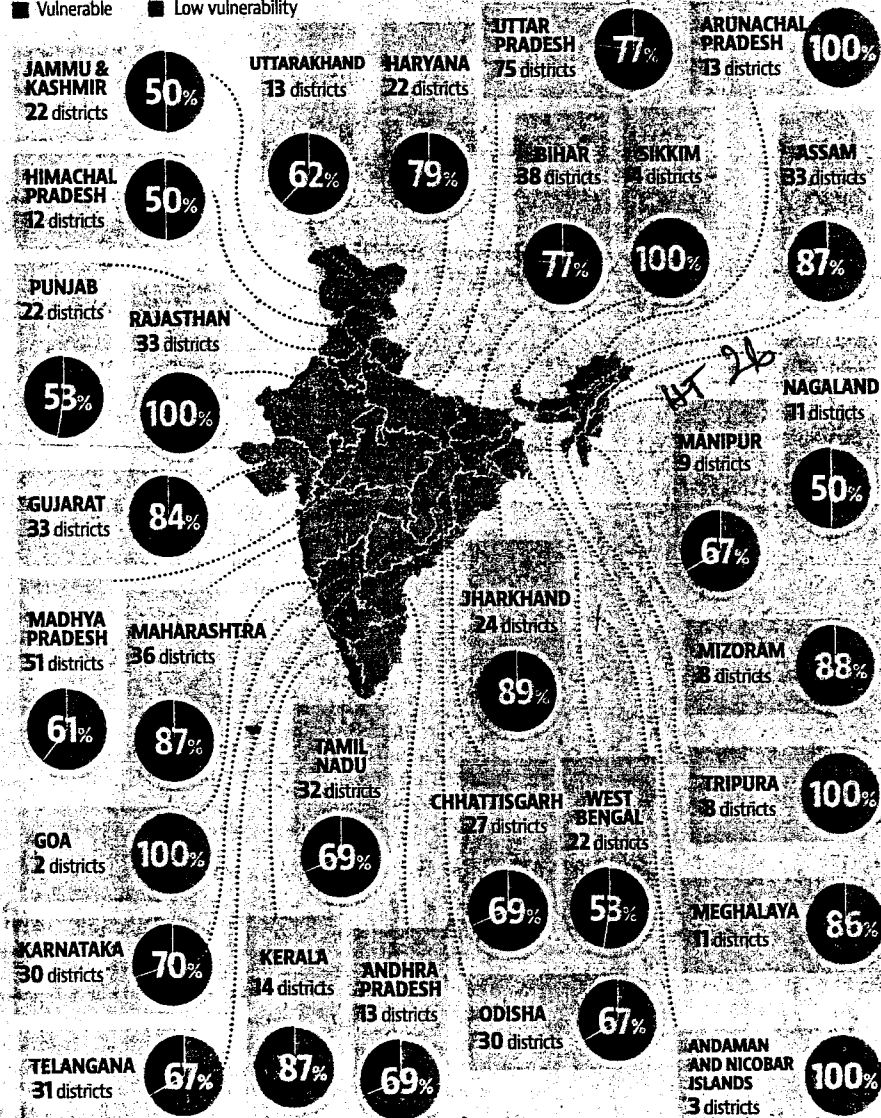
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CLIMATE VULNERABILITY: FARMERS AT RISK

By 2050, temperatures in India are likely to rise by 1-4°C and rainfall may decrease by 9-16%. This could have detrimental impact on farmers in more than half of India.

■ Vulnerable ■ Low vulnerability



'Around 60% of districts vulnerable to climate change'

Chetan Chauhan

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NEW DELHI: Around 60% of the Indian districts are vulnerable to climate change, a new assessment has found, claiming it could adversely impact food production if adequate climate proofing is not done.

Agriculture is the biggest livelihood source for around 60% of the population directly or indirectly dependent on it. Trends in recent years have shown declining production in rain-fed farm land that is more vulnerable to climate change induced rising temperature and irregular rainfall. Over the last 100 years, the average temperature in India has risen by close to 2°Celsius and extreme weather events like flash floods and drought have increased, the IMD data show.

Many districts in states such as Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and eastern Uttar Pradesh are highly vulnerable to climate change, says the assessment to be published in the Centre for Science and Environment's State of India's Environment Report 2017 on June 5.

The first ground level vulnerability index has been derived from 38 parameters that include rainfall pattern, temperature rise, extreme weather events, degradation of land and agriculture workforce. The index divides the states into three categories—exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capability.

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Mamata meets Modi, hints she won't agree to Teesta pact

Mohua Chatterjee
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New Delhi: In what could spell fresh trouble for the proposed Teesta water sharing pact between India and Bangladesh, West Bengal CM and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee pointed out to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday the problems the state faces for sharing river waters with the neighbouring country.

Mamata's meeting with the PM was to discuss fund allocation and other issues faced by the state. She submitted a three-page memorandum which focussed on problems that Bengal faces because of Bangladesh. She urged Modi to take up the issues with Dhaka.

Mamata's concerns over Bangladesh is a clear pointer that the CM is unlikely to agree to the pending Teesta water sharing treaty easily. She had made her displeasure clear to Modi and visiting Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina recently, saying that the Teesta pact in its present form was not acceptable to Bengal.

Mamata is learnt to have told the PM that "Bengal's experience about sharing Ganga water with Bangladesh is not good, as water shortage at the Farakka barrage causes the NTPC-run thermal power plant to shut down occasionally and the two ports in the state are impacted adversely". She complained about reduced flow of water from rivers like Atrayee, Tangon and Punarbhaga that flow into Bengal from Bangladesh because of barrages and dams built by the other side and also about severe pollution from Bangladesh flowing into Bengal's Churni river in Nadia district.

She also asked the PM to take up with Dhaka the issue of Malda mangoes on which Bangladesh has doubled the import duty. "They have stopped sending Hilsa and now they are imposing heavy duties on mangoes," she said.

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**उमा
भारती**

**गंगा सफाई अभी
दूर की कौड़ी**

गंगा के लिए प्रेम के लिए
पहचाने जाने वाली उमा भारती
का मंत्रालय गंगा सफाई पर
फिस्डू रहा है।

पॉजिटिव...

लंबित 297 परियोजनाओं में
से 160 को पूरी कराने में
सफलता। स्वच्छ गंगा के
लिए राष्ट्रीय प्राधिकरण।

निगेटिव...

नदी जोड़ो परियोजना में भी
खास प्रगति नहीं। चेतावनी
के बाद भी सूखे से निपटने
की कार्ययोजना तैयार नहीं।