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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.

Mahesh
27.8.18
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

Deputy Director TD Dte. & Publication Division

Director TD Dte

27/8

For information of Chairman & Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned,
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O/C

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

Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)
Punjab Keshari (Hindi)
The Hindu
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Business standard

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CRISIL DRIP

RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION REMAINS UNEVEN

Deficiency seen at the state-level, but irrigation cushions crops



THE ALL-INDIA RAINFALL level improved further in the week ended August 22 with cumulative rain at 7% below the long-period average (LPA) compared with 9% in the preceding

week. However, distribution across states remained patchy.

While rains continued to overwhelm Kerala and parts of Telangana, there was a catch-up in Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Rajasthan. Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar and Haryana continued to be rain deficient (15-24% below LPA), while rains weakened in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (UP).

But rainfall volume data alone is not sufficient to assess the distribution impact. It's important to weigh that along with irrigation levels. Some states have reasonably good irrigation levels. So, weaker rains are unlikely to dent crops sown there.

And that's where CRISIL's Deficient Rainfall Impact Parameter or DRIP, provides a better assessment of deficiency because it considers the irrigation buffer available. The higher the CRISIL DRIP score, the more adverse the impact of deficient rains.

Haryana is a case in point where for most of July and August, rainfall deficiency has been over 12%. But the state's DRIP score has stayed low simply because it is well irrigated. Similarly, in specific states, certain crops are better irrigated, which cushions them from weak rains.

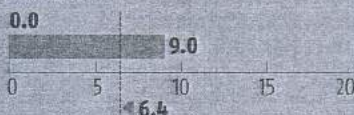
This week's DRIP scores highlight some strain in Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar and Rajasthan, because they are higher than last year and above the average of the past five years.

Compared with the previous week's list of stressed states, Madhya Pradesh dropped out as rains caught up after a

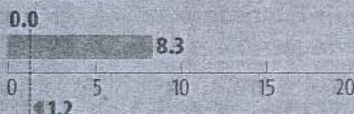
STATE-WISE DRIP SCORES

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ Average of last 5 years

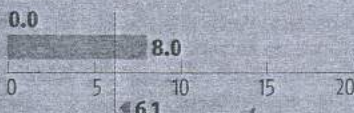
GUJARAT



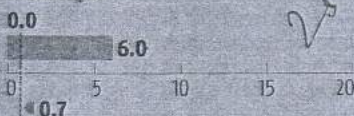
WEST BENGAL



BIHAR



RAJASTHAN



CROP-WISE DRIP SCORES

RICE



Note: DRIP scores are for rainfall data from June 1 to July 25 for each year.
Source: Indian Meteorological Department, Ministry of Agriculture, CRISIL

brief deficiency and Bihar has been added. Last week's DRIP scores had highlighted some emerging strain in Bihar.

Crop-wise DRIP scores though shows improvement. As of now, only rice (cultivated in rain-deficient West Bengal) appears under some strain as scores are higher than 2017 as well as the past average.

Data for one more week in August is pending after which the impact on states or crops will be clear.

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A world of bluffocrats



AL FRESCO

SUNIL FESCHI

In Britain, they have just coined a new phrase: Bluffocrats. In a new book *Bluffocracy*, part of a series titled "Provocations", James Ball, a journalist, and former civil servant Andrew Greenway, argue that their country is overtaken by chancers — "In a nation run by people whose knowledge extends a mile wide but an inch deep; who know how to grasp the generalities of any topic in minutes, and how never to bother themselves with the specifics. Who place their confidence in their ability to talk themselves out of trouble, rather than learning how to run things carefully."

So who is a top-of-the-line British bluffocrat, really? Is he —

for the category is predominantly male — also a buffoon like the former mayor of London and former foreign secretary, Boris Johnson? Or a perpetual itinerant like current home secretary Sajid Javid, who has held seven jobs in six years? Or George Osborne, a prominent editor with a few weeks' experience in journalism?

In a forceful, often rollicking ride the authors take you through a broad swathe of the political, bureaucratic and media establishment populated by figures unable to come to grips with governance. Their caustic findings are bolstered by polemical conclusions. A bluffocrat is "someone who knew how to come up with a headline-grabbing idea, and how to make it sound convincing and radical — but didn't ever have the faintest idea how to implement it."

By that definition many masters of our universe are in competition for ace slots, from Donald Trump — for his outrageous views on everything from immigration to sexual shenanigans — to Russia's Vladimir Putin — for his expansionist dreams — to Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif — for running their

economies into the ground.

If the school of bluffers includes those who get to the top not from deep knowledge but from delivering "a clever quip or a leftfield surprise argument," then India's Narendra Modi is the undisputed Bluffocrat Emeritus. An endless stream of ill-starred or half-digested ideas including demonetisation and GST have been propped up by a series of welfare schemes — public toilets, rural electrification and housing, instant banking and health insurance — couched in catchy slogans and drop-dead deadlines. All were to contribute to the "Ache Din" utopia promised in 2014. Less than ten months to the next election several are a fading mirage.

To the cast of bluffocrats in public life — described in characteristic British idiom, "as the same sort of chap with the same sort of chat" — India has the added distinction of creating a new class of politician with a novel idea of body language. These are Hug-o-crats.

Through much of his term, the Indian prime minister was subjected to ridicule for clasping world leaders close to his 46-inch chest. Where a polite handshake or a decorous namaskar or salaam

customary among his compatriots would have sufficed, Mr Modi took to embarrassingly deep clinches. Then Rahul Gandhi turned the tables with his surprise hug-and-wink in Parliament. The latest member of India's Hug-o-cracy is Punjab minister Navjot Singh Sidhu whose unexpected free hugs to Pakistan's leading general invited censure from his chief minister and a jaded public reaction. The 54-year-old party-hopping former cricketer and TV joker is a classic bluffocrat. Well past his sell-by date, his heyday of "Sidhu Sixers" on the pitch or the screen consigned to a hazy past, he depends, like most bluffocrats, on the dubious gratification of social media.

The inescapable lifeline of the bluffocrat is the number of Facebook page "likes", Twitter or Instagram followers totted up per millisecond. Partyspokespersons such as Sambit Patra and Randeep Singh Surjewala are professional bluffmasters, fielded for their acerbic, below-the-belt one-liners as much for their dexterity on smartphones.

Their daily slog at pressers, however, must cede space to the arresting visual image a bluffocrat can speedily disseminate. A misplaced example of bleeding-heart solidarity this week came from bureaucrat-turned-Union minis-

ter K J Alphons flashing a picture of himself bedding down in a flood relief camp Kerala. Meanwhile, Shashi Tharoor, MP from the state capital, Thiruvananthapuram, a gilt-edged bluffocrat of high polish and well-honed lines, hopped a ride with party leader Rahul Gandhi on his four-day outing in Germany, leaving endangered lives and life-savers to their own devices. An accomplished bluffocrat always knows which side of his bread is buttered.

Among the assertions that the authors of *Bluffocracy* make is that there were few women bluffocrats that made the cut, perhaps because men far outnumbered women, in this superior male-entrenched class. In India, there is the honourable exception of Textiles Minister Smriti Irani. She is an itinerant bluffocrat, now into her third ministry in four years. Indeed, it would be difficult to decide where she proved her mettle better in bluffing skilfully, as TV actress or leading light of the ruling party.

In Britain, the finest flower of bluffocrats is acknowledged to be Boris Johnson. Here is his definition of how he achieved that halcyon status. "My friends," he said, "as I have discovered myself, there are no disasters, only opportunities. And, indeed, opportunities for fresh disasters."

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 20/8/18 in the

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All pride, no grace



KARAN THAPAR

I don't view pride as a laudable emotion although when it's a response to creditable achievements it is, at least, understandable. But when it's not, it appears arrogant and ungracious, it can prove to be self-defeating and, often, leave you looking ridiculous. Sadly, all three is the case with India's refusal to accept international aid in response to Kerala's devastating floods.

Now I know this is a policy that stretches back to the Manmohan Singh government's

response to the 2004 tsunami. It was also implemented during the Uttarakhand calamity of 2013. So it's been India's practice for the last decade and a half. But what's happened over Kerala best illustrates why this is a deeply mistaken response.

Let's first examine the facts. According to the Kerala government, the state has suffered damage of nearly ₹200 billion. Over 350 have died; 1.3 million are in camps; 200,000 houses destroyed. The government has asked for ₹26 billion of immediate relief assistance. In response, the Centre has given ₹6 billion and various state governments perhaps another ₹2 billion. Together that's just about 30 per cent of what the state believes is required.

UAE's alleged offer of ₹7 billion was a sizeable step towards filling that gap. Assistance has also been offered by Qatar, Thailand and The Maldives. No doubt others would have helped

as well but they've probably been choked off.

The first question is a simple one: Can New Delhi on its own provide all the financial assistance Kerala needs and do so promptly? Remember the devastated state is in no position to wait and be patient. If the answer is not an unequivocal yes, it's self-defeating to refuse assistance when you need it. Those who have suffered will pay the price. Not the rest of us.

India's position, articulated by Dr Manmohan Singh during the 2004 tsunami, is "we feel that we can cope with the situation on our own". It's intended to prove we are a power of substance and not dependent on assistance. But the major economies of the world have behaved very differently in similar circumstances.

At the time of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, America accepted aid from 150 countries including India. UAE, Qatar and Kuwait gave "very large cash" donations. Even Bangladesh pledged \$1 million. During the

Fukushima earthquake in 2011, Japan's doors were open to international assistance. India was one of the contributors. The same was true of China when the Sichuan earthquake struck in 2008.

It seems we wish to give but not accept. Doesn't that feel ungracious? Doesn't it smack of arrogance? The UAE has a special relationship with Kerala. It wishes to share the state's pain and suffering. This is why it wants to contribute. This is also why it's mean-spirited to reject its offer, no matter how politely done.

We may be a fast developing country but remain a poor one. Twenty-two per cent live below the poverty line, defined as a mere ₹816 per capita per month in rural areas and ₹1000 in urban areas. Perhaps just as many scratch a living just above it. Abject poverty is the only phrase that can accurately describe their existence. Even when you take the rest of us into account, the country's per capita income is only \$7,060. In contrast, it's \$16,760 in China, \$45,470 in

Japan and \$60,200 in USA.

In our own eyes, we believe we can do without aid but is that how others see us? I doubt it. Though not to our face, I'm sure they will snigger behind our backs and think we're being ridiculous.

The bizarre bit is that Clause 9 of the 2016 National Disaster Management Plan envisages the acceptance of international assistance. It says: "If the national government of another country voluntarily offers assistance as a goodwill gesture in solidarity with the disaster victims, the Central Government may accept the offer." Prime Minister Narendra Modi needs to explain why he won't. He should also explain why the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson says: "Contributions to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and the Chief Minister's Relief Fund from NRIs, PIOs and international entities such as foundations would, however, be welcome." Is this a case of accepting money by the back door whilst refusing it through the front? It certainly feels like that.

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Rising costs, shift pay pull down tea industry

PAVAN LALL

Mumbai, 24 August

In June, the tea industry was shaken as the world's largest producer Mcleod Russel moved to sell 11 gardens in a bid to slash debt and consolidate its business. Nearly two years ago, Duncans, one of the largest tea companies in India, shut doors. Now, growing demand for shift wages for plantation employees in West Bengal, who want rates revised from ₹159 to ₹169, may lead to a slump in the industry.

The Plantations Labour Act requires workers be provided wages, health care, food, accommodation and education for their children. Assam, which produces close to 700 million kilograms of tea every year, recently revised wages from ₹137 to ₹167. Assam had been grappling with strikes or bandhs that saw around 500 of the 800 plus gardens stop work, causing billions of rupees in losses. Last week, West Bengal saw unions go on a three-day partial strike.

Azam Monem, director at Mcleod Russel, said business had come full

circle from when his firm had bought gardens from the Tatas and Hindustan Unilever.

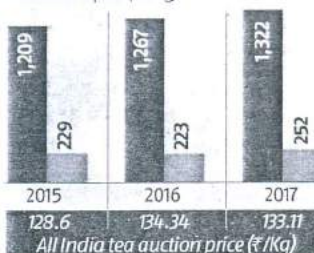
"The labour-intensive approach is back dated. Competition from small tea growers and flat tea prices at auctions makes it hard to see growth," Monem added. "The industry faces the exact predicament as the textile industry did during the advent of power looms. The tea industry is one of the largest employers after the Indian Railways with a minimum of 1,000 workers for every garden and around 700,000 workers in Assam, according to industry experts.

Monem thinks there are too many unions. "Assam has two to three unions, but West Bengal, including the Dooars, have 21 different registered unions in operation. This makes any negotiation complex," he said. Arijit Raha, secretary general of the Indian Tea Association, said small tea growers who accounted for around 15 per cent of the total production a few years ago now produce 47 per cent of the total output.

Bidyandana Barkakoty,

IN FIGURES

■ India tea production (mn kg)
■ India tea exports (mn kg)



Source: Indian Tea Association

chairman of the advisory committee for small tea growers in India, said the smaller producers sell at lower prices. He pointed to another emerging trend. "The organised sector is buying tea leaves from these small players," he added.

The Guwahati Tea Auction Centre broke records by receiving bids for ₹40,000 a kilo for Golden Needle tea. So, why can't the sector go the

premium way and push prices higher by packaging their products and pushing more premium products? The consumer class, which might spend money on tea and beverages is tiny and restricted to major metros and international markets, said Vivek Goenka, president of Warren Tea Company.

Darjeeling, a key hub for Indian tea plantations faced a lockdown for over three months last year due to political turbulence. While some may point to the need for agricultural labour to be fairly compensated, one Darjeeling-based tea garden owner pointed to a subject that most unions shy away from discussing — productivity. "Many workers don't show up for work but claim dues. It's something the unions have to fix," he added.

Many were surprised when Mcleod Russel hived off multiple gardens but similar events in the future are not unexpected anymore. Goenka said: "I will not be surprised if more gardens or companies shut down entirely because of market pressure."

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Cheerless Onam in Kerala's rice bowl

GIREESH BABU
 Kuttanad, 24 August

With large parts of the state still reeling from the ravages of the floods, Kerala is staring at a grim Onam this year. Saturday is the main feast of the festival, which celebrates the legend of asura king Mahabali's annual visit to earth from netherworld. But there are no merry-makers this time. Missing are the snake boat races and the revellers dressed as Mahabali. And missing too are the lush green paddy fields; they are inundated with flood water and the crops are all destroyed.

"We won't have Onam this year. I think it will be several more days before I get to see my house and fields out of water," says 68-year-old Gopalan, who is staying at a relief camp in Alappuzha, which is part of Kuttanad, the rice bowl of Kerala. When Gopalan and his family were rescued from their house, the water was already chest-high.

D Lakshmanan, Pallathuruthy ward councillor, and head of the relief camp at a school in Thiruvambadi, Alappuzha, says: "Almost 200,000 people have been rescued and there are 62 relief camps in Alappuzha alone."

"The water is receding slowly and it may take another 10 days for it to be fully drained," says Vinod V, a farmer in Kuttanad. "The land needs to be prepared for cultivation by November and we don't know if it will be possible," he says. Having lost their crops, farmers like Vinod also wonder how they will repay the loans they have taken.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Kuttanad Wetland Agriculture System is unique as it is the only place in India which favours rice cultivation below sea level in land that was created by draining the delta swamps. In fact, it was awarded the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) tag for its unique agricultural heritage.

But today, the entire Kuttanad region, including Chambakkulam, Nedumudi, Kavalan, Kayikkara and many others, has been devastated. And it's not only the wasted croplands — after being underwater for more than a week, many houses have developed cracks. The chances of some of them collapsing cannot be ruled out.

The mood is not much different in Kochi, Kerala's financial capital. While it was not as badly hit as Kuttanad, water from Periyar inundated much of Kochi's streets and those of neighbouring towns like Aluva. "This is the busiest season for traders and shopkeepers, but business has been at a standstill for the last two weeks," says a tailoring shop owner. Many industrial units are running with low manpower, as most of the employees have still not returned home from the camps.



Men paddle their boat through the lawns of a partially submerged church at Kuttanad in Alleppey

Rubber prices up 6% as supply down

Prices of rubber rose nearly six per cent to ₹134 a kg on Thursday from ₹127 as on July 31 due to rain and floods in Kerala, which caters to 85 per cent of the domestic demand. Tyre makers, the largest consumers of natural rubber, are worried more about availability than price. They expect a gap of over a half a million tonnes during the ongoing fiscal.

Rubber has seen around 40 per cent crop loss, the Kerala Planters Association (KPA) estimates, which means the targeted output of 600,000 metric tonnes (MT) for 2018-2019 will not be possible. Production has remained below 45,000 tonnes from April-June, while in August there was virtually no production. Arrivals in the market are practically nil or negligible, said Rajiv Budhraj, director general, Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association. He said more than 40 per cent of the April-June demand was met through imports.

T E NARASIMHAN

Needless to say, the loss to business has been staggering. "We are yet to analyse the losses," says Damodar Avanoor, state president of Kerala State Small Industries Association (KISSIA). There are about 135,000 small scale units in Kerala, and Avanoor says they will request the state and the Central governments for special packages or exemptions as relief measures.

The floods have also dealt a heavy blow to Kerala's plantation sector. Ajith Balakrishnan, secretary, Association of Planters of Kerala (APK), pegs the losses at around ₹7-8 billion. The worst affected are the plantations in Idukki, Wayanad, and Nelliyanpatti in Palakkad — places which are still mostly inaccessible.

The government's initial estimate of the losses is about ₹200-300 billion. But the figure could climb higher. "We have not assessed the full extent of the damage as yet and will approach the government for assistance soon," says S Sajikumar, chairman of CII Kerala State Council.

Meanwhile, most agree that the state and other agencies have done a sterling job in the

relief camps. At the Thiruvambadi camp a doctor visits every day and treats the sick. The flood is good too, say the people. However, some complain that while food is not a problem, the distribution of clothes has not been even-handed. "The councillor is giving all the new clothes to his relatives and giving us the old stuff," alleges Sophy, a housewife, who lost her paddy field and some 150 ducks to the flood. But the government and relief camp authorities say that they are not even accepting old clothes for fear of infection and disease.

Relief measures to help people pick up the pieces of their lives are underway. Banks are rescheduling loans to farmers and the government too has announced steps to reduce their burden. People are slowly going back to their homes now. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that the number of people in the camps has come down from 1.2 million to 1.04 million on Thursday.

However, the long road to rebuild Kerala has just begun.

KEEP MULLAPERIYAR DAM WATER LEVEL DOWN, SC TELLS TN

The Supreme Court on Friday ordered that the water level at the Mullaperiyar dam be maintained at 139 feet till August 31 keeping in mind the grave devastation that has taken place due to the unprecedented floods in Kerala. A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud considered the Centre's submission that the sub-committee of the Mullaperiyar dam had met on August 23 and directed the Tamil Nadu government to ensure that the water level is maintained at 139 feet, which is two feet below the permissible limit fixed by the apex court. **PM**

ITALIAN FOOTBALL CLUB AS ROMA TO PUT MATCH SHIRTS ON BID

Italian football giant AS Roma on Friday said it will auction off five match-worn shirts from the first team players to help raise funds for Kerala. The Serie A side also urged its fans to donate. English Premier League side Liverpool FC also tweeted in solidarity and asked its fans to help the victims of the flood-hit state. **PM**

GATES FOUNDATION TO SEND \$600,000 FOR KERALA RELIEF

An amount of \$600,000 (almost ₹42 million) will be sent to UNICEF to strengthen relief and rehabilitation efforts in Kerala which witnessed its worst deluge in nearly a century, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has said. The emergency grant aims to bolster government efforts and initiatives by NGOs in the enormous task of assisting displaced, flood-affected people and helping them rebuild their lives, the foundation said. UNICEF, along with NGOs, is currently working in tandem with district administrations to spearhead relief effort. **PM**

'Kerala's GSDP to be hit by ₹108 bn'

NIKHAT HETAVIAR
 Mumbai, 24 August

Kerala's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) loss would amount to nearly ₹108 billion due to the torrential downpour and floods, said a report by Acute Ratings.

The calamity will expectedly affect the state's finances due to impact on the GSDP and the likely rise in state borrowing to finance the reconstruction activities in the infrastructure sector such as roads.

Acute estimated the state fiscal deficit to reach up to 5.4 per cent in FY19 from 3.3 per cent in FY18, which may only get partly offset by the grants-in-aid from the Central government and other sources.

Tourism and the agro-based industries, key sectors in the Kerala economy, are expected to suffer severe losses given the damage to infrastructure assets and the local crop or plantations.

The hospitality and tourism sector is estimated to account for around one-fourth of the

GSDP and may witness an impact in the current year through a likely drop in tourist flows and the loss in property due to the floods, said Acute.

A CARE Ratings report said that the fall in tourism is expected for around six to seven months as the state recovers during the peak tourism season. The agro-based and plantation industries such as rubber, tea, paper, textiles, food processing etc. are likely to suffer aggregate losses of over ₹12 billion, said Acute.

Floods will also have a significant impact on the financial services sector in the state, it said. Acute estimated an increase of up to 2-2.5% in the non-performing asset levels of the retail and the small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) portfolio of banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) operating in the state over the near term.

"This may slow down the growth of bank credit and disbursements in the state further impacting the growth in GSDP," it said.

Still believe UAE aid will be taken: Vijayan

T E NARASIMHAN
 Kochi, 24 August



Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that he still believes that the financial aid offered by the UAE will be accepted by India.

He said that the conversation on financial aid was between the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"As mentioned on that day, when (business honcho) Yusuf Ali MA met the UAE Prince to convey his Bakrid wishes, he said that he had

spoken to the Prime Minister about a financial aid to the tune of \$100 million. I have again asked him whether we can announce in public and he said there would not be any issue," he said.

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Kharif sowing may stay below last year's level

SANJEEB MUKHERJEE

New Delhi, 24 August

Kharif sowing continued to fall short of last year's figure by almost 1.3 million hectares due to shift from pulses to oilseeds in some states and low acreage owing to drought in others.

With the southwest monsoon entering its last month and amount of rain expected to remain low, sowing of kharif crops is unlikely to pick up in a big way.

This would mean that acreage of some major crops may remain below last year's level, though the actual impact on the total output will depend on the weather during the remaining few weeks.

According to the Met department, overall monsoon distribution has been fairly good, though there have been pockets of distress which now face the prospect of drought.

These include Bihar, where the rainfall in this season so far has been 22 per cent less than normal, Jharkhand where it has been less than 28 per cent, north interior Karnataka (-21 per cent), Rayalseema (-42 per cent), Assam and Meghalaya (-34 per cent) and Saurashtra (-21 per cent).

Out of the 36 meteorological subdivisions, rainfall between June 1 and August 23 has been normal in 25 subdivisions and deficient in the remaining 11.

According to the department of agriculture, area sown under rice, the main kharif crop, is still lagging behind at 35.68 million hectares (ha) so far in the current season.

Rice acreage stood at 35.95 million hectares in the year-



THE DOWNFALL

Kharif sowing till August 24 (in million hectares)

	2017-18	2018-19	% Change
Rice	35.95	35.68	-0.75
Pulses	13.38	13.08	-2.27
Coarse cereals	17.43	16.65	-4.48
Oilseeds	16.42	16.7	1.68
Total	100.85	99.56	-1.28

Source: Ministry of Agriculture

ago period.

Sowing of kharif crops begins with the onset of southwest monsoon from July and harvesting from October.

According to the ministry's data, shortfall in the area of most kharif crops has narrowed and sowing of all kharif crops was covered in 99.56 million hectares when compared with 100.85 million hectares in the previous year.

Besides rice, area that has sown pulses, mainly urad, arhar and moong was marginally down at 13.08 million hectares so far this season against 13.38 million hectares in the same period

last season.

Coarse cereals acreage remained lower at 16.65 million hectares so far this season against 17.43 million hectares a year ago.

Cotton area, too, was lower at 11.68 million hectares against 11.96 million hectares in the said period.

However, area under oilseeds and sugarcane remained higher than the year-ago period.

Area sown to oilseeds was slightly higher at 16.7 million hectares against 16.42 million hectares, while the sugarcane area was at 5.06 million hectares against 4.98 million hectares from the previous year.

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
Aaj (Hindi)
Indian Nation
Nai Duniya (Hindi)
The Times of India (A)
Business standard

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

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFIC RELIEF ACT, 1963

Getting stalled projects going

JYOTI MUKUL

Non-resolution of contractual disputes between a government body and a contractor or between two private contractors come in the way of completion projects many a time, making stalled projects a chronic problem in the country, especially in the infrastructure sector.

Though the mother legislation governing contracts is the Indian Contract Act, 1872, the Specific Relief Act of 1963 provides a mechanism to move on when disputes arise. This Act, which gives remedies for resolution of disputes, has been amended to widen the options available for seeking execution of contracts. For instance, Section 20 of the Specific Relief Act has been replaced by a new provision which allows the aggrieved party to engage another entity for execution of work. "Where the contract is broken due to non-performance of promise by any party, the party who suffers by such breach shall have the option of substituted performance through a third-party or by his own agency, and, recover the expenses and other costs actually incurred, spent or suffered by him, from the party committing such breach," says the new provision.

Besides the "substituted performance", the Act provides for "specific performance" where the aggrieved party can seek court direction for execution of contractual obligation by the other party. The earlier law had laid conditions on the court while ordering specific performance. These conditions of inadequate monetary compensation or where compensation cannot be easily calculated stand removed after the amended conditions. "Before the passing of these amendments, specific performance was an exception rather than the rule and, therefore, in most cases the legal right available was damages," says Gauri Rasgotra, partner and deputy head, Delhi, Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas.

The court is now bound to enforce specific performance unless it falls under the restrictions provided in the amendments. This in a way gives a government authority a greater legal leeway in getting a stalled

project going. The aggrieved party can invoke a specific performance if it is able to prove non-performance and would be at a greater advantage. "Therefore, if the authority is able to prove breaches then either the court may grant the specific performance claimed by the authority or it may direct a third party to complete the project and ask the contractor to pay for the cost," she says.

Moreover, the insertion of Section 20(A) seeks to ensure minimum court interference in public utility contracts that are specified in the Act as well as can be notified by the government as infrastructure from time to time. "It has sought to prevent the court from granting injunctions if it causes any delay in the progress or completion of the infrastructure project. Also, the court has to record reasons for the grant of such injunction," she says.

Another sub-section 20(B) provides the state governments designate special courts to deal with cases relating to infrastructure projects. A time limit of 12 months has been fixed for deciding such cases.

At the same time, Section 14(A) of the Act now allows courts to engage experts in assisting it. The payment to such experts is liable to be borne by both contracting parties.

There have been attempts by the government in the past, too, to address the issue of resolution of disputes which arise because of factors like environment clearance, land acquisition,

levy of user charges leading to cost escalation and funding challenge for the contractors. At one point, a Public Utility Dispute Resolution Bill was conceived. The proposal for the Bill, which also provided for special tribunals, an independent monitoring agency and a new credit rating system, was later given a burial by the NDA government. Rasgotra says amendments to the Specific Relief Act addresses most of the issues that the government had proposed in that Bill for dealing with delays in the infrastructure sector.

Settlement of contractual disputes, however, will continue to depend on interpretations of agreement clauses that in most sectors are tightly designed, leaving little flexibility for addressing unforeseen issues.

Hindustan Times
Statesman ✓
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and documented at Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section, CWC.

Alarm rings as 900 water resources dry up in HP

SANJEEV KUMAR
SHIMLA, 26 AUGUST

The recent water crisis of Shimla has signalled alarm bells to the rest of the state. As many as 922 water supply and 245 irrigation resources have almost exhausted owing to changing climatic conditions.

"The change in climatic conditions has resulted in reduction in surface and ground water levels in Himachal," Irrigation and public Health Minister Mahender Singh Thakur informed Vidhan Sabha.

This has also resulted in drying up of 922 potable water and 245 irrigation resources in the state, he added while replying to a query by Balvir Singh Verma, a legislator from Chopal assembly constituency of Shimla district.

He informed that government is implementing Rs 4,751 crore Asian Development Bank funded project to rejuvenate water resources and is implementing 'Doubling of Farmers' Income through Water



Conservation in HP' for the purpose. Under the scheme, the government would build structures for rain water harvesting and soil water conservation across the state and the water would be used for irrigation purposes in surrounding areas.

In first phase, the scheme would be implemented in worst affected areas of Mandi, Bilaspur and Hamirpur districts

and Rs 708.87 crore has been sanctioned for the same.

Later, the scheme would be implemented in other areas of the state in phased manner, he added.

The government has decided to make changes in existing policy for new drinking water schemes as almost all from small to big water resources are drying up with each passing day.

"Now, the government would focus on major water resources and large number of consumers instead of focusing on small area or schemes," he said.

The government would connect small schemes with big water sources or reservoir so that regular water supply could be provided to the people of the state, Thakur added.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the tourist town of Shimla faced severe water crisis in May-June this year which led to its comparison with that of Cape Town in South Africa.

During the monitoring of Shimla water crisis, the High Court had observed that five districts of Himachal, Bilaspur, Mandi, Kangra, Hamirpur and Una are too facing severe crisis.

As per the data provided by the government, around 50 per cent of the habitations in Himachal Pradesh are not fully covered for adequate potable water to the residents.

The government report had revealed even after more than 70 years of independence, only 50 per cent of total 53,604 habitations so identified by the IPH stand provided with adequate potable water.

The court had termed it as a serious issue for the state which has many perennial rivers like Satluj, Bias, Ravi, Chenab, Pabbar, Chander and Bhaga.

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Trouble in the hills

There should be public consultation on expert reports on the Western Ghats ecology

The catastrophic monsoon floods in Kerala and parts of Karnataka have revived the debate on whether political expediency trumped science. Seven years ago, the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel issued recommendations for the preservation of the fragile western peninsular region. Madhav Gadgil, who chaired the Union Environment Ministry's WGEEP, has said the recent havoc in Kerala is a consequence of short-sighted policymaking, and warned that Goa may also be in the line of nature's fury. The State governments that are mainly responsible for the Western Ghats - Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Maharashtra - must go back to the drawing table with the reports of both the Gadgil Committee and the Kasturirangan Committee, which was set up to examine the WGEEP report. The task before them is to initiate correctives to environmental policy decisions. This is not going to be easy, given the need to balance human development pressures with stronger protection of the Western Ghats ecology. The issue of allowing extractive industries such as quarrying and mining to operate is arguably the most contentious. A way out could be to create the regulatory framework that was proposed by the Gadgil panel, in the form of an apex Western Ghats Ecology Authority and the State-level units, under the Environment (Protection) Act, and to adopt the zoning system that it proposed. This can keep incompatible activities out of the Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZs).

At issue in the Western Ghats - spread over 1,29,037 sq km according to the WGEEP estimate and 1,64,280 sq km as per the Kasturirangan panel - is the calculation of what constitutes the sensitive core and what activities can be carried out there. The entire system is globally acknowledged as a biodiversity hotspot. But population estimates for the sensitive zones vary greatly, based on interpretations of the ESZs. In Kerala, for instance, one expert assessment says 39 lakh households are in the ESZs outlined by the WGEEP, but the figure drops sharply to four lakh households for a smaller area of zones identified by the Kasturirangan panel. The goal has to be sustainable development for the Ghats as a whole. The role of big hydroelectric dams, built during an era of rising power demand and deficits, must now be considered afresh and proposals for new ones dropped. Other low-impact forms of green energy led by solar power are available. A moratorium on quarrying and mining in the identified sensitive zones, in Kerala and also other States, is necessary to assess their environmental impact. Kerala's Finance Minister, Thomas Isaac, has acknowledged the need to review decisions affecting the environment, in the wake of the floods. Public consultation on the expert reports that includes people's representatives will find greater resonance now, and help chart a sustainable path ahead.

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Kerala seeks help to rebuild State

CM thanks the 'noble minds' assisting the State in its hour of calamity

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has called upon people living in all parts of the world to support Kerala, which is striving hard to come out of its biggest calamity in 100 years.

'Pitiable plight'

In an article released on Friday, the Chief Minister pointed out that the unprecedented downpour and floods had resulted in a heavy loss of life, immeasurable misery and devastation. "As is known to all, the calamity, with its hitherto unheard of dimensions, plunged our State and its people into a pitiable plight. The magnitude of the havoc truly gets reflected in the fact that a vast area of the State still remains submerged in floodwaters," he said.

Mr. Vijayan put the loss of lives in the floods at 372, and the number of homes damaged or destroyed at 26,000. The flood waters had laid waste crops spread over 40,000 hectares, claimed the lives of two lakh poultry

and at least 46,000 milch animals, brought down many multi-storey buildings, shops and commercial establishments, caused severe damage to the roads and bridges, washing away some of them, and caused loss to the order of ₹ 750 crore to the power sector and of ₹ 900 crore to the water sector.

A preliminary assessment of the losses, in monetary terms, was ₹ 20,000 crore.

"It goes without saying that the actuals will steadily go up once the water recedes and the final assessment is made. To put it in a nutshell, the size of the loss caused by the calamity is equal to the size of the annual plan that the State has chalked out for 2018-19. I need not tell you that Kerala on its own will not be in a position to mobilise the required resources to bridge the gap, reclaim and rebuild. Since the State is densely populated with an equally complex infrastructure network, the loss suffered by the State is huge in nature and is something which cannot be compared



Flights from the UAE being loaded with over 175 tonnes of relief material, donated by various organisations, for Kerala. • OFFICIAL TWITTER HANDLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

to the damage suffered by any other part of the country at any point of time," the Chief Minister said.

'Point of agony'

Mr. Vijayan said it was heartening that "noble minds from all over the world are coming to help us at this point of agony. Considering the magnitude of the devastation that has happened in Kerala, the Centre has released ₹ 100 crore for immediate relief. The Prime Minister, immediately after his aerial survey, announced that ₹ 500 crore will be made available to the State in addition

to the damage suffered by any other part of the country at any point of time," the Chief Minister said.

"It is with a thankful heart that we take note of the fact that foreign countries ranging from the UAE (United Arab Emirates) to Qatar have come forward with their promise of assistance. I know pretty well that all who have a concern towards our State, located at the southern-most tip of our land, will come in a big way to our aid. Help from all around the world will go a long way in our efforts to overcome this calamity," the Chief Minister said.

(For full statement, visit: <http://bit.ly/KeralaCMappeal>)

SC staff to donate one day's salary

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

After the judges and the lawyers, it is now the turn of the Supreme Court's general work staff to do their bit to bring relief to the flood victims of Kerala.

The court issued a circular on Friday stating that "a large number of staff members feel that we should contribute generously" to the flood victims.

The circular said the employees are willing to donate at least a day's gross salary to the Kerala Chief Minister's distress relief fund. This donation, it said, would be voluntary and "meant for the welfare and rehabilitation of the affected population and development of the affected areas in the State of Kerala."

The Supreme Court has seen a flurry of activity with lawyers coming together to collect tonnes of relief material in two separate drives.

Kerala farmers lose out on insurance payout

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

There will be no payout for Kerala farmers affected by the recent floods under the government's weather-based crop insurance scheme, as the State had not notified excess rainfall as one of the trigger conditions for the month of August.

However, Agriculture Ministry officials say farmers will receive compensation under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, which is a yield-based crop insurance scheme. The insurance com-

pany implementing the scheme has been directed to pay an estimated amount of ₹12-14 crore within a week's time to farmers in Alleppey and Kottayam districts where germination failure has been declared.

For the remaining districts, where mid-season adversity losses are likely to be declared, compensation is still being calculated.

"The State declared various triggers when the Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) term sheet for kharif 2018 was made," a senior Agriculture Ministry official told *The Hindu*. "For the month of August, excess rainfall was not included as a trigger."

"For the month of August, excess rainfall was not included as a trigger."

District-wise crops

The notification by the Kerala Agriculture Department, dated June 30, lists the district-wise crops which would be covered by the RWBCIS for the 2018 kharif, or summer, crop season. Apart from three variants of paddy, other crops covered include arecanut, pepper, ginger, su-

garcane, turmeric, cardamom, pineapple, banana and nutmeg. It also lists the crop-wise risks, the covered risk period and the cut-off date for coverage.

For all types of paddy, for example, the insurance scheme covered deficit rainfall, dry spells and high temperatures during specific time periods as possible factors which would trigger a payout.

However, excess or unseasonal rainfall is only listed as a trigger for pepper, ginger, sugarcane, turmeric, pi-

neapple, banana, but with time periods that are either before May or after September 15. Only nutmeg includes coverage for excess rainfall in August.

"Each State has to decide what are the most likely risks, as insurance premiums increase with every listed trigger," explained the Ministry official, adding that continued excess rainfall next month would result in farmers of other horticulture crops – barring paddy – benefiting from the coverage under the RWBCIS.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 25.08.2018 in the

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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Karnataka floods: Defence Ministry slams state minister behaviour, state govt hits back at Sitharaman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, BENGALURU,
AUGUST 25

A DAY after the public spat between Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Karnataka Minister Sa Ra Mahesh over her itinerary, the Defence Ministry on Saturday termed his conduct as "unfortunate". The state government hit back, saying it was not inferior to the Centre and Sitharaman should have shown respect to its minister.

Sitharaman was speaking at the district commissioner's office with a group of people from Kodagu district, where torrential rain has claimed at least 17 lives, when Mahesh suggested that she wind up the interaction as some government officials were wait-

ing for a meeting with her. Sitharaman, a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka, responded by saying that she was going by the itinerary approved by the state authorities. "I am following a minute-to-minute programme, minister. I do not violate that. If officials are important, my parivar (family) is also equally important. I follow the minister-in-charge. Central minister follows the minister-in-charge here. Unbelievable," Sitharaman told Mahesh, who was sitting next to her.

When an official told her that media was recording her comments, she said, "Let it get recorded."

The defence ministry said in a clarification Saturday, "On completion of the field visits, as per the programme, the defence minister was interacting with ex-servicemen who had been adversely af-



Nirmala Sitharaman

ected by the floods, when the district in-charge minister objected and insisted that meeting with the officials be conducted first."

"The defence minister clarified that welfare of ex-servicemen was an essential part of the ministry and the same was scheduled in the programme. However, the district minister insisted that the defence minister immediately

stop the interaction and proceed to the meeting with the officials," the ministry said. It said Sitharaman immediately halted the meeting and proceeded to the venue of the meeting with the officials.

The venue was already set up for the press conference and hurriedly the officials were summoned to sit among the media persons for the review. It was unprecedented to hold a meeting with the officials, with all the media persons present," it said.

The ministry said in spite of the district administration finalising her programme and the minister following the same in its "entirety", it is "unfortunate that the Karnataka minister behaved the way he did".

"Subsequently, the personal remarks made against the defence minister were also in bad

taste, which do not merit a response," the ministry said.

The Defence minister's remarks drew a sharp response from Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara who said the state governments derive their powers from the Constitution, not from the Centre, and he was disappointed to see her lashing out at his colleague.

"The Constitution has distributed powers among the Centre and states to ensure an equitable partnership between both. We are not inferior to the Centre. We are partners @SitharamanMadam," he said in his tweet, before the clarification from the ministry.

"Madam @Sitharaman, our ministers have stayed back in Kodagu for weeks to oversee relief operations along with district administration. You should ex-

tend to them the same respect that they extend for the help from your end. It was disappointing to see you lash out at my colleague," he said. Congress leader and former Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, too, criticised Sitharaman, alleging that she was "more interested in dominating our minister" which reflected BJP's "apathy" towards the state.

In its clarification, the ministry noted that "there has been gross misrepresentation with regard to the use of the term 'parivar' by the defence minister during the press conference". "One of the four departments of the Ministry of Defence is the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare and in that context it was stated that all ex-servicemen are part of the MoD 'parivar'. Any other inference is misconstrued and uncalled for," it said.

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बाढ़ जिसमें आपदा प्रबंधन बह गया

आपदा से निपटने के लिए पूर्व-तैयारी काफी मायने रखती है। किसी घटना का हम इंतजार नहीं कर सकते। केरल में यही चीज नहीं दिखी।

केरल में जो हुआ, वह विपरीत प्राकृतिक आपदा नहीं है, उसमें हम आपदा प्रबंधन की नाकामी को भी देख सकते हैं। साल 2005 में राष्ट्रीय आपदा प्रबंधन प्राधिकरण (एनडीएमए) का गठन इसलिए किया गया था, ताकि मुश्किल हालात में रहत और बचाव कार्य ही नहीं, आपदा प्रबंधन के सभी लक्ष्यों को केंद्रित करके अभियान चलाए जा सके। मगर केरल में इस अनुशासन का अभाव दिखा है। आपदा प्रबंधन का एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू होता है, मुश्किल हालात आने से पहले खुद को तैयार

रखना। इसमें आपदा को रोकने के प्रयास तो किए ही जाते हैं, संकट का दायरा सीमित रखने का कोशिश भी होती है। इस काम में सफलता तभी संभव है, जब विभिन्न एजेंसियों में समन्वय हो। खबरें हैं कि केरल में इस तरह का समन्वय नहीं बन सका था।

केरल पश्चिमी घाट का राज्य है। वहां 44 नदियां बहती हैं, जिनका जन्म राज्य में ही होता है और अंत उसी राज्य के तटीय समुद्र में। चूंकि वहां ढलान काफी ज्यादा है, इसलिए पानी का बहाव स्वाभाविक तौर पर तेज रहता है। बारिश होने पर वह पानी कहीं ज्यादा तेजी से समुद्र में समाने के लिए भागता है। इस गति को थामने के लिए जगह-जगह पर बांध बनाए गए हैं। जरूरी हुए कि आने वाले संकट और पानी के बहाव को देखते हुए पानी को थोड़ा-थोड़ा करके छोड़ा जाता। बांध-दर-बांध समन्वय बनाते हुए पानी की गति नियंत्रित की जाती। मगर कहा जा रहा है कि वहां केंद्रीय जल आयोग के कई उपकरण काम नहीं कर रहे थे। बारिश और नदी के जलस्तर में वृद्धि को देखकर क्षेत्र-विशेष में पसरने वाली बाढ़ की भयावहता का आकलन भी समय-पूर्व नहीं किया जा सका।

आपदा से निपटने के लिए पूर्व-तैयारी काफी मायने रखती है। किसी घटना का हम इंतजार नहीं कर सकते। मॉरिजन में आज भी 2011 में जापान में आए भयानक भूकंप की यादें ताजा हैं। उस भूकंप के बाद सुनामी आ गई थी, जिसकी चपेट में फुकुशिमा परमाणु ऊर्जा संयंत्र था। आ गया था। उस विनाशकारी हादसे के तुरंत बाद तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री ने एनडीएमए की एक विशेष बैठक बुलाई थी, ताकि इस हादसे के सबक को हम सीख सकें। इसके बाद अपने देश के तमाम परमाणु संयंत्रों की तैयारी को जांचने के लिए हमने 'मॉक ड्रिल' की थी।

एम शशिधर रेड्डी
पूर्व उपाध्यक्ष, एनडीएमए



अक्तूबर 2013 में ओडिशा में आए फैलिन चक्रवाती तूफान का सफलतापूर्वक सामना भी हम ऐसी ही पूर्व-तैयारी से कर सके थे। उस तूफान में जून 23 लोगों की जान गई थी, लेकिन अंतरराष्ट्रीय एजेंसियों को आशंका थी कि इससे हजारों लोगों की मौत हो सकती है। तब जान-माल का कम नुकसान इसलिए हुआ, क्योंकि हमने आपदा प्रबंधन अधिनियम की सख्ती से लागू किया था। इस अधिनियम की एक धारा यह कहती है कि अगर लोग अपने घरों को खाली करके सुरक्षित स्थान पर नहीं जाते हैं, तो पुलिस उनकी सुरक्षा के लिए उनके साथ जबरदस्ती कर सकती है। असल में, लोग यही समझते हैं कि चेतावनी यूं ही जारी कर दी गई है, फिर उन्हें अपने घर में रखे सामान की फिक्र भी होती है। मगर हमने यदि उन्हें अपने भरोसे छोड़ दिया, तो उनका जीवन खतरों में पड़ जाएगा। केरल में कुछ ऐसा ही हुआ है। हमने यही देखा कि लोग अपनी-अपनी जगह से हटें नहीं। वे अंत-अंत तक विरोध करते रहे। ऐसी स्थिति में स्थानीय प्रशासन को सख्ती दिखानी चाहिए थी।

गलती यह भी हुई कि केरल में नदियों का पानी सीधे छोड़ दिया गया। ड्यूककी बांध के बारे में ही कहा जा रहा है कि जब पहली बार तेज बारिश हुई, तभी आनन-फानन में उसके दरवाजे खोल दिए गए थे। तब इतना पानी छोड़ दिया गया कि बांध आधा खाली हो गया था। बाद की बारिश ने रही-सही कसर पूरी कर दी। जबकि आपदा प्रबंधन का गणित कहता है कि किसी भी बांध से पानी

इतना ही निकालना चाहिए, जिससे 'ओवर फ्लो' की स्थिति न आए। डॉक्यूमेंटेशन यानी दस्तावेजीकरण भी आपदा प्रबंधन का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा माना जाता है। कोई आपदा आती है, तो उसका सामना हमने कैसे किया, जान-माल का कितना नुकसान हुआ, रहत-कार्य किस तरह चलाए गए, सफलता व नाकामी कितनी मिली- इन सबको दस्तावेज का रूप देना चाहिए। इसका मकसद किसी एक पर नाकामी की जिम्मेदारी डाल देना नहीं होता। सही और गलत, सब कुछ इसमें दर्ज किया जाता है, ताकि अगली आपदा से बेहतर तरीके से निपटने में हम सफल हो सकें। इसे इस तरह समझ सकते हैं कि किसी विमान हादसे में उसके ब्लैक बॉक्स सबसे पहले ढूंढे जाते हैं, क्योंकि उसी से पता चलता है कि आखिरी वक्त में क्या गड़बड़ी हुई थी, और फिर उस गलती को दोहराने से बचा जाता है।

दरअसल, आपदा एक अवसर की तरह भी होती है। यह हमें सीखने का मौका देती है। 'नॉन-डिजास्टर टाइम' (ऐसा वक्त, जब कोई आपदा न आई हो) में इन्हें दस्तावेजों का अध्ययन किया जाता है। यह काम कोई पाट-टाइम व्यस्त नहीं कर सकता। एनडीएमए अभी गृह मंत्रालय के अधीन है, मगर वहां उपाध्यक्ष का अभाव है। बेशक मंत्री योग्य लोग हो सकते हैं, मगर कोई विशेषज्ञ यदि इस प्राधिकरण को संचाले, तो कहीं बेहतर नतीजे सामने आएंगे।

लोगों को जागरूक किए बिना हम किसी आपदा से नहीं निपट सकते। प्रचार-प्रसार के तमाम साधनों का इस्तेमाल करके हम जन-जागरूकता अभियान चला सकते हैं। 'सबसे सख्त' का भी जमकर प्रचार-प्रसार होना चाहिए। इससे लोगों की होसला अकनाई होती है। अभी केरल में ही एक गर्भवती महिला को बाढ़ सेना के जवानों ने एयरलिफ्ट किया और सुरक्षित जगह पर उसकी 'डिलिवरी' करवाई। इस तरह की कहानियां तंत्र में लोगों का भरोसा बढ़ाती हैं। आखिरकार इसी भरोसे तो लोग आपदा में अपने-अपने घरों को छोड़ते हैं और संकट के बाद पुनर्निर्माण के कामों में शासन-प्रशासन की मदद करते हैं। हमें इस भरोसे को डिगमने से बचना ही चाहिए।

(ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)



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
Aaj (Hindi)
Indian Nation
Nai Duniya (Hindi)
The Times of India (A)
Business standard

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

केरल की इस त्रासदी से निबटने में राज्य और केंद्र सरकार कितनी कामयाब या नाकामयाब रही, इसका मूल्यांकन भी लोग आगे-पीछे करेंगे और आज भी कर रहे हैं। लेकिन वहां लोगों के अदम्य साहस, जिजीविषा, मानवीय प्रयत्नों की सफलता की अनंत कहानियां हमारे भीतर अधिक समय तक जिंदा रहेंगी।

PP-25

बाढ़ के पार मानवता का सेतु

विष्णु नागर
वरिष्ठ पत्रकार



कवि और गद्यकार।
काव्यभिरुचि और
'शुक्ल' के पूर्व
संपादक।

उन लोगों ने भी –
जिनहोंने शायद
केरल देखा भी
नहीं होगा – जब
भयंकर त्रासदी के
बारे में जाना तो
जिस तरह का भी
प्रयत्न अपनी
सीमा में बन पड़ा,
किया और अभी भी
कर रहे हैं। मदद
करने की जैसे एक
लहर सी चल पड़ी
है, जो शायद जल्दी
थम जाए मगर
एक मजबूत पुल
जो पूरे देश के
लोगों ने केरल
और बाकी
भारतीयों के बीच
बनाया है, वह कोई
छोटी बात नहीं है।

हाताश करने वाली, अंदर से तोड़ने वाली, देश और उसके लोगों के भविष्य के बारे में चिंतित करने वाली रोज आने वाली खबरों के बीच केरल में सौ साल बाद आई भयंकर बाढ़ की खबर भी इन्हीं में से एक लग सकती है मगर पूरी तरह ऐसा भी नहीं है। निश्चित रूप से केरल का पुनर्निर्माण एक बहुत बड़ी चुनौती है और बहुत जल्दी हमारा ध्यान बेमतलब के मुद्दों पर खुद भी उलझ जाएगा और उलझाया जाएगा भी।

शुरुआत हो चुकी है। ऐसी त्रासदी से निबटना वहां के लोगों और सरकार के लिए आसान नहीं होगा। बहुत समय लगेगा मगर केरल का समाज, वहां का सरकारी तंत्र उत्तर भारत से कई साधनों में बेहतर है। यह कभी भी वहां गया कोई व्यक्ति आसानी से देख सकता है। हम भले ही समय के साथ उदासीन हो जाए, लेकिन वहां के लोग, संगठन, समाज, सरकार सब फिर भी लगे रहेंगे। जल्द ही वहां काफी कुछ बेहतर होता, बदलता, फिर से रूप लेता दिखेगा। ऐसी त्रासदियां हममें से लगभग हर एक को कुछ ऐसे संदेश दे जाती हैं, कुछ ऐसा हमारे भीतर जगा जाती हैं, जो नफरतों के इस माहौल में भी हमारे भीतर रोशनी की तरह जगमगाता रहता है।

केरल को इस त्रासदी से निबटने में राज्य और केंद्र सरकार कितनी कामयाब या नाकामयाब रही, इसका मूल्यांकन भी लोग आगे-पीछे करेंगे और आज भी कर रहे हैं। लेकिन वहां लोगों के अदम्य साहस, जिजीविषा, मानवीय प्रयत्नों की सफलता की अनंत कहानियां हमारे भीतर अधिक समय तक जिंदा रहेंगी। उन लोगों ने भी – जिनहोंने शायद केरल देखा भी नहीं होगा – जब सुना कि ऐसी भयंकर त्रासदी सुदूर दक्षिण में आई है तो जिस तरह का भी प्रयत्न अपनी सीमा में बन पड़ा, किया और अभी भी कर रहे हैं।

मदद करने की जैसे एक लहर सी चल पड़ी है, जो शायद जल्दी थम जाए मगर एक दूरी जो लोगों ने तय की है, एक मजबूत पुल जो पूरे देश के लोगों ने केरल और बाकी भारतीयों के बीच बनाया है, अपने भीतर की गहरी मानवीयता को जो उकेर है, जगाया है, वह क्या कम छोटी बात है? दुर्घट्य माध्यम कुछ मायनों में अधिक सार्थक साबित होते हैं, उसकी अन्वेषी करना भी गलत होगा। इस लिहाज से अखबारों और टीवी चैनलों ने जो बड़ी भूमिका निभाई है, वह कम से कम इस क्षण, इस समय बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है, ऐतिहासिक है।

और ऐसा भी नहीं कि यहां सब चंदा इकट्ठा करने और राहत सामग्री जुटाने तक ही सीमित रहे, गुरुवारों से जुड़े संगठनों के लोग लंगर बांटने वहां



शिरीष—

केरल में आज जो किया जा रहा है, वह अचानक पैदा मानवीय प्रयत्नों की बाढ़ नहीं है। यह छोटी-छोटी नदियों की पतली-पतली अप्रदूषित धाराएं हैं, जो एक बड़ी लहर के रूप में आज वहां दिखाई दे रही हैं।

पहुंचे और जहां पहुंच पाना तत्काल संभव नहीं था, अब वहां पहुंच रहे हैं। जिसकी जो विशेषज्ञता वहां काम आ सकती है, उसके साथ वह वहां जा पहुंचा है – भाषा और भूगोल की लंबी दूरियां पार कर। खुद केरल निवासियों ने अपने लोगों की खातिर जितना काम किया, वह अगोचर है। वहां के गरीब मछुआरे टोलियां बनाकर ऐसे-ऐसे क्षेत्रों में पहुंचे, जहां सरकारी एजेंसियों का पहुंचना भी मुश्किल था। उन्होंने अपनी रोजी-रोटी छोड़ी। सरकार से बस डीजल मांगा। रिहवर्ननपुरम के डीजीनिर्वहिंग के छात्रों ने डेटा केबल और चार बैटरियों को मिलाकर अस्थायी पावर बैंक बनाए, ताकि बाढ़ से घिरे लोगों के मोबाइल चार्ज हो सके।

कुछ आइएएस अफसर ऐसे भी थे, जो अफसरी भूल कंधे तक गहरी पानी में बच्चों को बचाने पहुंचे, एक ने चावल की बोरियां तक कंधे पर लादकर पहुंचाईं। हायर सेकेंडरी स्कूल में पढ़ने वाली एक छात्रा ने अपने भाई की मदद से माता-पिता को तैयार किया कि वे अपनी एक एकड़ जमीन बेच कर – जिसकी कीमत पचास लाख रुपए है – सरकार के राहत कोष में दें। सड़सठ वर्ष के एक हिंदू खेत मजदूर को दफनाने के लिए उसके पास पर्याप्त

जमीन भी नहीं थी तो एक चर्च ने अपनी जमीन में उसे दफनाने की इजाजत दी। एक युवा ने पूरी रात राहतकर्मों के साथ काम किया। थक कर वह एक मित्र के घर सोने गया तो पता चला कि उसका अपना परिवार भी बाढ़ से घिर चुका है। फिर दोड़ा। ऐसी सेकंडरी-हजारों कहानियां हैं।

रोज भी हम अपने आस-पड़ोस में, अखबारों-टीवी चैनलों को देखें तो वहां भी हर जगह, हर कोने में ऐसी ज्यादा नहीं तो कुछ कहानियां खिखरी पड़ी मिलेंगी। यह केरल में आज जो किया जा रहा है, वह अचानक पैदा मानवीय प्रयत्नों की बाढ़ नहीं है। यह छोटी-छोटी नदियों की पतली-पतली अप्रदूषित धाराएं हैं, जो एक बड़ी लहर के रूप में आज वहां दिखाई दे रही हैं।

इस मौके पर कई निजी संगठनों की भूमिका स्तुत्य है। हमारे तमाम सैनिक-अधिसैनिक दलों और आपदा से जुड़े संगठनों की भी कितनी ही व्यक्तित्व और सामूहिक प्रयासों की देखी-अन्वेषी-विलुप्त कहानियां हैं। दुःखद यह है कि बैंगलूर की कुछ बड़ी आइटी और अन्य कंपनियों ने तो कुछ किया मगर जिन कारपोरेट घरानों के नाम हम सब की जुबान पर हैं, उनके दिलों-दिमागों में लगता है, अभी केरल की खबरों से दस्तक नहीं दी है।

नफरत की लहरों आकर यह सब कुछ बहाने लगेगी मगर अभी तो आपने देखा न, कि जो धर्म के नाम पर केरल की मदद न करने की गुहार लगा रहे थे, जो इस त्रासदी को सबरीमाला मंदिर में स्त्रियों के प्रवेश के 'पाप' से जोड़ रहे थे, किस तरह किनारे जा लगे हैं।

RESPONSE

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 25.8.2018 in the

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गंगा में 2014 के मुकाबले गंगा की 80 फीसदी तक बढ़ा है प्रदूषण : सिंघवी सफाई पूरी : नितिन गडकरी

नई दिल्ली | एजेसी

कांग्रेस ने 'नमामि गंगा परियोजना' को लेकर मोदी सरकार पर निशाना साधा है। कांग्रेस प्रवक्ता अभिषेक मनु सिंघवी ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि 2014 के मुकाबले गंगा नदी में प्रदूषण बढ़ा है।

सिंघवी ने कहा कि आरटीआई से पता चलता है कि पिछले चार साल में गंगा की सफाई को लेकर सिर्फ दावे हुए हैं। उन्होंने आरोप लगाया कि चुनाव में मां गंगा को भुनाया गया और फिर भूला दिया गया। साथ ही दावा किया कि नमामि गंगा के तहत सिर्फ एक चौथाई परियोजनाएं ही पूरी हुई हैं। उन्होंने कहा

कि मां गंगा के साथ मोदी जी का रवैया सही नहीं है। चुनाव के समय उन्होंने मां गंगा को खूब याद किया था। क्या गंगा ने उनको सिर्फ चुनाव लड़ने के लिए बुलाया था। उन्होंने कहा कि आरटीआई से सही स्थिति का पता चल गया है।

221 परियोजनाओं में

58 ही पूरी हुई : सिंघवी

ने कैग की रिपोर्ट का हवाला देते हुए दावा किया

कि नमामि गंगा में 221 परियोजनाएं पूरी होनी थी लेकिन 58 ही पूरी हुईं। इसका मतलब यह है कि सरकार को चार साल पूरे हुए लेकिन सिर्फ एक चौथाई परियोजनाएं पूरी हुईं।

मुंबई | एजेसी

केंद्रीय जल संसाधन मंत्री नितिन गडकरी ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि गंगा की 80 फीसदी तक सफाई हो चुकी है। उन्होंने कहा कि मंत्रालय ने गंगा की सफाई के लिए जनता से अब तक 250 करोड़ रुपये जुटाए हैं।

केंद्रीय मंत्री ने बताया कि एक करोड़ से ज्यादा लोगों से गंगा की सफाई के लिए फंड एकत्रित करना हमारा लक्ष्य है। इसके साथ ही केंद्रीय पोत-परिवहन मंत्री नितिन गडकरी ने यहां जेएनपीटी पर कहा, 'पहली

लक्जरी क्रूज सेवा 500 यात्रियों को लेकर 1 अक्टूबर को मुंबई से गोवा के लिए रवाना होगी।' मंत्रालय मुंबई बंदरगाह क्षेत्र में क्रूज टर्मिनल के लिए 1,000 करोड़ रुपये का निवेश कर रहा है। गडकरी ने यह सेवा पिछले साल दिसंबर में शुरू करने की बात कही थी। अब इसकी रवानगी 1 अक्टूबर को तय की गई है।

दिल्ली-मुंबई एक्सप्रेस-वे पर दिसंबर से काम : नितिन गडकरी ने कहा कि राष्ट्रीय राजधानी दिल्ली को मुंबई से जोड़ने वाले प्रस्तावित 1,000 अरब रुपये के एक्सप्रेस-वे पर काम दिसंबर में शुरू होगा।

आमने सामने

Hindustan Times

Statesman

The Times of India (N.D.)

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GOVT BROADENS PROJECT

Challenge to a cleaner Yamuna: New drains

MALLICA JOSHI
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 24

THE PROJECT to intercept untreated sewage before it enters the Yamuna will have to be revised as the 100 drains that are covered under it will have to be increased to around 200.

In a meeting between the Delhi Jal Board and Engineers India Limited (EIL), the consultant for the first project, it was decided that the PSU will have to make a new list of discharge drains and submit it by October 15.

Interception of these drains means their flow is checked before they reach the Yamuna, sewage is treated, and the water is either re-routed into the river or recycled.

"The list of 100 discharge drains was prepared around 10 years ago. When EIL undertook the interceptor project for the 100 drains, they had mentioned that it did not include all drains. This meant that despite the project, untreated sewage would still be flowing into the river," said a senior DJB official.



According to DJB, the new drains originated over the past decade due to settlement of new unauthorised colonies

EIL, after conducting the study, will now submit an action plan to DJB by November 15 with ways to tackle waste from these drains. According to experts, there are three ways to do this.

"The first is to check if untreated sewage is leaking into a drain because of a leak in the system. If it is, the easy fix will be to plug that gap. The second way is to check if there is an existing sewage system near the drain. If yes, both can be connected. The third is to set up a decentralised

sewage system to treat sewage from one or more isolated sites," said the official. The initial interceptor project will be completed by December this year.

According to DJB, the new drains, whose number is expected to be between 50 and 100, originated over the past decade due to settlement of new unauthorised colonies.

Meanwhile, in Friday's DJB board meeting, a decision was taken to set up decentralised STPs in all parks of the city.

Hindustan Times
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State considers interest-free loans for traders

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 24

THE KERALA government on Friday announced more relief measures for the flood-hit people of the state even as it tried to restore its ravaged civic infrastructure.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told the media that the government was considering interest-free loan up to Rs 10 lakh for traders, dairy farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs who had suffered massive losses in the flood. "The traditional industrial and trade sectors have faced a severe setback. The government has asked banks to give moratorium for one-and-a-half years on loans," he said.

Vijayan said that families in relief camps would be given financial assistance of Rs 10,000 when they return home. The amount will be credited in their bank accounts.

He also said that 31 per cent of the flooded houses had been cleaned and made ready for occupation. Of 25.6 lakh power connections that had gone defunct, 23.36 lakh have been restored.

Indicating that more people are returning home from relief camps, the CM said that the number of people in the camps had come down to 8,69,724 on Friday from 10,40,688 the previous day.

He said the office of the CM would function on Saturday (Onam) as continuous effort was required to overcome the crisis.

THE AFTER-EFFECTS

CM Pinarayi Vijayan on Friday detailed the losses caused by the floods:

231

DEATHS

26,000

HOUSES DAMAGED

40,000 hectares

CROPS LOST



■ Preliminary assessment of losses: Rs 20,000 crore — equal to the state's annual plan size for 2018-19.

■ Poultry lost: 2 lakh

■ Milch animals lost: 46,000

■ Loss in power sector: Rs 750 cr

■ Damage to water infrastructure: Rs 900 crore

■ Landslides: 300

■ Rivers that altered course:

Bharathapuzha, Periyar,

Chalakkudy and Pamba

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 25.08.2018 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

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Deccan Chronicle

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Business standard

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Apex court directive to maintain water level of Mullaperiyar dam at 139 ft

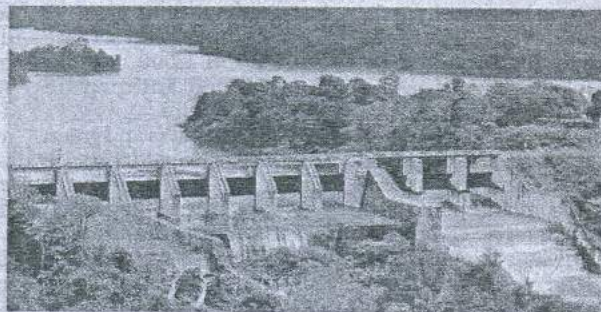
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 24 AUGUST

ST-25
The Supreme Court today ordered that the water level at the Mullaperiyar dam be maintained at 139 feet till August 31 keeping in mind the grave devastation that has taken place due to the unprecedented floods in Kerala.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices AM Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud considered the Centre's submission that the sub-committee of the Mullaperiyar dam had met on August 23 and directed the Tamil Nadu government to ensure that the water level is maintained at 139 feet, which is two feet below the permissible limit fixed by the apex court.

The bench made it clear that it would confine itself to the aspect of disaster manage-



ment and said that the decision to lower the water limit in the dam has been taken in view of the devastating deluge in Kerala. The observation came after Tamil Nadu government alleged that "it could be a part of a sinister design" to circumvent the apex court's decision fixing the permissible limit. The bench fixed the matter for hearing on September 6 and asked Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

to file their responses in the meantime. The Kerala government had yesterday told the apex court that the sudden release of water from the Mullaperiyar Dam by the Tamil Nadu government was one of the reasons for the devastating deluge in the state. It had said that out of a total population of about 3.48 crore, more than 54 lakh or one sixth of the population of Kerala, had been directly affected by the floods.

The Mullaperiyar Dam is located on the Western Ghats near Thekkady in Idukki district of Kerala on the Periyar river. Kerala resident Russel Roy had filed a plea seeking, among other things, a direction to Tamil Nadu to manage the water level in the dam owing to the floods in Kerala.

Italian club AS Roma to auction shirts for Kerala flood relief

Italian football giant AS Roma today announced that it will auction off five match-worn shirts from the first team players to help raise funds for flood-ravaged Indian state, Kerala. "After #ASRoma's first home match of the Serie A season, the club will auction off five match-worn shirts from our first team players to help raise money to donate to the relief fund.

SEE ALSO PAGE 7

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M.P.Chronicle
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The Times of India (A)
Business standard

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

Kerala, TN trade blows on opening of dam floodgates

SHIFTING BLAME Tamil Nadu CM refutes Kerala's charges

HT Correspondents
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

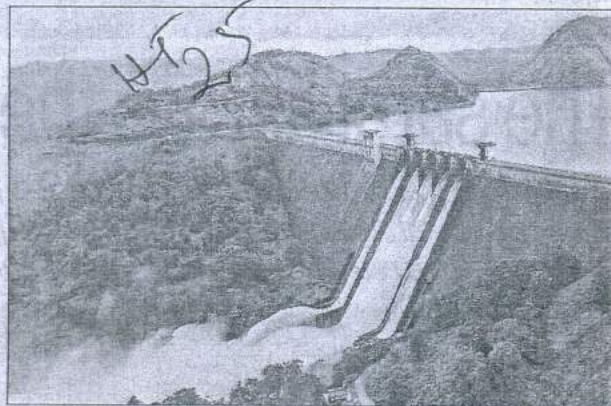
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu government hit back at Kerala on Friday over who was to blame for the devastating floods that left around 220 people dead and caused losses worth thousands of crores of rupees earlier this month, reopening a decades-old fight in the Supreme Court and outside.

Lawyers for Kerala had a day earlier told the top court in an affidavit that Tamil Nadu's failure to control release of water from the Mullaperiyar dam till the reservoir reached its full capacity was one of the reasons for the flash floods.

On Friday, Tamil Nadu's counsel responded by calling the claim "clever" in the top court, while its chief minister E Palaniswami said the allegations in the affidavit was "deliberately false".

The Mullaperiyar dam falls in Kerala but is controlled by Tamil Nadu, which uses the reservoir's water for irrigation and power generation. The two states have fought over how much water can be stored in it, with Kerala claiming the dam was weak and posed a threat to its cities downstream.

"In this affidavit (by Kerala), I



■ A view of the Idukki dam after it opened its sluice gates to release excess water. Kerala claims that discharge from Mullaperiyar had caused water in Idukki reservoir to rise above danger levels. PTI

see a clever device to get out of the judgment of this court," senior advocate Shekhar Naphade said in the Supreme Court, referring to a 2014 ruling that allowed Tamil Nadu to raise the water level to 142 feet.

Chief Justice Dipak Misra, who was on the bench along with justices AM Khanwilkar and DY Chandrachud, made it clear that the court would only go into the disaster management aspect. The bench said water level in the Mullaperiyar dam must be maintained three feet below the permissible limit till August 31, as

suggested by a sub-committee formed by the Union government.

"We are only concerned with the safety and lives of people," the chief justice said and posted the matter for hearing on September 6.

In Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu chief minister Palaniswami rebutted Kerala's allegations. He said water from Mullaperiyar was released much after flooding began and multiple warnings had been issued.

Mullaperiyar

"Around 80 dams and water bodies in Kerala discharged surplus water due to heavy down-pour and this flooded the entire state, whereas the release of water from Mullaperiyar pertains only to a minor portion of Kerala," he told reporters after inspecting the Trichy Mukkomby sluice gates, nine of which had collapsed on Wednesday.

According to experts, dam management in India must factor in rain forecasts so that they can be used to check flooding.

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Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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Govt eases lending rules, gives more aid to Kerala

Saubhadra Chatterji

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEWDELHI: The Union government has made it easier for people in Kerala to apply for the government's subsidised housing loan scheme and released on Friday ₹543 crore under the rural employment programme MGNREGS, raising the financial assistance to the southern state where flash floods earlier this month led to widespread devastation.

At least 265 people have been killed since August 8, when a week-long bout of heavy rains began, and the state government said assets worth ₹19,500 crore had been destroyed as floods washed away homes, roads and bridges.

The funds released Friday will help reconstruction efforts under MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme), a social security programme that allows administrations to hire people for labour work. According to an offi-



Submerged houses in Alappuzha district of Kerala. The Centre has eased home loan subsidy norms. RAJ K RAJ/NT

cial in the Union government, in addition to releasing the funds and sanctioning 55 million person-days of work, the Union government has also asked the state for a fresh labour budget so that more money can be given.

Earlier this week, the Kerala government wrote to the Centre seeking additional MGNREGS

fund to cover reconstruction works.

The wages for unskilled labour is entirely sponsored by the Union government, which also pays 75% of the cost for skilled and semi-skilled workers, and underwrites the cost of the material required.

CONTINUED ON P 6

Govt eases PMAY rules, gives more aid to Kerala

The federal government also relaxed norms for the rural housing finance scheme Prime Minister Awas Yojana (PMAY) — one of the most popular programmes across states — to allow more people to rebuild homes they lost in the floods.

"We told the state that if someone's home, built earlier with government funds, has been washed away in this flood, he must be allowed to get funds and build another house for himself. We have earmarked fund for areas affected by natural calamities and 11,000 houses can be built out of that," the Union rural development secretary Amarjeet Sinha said.

The Centre directed Kerala to include beneficiaries previously excluded from the rural housing scheme. People paying income tax, owning a house made of bricks, a refrigerator or a land-line phone as determined by the Socio Economic Caste Census were automatically excluded from the PMAY.

Friday's announcement comes amid a row between the state and centre over funding of restoration work, particularly in light of a purported offer from the United Arab Emirates that may not be cleared by the Union government in line with established protocols.

"We asked Union Gov for financial support of ₹2200 Cr; they grant us a precious ₹600 Cr. We make no request to any foreign gov but UAE gov voluntarily offer ₹700cr. No. says Union gov, it is below our dignity to accept foreign aid. This is a dog in the manger policy," Kerala's finance minister Thomas Isaac said in a tweet on Wednesday.

A day later, a senior UAE diplomat in New Delhi clarified that the country was yet to officially announce any financial aid for Kerala flood relief.

"Kerala government has so far appreciated the help from the Centre. But let's remember that this MGNREGS money also contains a large arrear. On August 30, Kerala government has called a special session of assembly to discuss the situation with all parties. Meanwhile, they have sought permission for imposing a cess on GST and bypassing the FRBM act temporarily," said CPI(M) politburo member Brinda Karat.

Both those measures would help shore up the state's revenue as it embarks on a massive recon-

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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The Times of India (A)
Business standard

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

Kerala floods: registration of migrant workers emphasised

During the crisis, the Odisha govt. did not have a list of its migrant workers

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

11-26

Having learnt their lessons the hard way in the recent Kerala disaster, migrant workers from Odisha have now demanded proper registration of the workforce heading for other States and insurance cover for wage loss in the event of exigencies.

Relatives of workers, organisations advocating welfare of migrant labourers and labour union leaders narrated the trauma experienced by workers at the Odisha Vikash Conclave-2018.

"There was absolute chaos in the efforts to bring migrant

workers back from rain-hit Kerala. Such was the situation that family members had no information about their near and dear ones for days," said Sudarsan Rout of Satabhaya village in Kendrapara district. About 200 people from the village were working in the plywood industry in Kerala.

Mobile numbers

While rain and floods were wreaking havoc in Kerala, the Odisha government did not have a list of its migrant workers. Worried family members were providing mobile numbers of the workers stranded

in Kerala and the same was being forwarded to the Special Relief Commissioner of Kerala.

Plywood industry

As per a study, migrants from 22 districts of Odisha were working in Kerala. While traditional fishers from coastal Odisha work on boats that operate from various harbours in Kerala, unemployed youths from Kandhamal, Dhenkanal, Kendrapara and Kalahandi are a major source of workers in Kerala's plywood industry.

Similarly, women and girls from Balangir, Malkangiri,

Sundargarh, Kandhamal, Ganjam, Nabarangpur and Rayagada work in the textile and apparel sector of Kerala.

"Although the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979, makes it mandatory for registration of migrant workers, the same is hardly practiced. Labour contractors and agents send hundreds of workers illegally to other States which makes it difficult for the source State to identify and track the workers," said Umi Daniel, Director of Migration and Education of Aide et Action International, a non-government organisation.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 27/8/18 in the

Hindustan Times
Statesman

The Times of India (N.D.)

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3 years later, big projects in PM's J&K development plan are stuck

Delay in submitting final project reports, land acquisition, forest clearances and release of funds from the Centre

NAVEED IQBAL

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 26

FROM AN IIM in Jammu to an AIIMS in Awantipora, from key arterial roads in the Jammu and Kashmir regions to the Zozila tunnel in Ladakh.

At least 28 big-ticket projects — each worth Rs 1,000 crore or more — in the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) for J&K announced nearly three years ago remain stuck at various stages, official records accessed by *The Indian Express* show.

The package was announced on November 7, 2015, nine



months after the PDP-BJP government took charge in the state. That government collapsed in June this year after the BJP withdrew support, making way for Governor's rule. On August 21, the Centre named Satya Pal Malik as the new Governor — the

first politician to be appointed to the post since the beginning of militancy.

Most of the mega projects (see chart, page 9) under the PDMP are struggling to make progress due to various reasons, including preparation of detailed project reports, land acquisition, forest clearances and even release of funds from the Centre.

Most of these projects are in infrastructure-related sectors and have a gestation period of 3-5 years. They are worth a total of Rs 69,178 crore, which is over 86 per cent of the total PMDP outlay of Rs 80,068 crore. Roads and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

28 PROJECTS, 86% OF TOTAL

Amounts in Rs/crore

Roads	26,559
Tunnels	14,090
Power	11,721
IIMs & AIIMS	6,000
Infrastructure	3,200
Flood management	2,528
Tourism	2,000
Rehabilitation of displaced families	2,000
Jobs	1,080

Note: Projects worth Rs 1,000 crore or more

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Continued
on
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3 years later, big projects in PM's J&K plan are stuck

tunnels alone account for over 50 per cent of the outlay.

Until June 30, the records show, detailed project reports (DPRs) were still being finalised or had just been submitted in four of the 13 road and tunnel projects. Two more projects, cleared by the state government, remain stuck at the Centre. Five road projects have been awarded, and foundation stone laid in January this year for the mega Rs 9,090-crore Zozila tunnel.

Power projects, which make up another 15 per cent, have moved at a comparatively faster pace. The Pakal Dul 1,000 MW project and the Srinagar-Leh transmission line are on course. Of the 28 small hydro power projects estimated to cost a total of Rs 2,000 crore, those being executed by state-owned JAKEDA, are awaiting disbursement by the central government.

Premier educational institutions — AIIMS and IIMs — account for another 7.5 per cent. Forest land has been acquired for an IIT and an IIM in Jammu, and students have been enrolled. But IIM Jammu is functioning in the old campus of University of Jammu and the IIT from a transit campus. Forest land has been acquired for the two AIIMS in Jammu and Awantipora in Kashmir, and boundary walls are being constructed.

Release of funds for rebuilding homes and infrastructure has been expedited. For instance, of the sanctioned amount of Rs 1,195 crore for rebuilding homes, Rs 1,024 crore has already been utilised. Similarly, about Rs 1,095 crore has already been spent on restoring damaged infrastructure.

While the state has created additional government jobs for 3,000 Kashmiri migrants, selections were still being made by relevant recruiting agencies, according to records. The state has also extended financial assistance of Rs 578 crore through Direct Benefit Transfer to 12,588 displaced families (of the 36,384) from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Chhamb.

ROADS TO EDUCATION, POWER TO HOUSING

INFRASTRUCTURE	COST (in ₹ cr)	STATUS
Jammu-Akhnoor-Poonch road	5100	Jammu-Akhnoor: one part bid done, another being evaluated. Akhnoor-Poonch: DPR completion in July 2018
Chenani-Sudhmahadev-Goha road	2100	Chenani-Sudhmahadev LoI issued, land yet to be handed over. DPR for Sudhmahadev-Goha underway
Semi ring road in Jammu	1400	NHAI has handed over land to contractor on January 8
Udhampur-Ramban road	2137	Physical progress 42%. Likely to be completed by Oct 2019. Land acquisition partly held up due to court proceedings
Ramban-Banihal road	2169	Physical progress 78.3%. Progress held up due to court proceedings
Jhelum-Tawi flood reconstruction	1350	Reimbursement bills submitted
Srinagar-Shopian-Quazigund NH-444	1800	Draft DPR submitted in December 2017
Ring road in Srinagar	1860	Work awarded. Phase I tendering completed. Phase II: DPR under revision
Qazigund-Banihal four-laning	1386	Physical progress 72%. Completion by June 2019
Jhelum flood management Phase-II	1178	Single bidder, fresh tenders invited
Nimu-Padam-Darcha road	1707	Revised Cabinet note pending with Ministry of Defence
Zozila tunnel	9090	IL&FS selected as EPC contractor. Foundation stone laid by PM
Kargil-Zaskar NH-301	4200	DPR re-framed, completed and submitted to MoRTH
Tunnels at Lachung La Pass and Taglang La Pass	5000	Tender for DPR to be floated shortly
Bharat Mala projects	2700	Project needs MoRTH consideration
Infrastructure restoration	2000	Rs 1,097 crore spent. Project and item-wise utilisation certificates sought for Rs 756 crore
TOTAL	45177	

EDUCATION	COST	STATUS
IIM Jammu	1000	80 ha forest land acquired. Academic session started at UoJ campus. Out-campus in Kashmir identified at Budgam
IIT Jammu	1000	159 ha of forest land handed over. Transit campus to host 600 students built.
AIIMS	2000	DPR estimates by CPWD of Rs 1,381 cr submitted to Health Ministry for approval on Oct 21, 2017.
AIIMS Awantipora	2000	DPR estimates by CPWD of Rs 1,567 cr submitted to Health Ministry for approval on Oct 21, 2017
TOTAL	6000	

POWER	COST	STATUS
Pakal Dul project	4153	Rs 927 crore spent; project to be completed in 66 months.
Small Hydro Projects	2000	MNRE hasn't released funds for JAKEDA executing 13 projects. JKSPDC, executing 15 projects, has issued letter of award
Srinagar-Leh 200 KV transmission line	1788	Major RoW, forest issues resolved. Expected completion time: 2018
Distribution Strengthening	3780	5 of 7 packages awarded for urban projects. 10 of 13 rural projects assigned to JKPD awarded. All 8 assigned to PGCIL awarded
TOTAL	11721	

HOUSING AND REHABILITATION	COST	STATUS
Housing assistance	1200	Damaged pucca and kuchha houses rebuilt
Rehabilitation of PoK, Chhamb families	2000	12,588 beneficiaries recommended to MHA. Rs 578 crore disbursed through DBT
TOTAL	3200	

TOURISM AND JOBS	COST	STATUS
Tourism	2000	Four circuits taken up. One 75% complete, others in progress
Additional jobs to Kashmiri migrants	1080	3,000 posts created, of which 2,865 referred for selections
TOTAL	3080	

Note: Projects worth Rs 1000 crore or more

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नमामि गंगे प्रोजेक्ट पूरा करने की समय सीमा 2021 तक

नई दिल्ली, (भाषा): सरकार ने संसद की एक समिति को बताया है कि गंगा की सफाई से जुड़े नमामि गंगे कार्यक्रम के तहत परियोजनाओं को पूरा करने की समय सीमा दिसंबर 2021 तक रखी गयी है। संसद में हाल ही में पेश जल संसाधन संबंधी स्थायी समिति की रिपोर्ट में राष्ट्रीय नदी संरक्षण योजना के तहत पैरा 4 के एक जवाब में कहा गया है कि वर्ष 2017-18 के दौरान नमामि गंगे के तहत वास्तविक व्यय 1423 करोड़ रुपये रहा। वर्ष 2017-18 के दौरान कार्यकारी एजेंसियों सहित राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ गंगा मिशन द्वारा 1625 करोड़ रुपये व्यय किये गए। इसके तहत मंजूर 104 स्वीकृत जलमल आधारभूत परियोजनाओं में से अब तक 26 परियोजनाएं पूरी कर लीं गयी हैं। इसके तहत 24 परियोजनाओं को दिसंबर 2018

● वर्ष 2017-18 के दौरान कार्यकारी एजेंसियों सहित राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ गंगा मिशन द्वारा 1625 करोड़ व्यय किये गए

तक पूरा करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है। छह परियोजनाओं को मार्च 2019 तथा 20 परियोजनाओं को दिसंबर 2019 तक पूरा करने का लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया गया है। इस कार्यक्रम के तहत 28 परियोजनाओं को दिसंबर 2021 तक पूरा करने का लक्ष्य है। संसदीय समिति ने गंगा नदी की सफाई से जुड़े 'नमामि गंगे' कार्यक्रम के महत्व को रेखांकित करते हुए जोर दिया है कि अब इस महत्वाकांक्षी कार्यक्रम के



तहत परियोजनाओं को पूरा करने की तिथि को दिसंबर 2021 तक बढ़ाया गया है। समिति आशा करती है कि अब परियोजनाओं को तेजी से पूरा किया जायेगा और निर्धारित समय सीमा दिसंबर 2021 तक पूरा कर लिया जायेगा। इस विषय पर पूछे जाने पर जल संसाधन, नदी

विकास एवं गंगा संरक्षण मंत्रालय के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि नमामि गंगे को पांच साल के कार्यक्रम के रूप में कैबिनेट की मंजूरी मई 2015 में मिली थी। इस तरह से 2020 तक पांच वर्षों में 20 हजार करोड़ रुपये खर्च किये जाने की पहल की गई थी।

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Climate expert for steps to protect Western Ghats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOCHI, 26 AUGUST

The recent occurrence of extreme rainfall events and associated floods in Kerala that killed many and rendered thousands homeless were due to climate change, a noted climate expert said today.

Chandra Bhushan, Deputy Director General of New

Delhi-based advocacy group Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), said the dam management system in the country will have to be "re-evaluated" taking into account the repeat occurrence of extreme rainfall events and associated flash floods.

"The floods in Kerala were caused by climate change and the disaster was exacerbated by bad development practises, particularly on Western Ghats and other ecologically sensitive regions of Kerala," Bhushan said. Over 290 people were killed and lakhs of people have been dis-

Slaughtering of cows has led to Kerala floods, says BJP MLA

BENGALURU, 26 AUGUST

Known for making controversial remarks, Vijayapura's BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal has kicked up a fresh row by saying the devastating floods in Kerala occurred because of slaughtering of cows in the open.

"In Kerala, people openly slaughter cows. What happened? Within a year, a situation like this (flood) arose. Whoever hurts the Hindu religious beliefs will face such consequences," he told reporters on the sidelines of a function at Vijayapura yesterday.

The BJP MLA was apparently referring to an incident



in Kerala last year, where a group of men slaughtered a cow in the open, triggering a controversy.

Yatnal said Hindus had sentiments attached to cows and that nobody should hurt others' religious beliefs.

He added that if the BJP came to power in Karnataka, cow slaughter will be stopped.

placed in Kerala.

Bapu mobilised Rs 6,000 for Kerala: Nearly a century

people as "unimaginable" and stepped in to mobilise over Rs 6,000 to help them, records show.

If the present rain fury has claimed over 290 lives and displaced over 10 lakh people, the massive floods that crippled the state in July 1924 are believed to have claimed a large number of lives and caused widespread destruction. Mahatma Gandhi, through a series of articles in his publications 'Young India' and 'Navajivan', had urged people of the country to generously contribute for the relief of the flood-hit 'Malabar' (Kerala).

Following his appeal, people from various walks of life including women and children had donated even their gold jewels and meagre savings to help the flood-affected people. Many had skipped a meal daily or given up milk to find money to contribute to relief fund mobilised by Gandhi, according to the journals penned by him.

ago when floods ravaged Kerala, Mahatma Gandhi had termed the misery of the

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KERALA GOVT HONOURS FORCES FOR RESCUE WORK

CM: Not only we the people, posterity will remember you with gratitude

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
AUGUST 26

THE KERALA government on Sunday held a farewell meeting to honour the defence and paramilitary forces and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) who participated in the rescue and relief operations during the floods.

Addressing the function held at Air Force Station here, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said, "Not only we the people, the posterity will remember you with gratitude and appreciation. Kerala will never forget your helping hand in times of the distress."

Vijayan said but for the initiatives of the defence forces, Coast Guard, paramilitary forces and the NDRF, the death toll in the calamity would have been much more.

"We could directly witness the bold initiative they took to rescue people from flood waters and isolated areas, braving adverse circumstances, complex landscapes that were totally strange or alien to them. The way the proud warriors of the



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan hands over a citation to Brigadier C G Arun, Station Commander, Pangode Military Station, in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday.

defence brought succour to the needy cannot be explained in words. When tear and rain became one, you rose up and spread warmth like the sun," Vijayan said.

The Chief Minister added,

"The service the defence personnel rendered in rescuing helpless people and assisting the civil authorities is creditworthy. All that we can say is that your services will be kept in mind in the times to come too, with gratitude and

appreciation. Thank you for raising your will higher than the flood water."

Air Marshal B Suresh, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Air Command, said the farewell given to the forces was a

very rare gesture.

He said the rescue effort had been phenomenal. While the topography of Kerala, adverse weather and the high number of flooded regions made the mission challenging, he said the forces could reach the remotest corners of the affected areas, he said.

Equating the rescue mission to a war, Suresh said the Chief Minister led from the front. He said the clear directions from the Chief Minister helped the forces to focus and reach the needy. He also appreciated the role of fishermen and volunteers in the rescue operations.

Citations were presented by the Chief Minister to Air Marshal Suresh, Rear Admiral R J Nadkarni, Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command; Brigadier C G Arun, Station Commander, Pangode Military Station; Rekha Nambiar, NDRF Commandant; Sanatan Jena, DIG, Coast Guard; Giriprasad, IG, CRPF; B C Nair, DIG, BSF; Vishal Anand, Commandant, ITBP; Dhanya Sanal, Defence PRO, and to all military and paramilitary forces who participated in the rescue mission.

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SINGLE FILE

Until dams do us part

India's policy on dams has to be urgently reviewed

M. GOPAKUMAR

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



The tragedy in Kerala has highlighted the dangers of excess water accumulation in dams. More than 20 dams released water that cascaded down the hills, leaving behind a trail of destruction. The opening of the gates of the Idukki dam, for instance, caused the Periyar river to swell rapidly and discharge seven lakh litres of water per second.

Yet, the argument for dams – that they provide drinking water and water for agriculture – is today scientifically discredited. For independent geologists and hydrologists, dams represent a nightmare, an ephemeral triumph of engineering over common sense and the natural sciences. Increasingly, it is evident that dam proponents are ignoring crucial decision-making data now available on patterns of rainfall, geology and climate change.

Dams store millions of tonnes of fresh water in large reservoirs, submerging prime forests, villages, farms and livelihoods. The 4,700 large dams built since 1947 have cumulatively displaced 4.4 million people. This makes dams the single largest cause for displacement post-Partition.

Solving the drinking water crisis does not require giant storage structures; these dams take decades to come up and only a fraction of their output is for the household sector. Over 85% of them are used in agriculture for producing cash crops such as sugarcane. Dams have displaced the poorest of India's people in favour of richer farmers and urban residents, often with little or no compensation.

Worryingly, dams are far more hazardous than any other infrastructure project, except nuclear plants. Even as Kerala and Tamil Nadu have battled over the safety of the 116-year-old Mullaperiyar dam, there are, according to the India Water Portal, over 100 dams in India which are over a century old, and more than 500 large dams which are 50-100 years old, many of which have major defects and need urgent repair. It is also accepted today that dams can trigger seismic events. The reservoir-induced seismicity (RIS) from the weight of the reservoir has resulted in earthquakes in various parts of the country: of the 75 cases of RIS reported worldwide, 17 have been reported from India.

The scale and frequency of natural disasters is growing. According to data compiled by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, the instances of extreme weather have gone up from 71 in the 1970s to about 224 in the 1990s and 350 in the first decade of the millennium. In the second decade, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Chennai, and now Kerala and Kodagu district have all been hit.

There has never been a greater urgency to review India's policy on dams and to act on decentralised alternatives that involve water recycling and reuse. The immediate task is to critically review every dam in the country, decommission those that are at end-of-life, stop building new ones and establish sound safety protocols. If this is not done, the time bomb will tick on.

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As hope floats in flooded Kerala, time to fasten accountability on Pinarayi govt

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
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After torrential rains inundated most of 'God's own country', receding water and generous aid and relief from across India has allowed agony stricken Malayalis to build their homes and lives anew. The calamity claimed close to 400 lives. Many are still missing.

Thanks to the traditional importance given to education, Malayalis have spread themselves across the country and abroad in a range of professional activities. It is heartening to find these outstation Malayalis sparing no effort in reaching out to the distressed population.

As the diaspora, NGOs and governments pitch in to help, it is time to fasten accountability on the LDF government headed by Pinarayi Vijayan, who surprisingly has been spared of criticism by the intelligentsia for displaying utter unpreparedness in taking steps to prevent, minimise and manage a disaster that was warned of more than seven years ago by scientist Madhav Gadgil, who headed the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Committee formed by the environment ministry.

"Yes, there is intense rainfall which has caused this. But I am quite convinced that developments in the state over the last several years have materially compromised the ability to deal with events like this and greatly increased the magnitude of the suffering that we are seeing today. Had proper



The recent floods in Kerala have claimed close to 400 lives

steps been taken, the scale of the disaster would have been nowhere near what it is today," Gadgil said last week.

Comparing the situation in Kerala with similar disasters in Odisha in the past two decades is instructive. In October 1999, Super Cyclone Pradip battered coastal districts of Odisha with wind speeds of up to 250 kmph for 36 hours accompanied by torrential rains and 7-10 metre high tidal waves. The toll was a calamitous 10,000 (unofficially 50,000). Nearly 13 lakh people were affected, 3.15 lakh cattle perished. The Union government sent a grant of Rs 300 crore.

Then J B Patnaik-led Congress government's faltering and stuttering relief and rehabilitation work was a lesson for the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD government which followed it. In October 2013, when intense tropical storm 'Phalin' struck Odisha with violent wind speeds and incessant rains, the state machinery was prepared to face the challenge.

It evacuated 6 lakh people from coastal areas to safe shel-

ters stocked with 10 lakh food packages. Only 44 lives were lost. More than two lakh houses were flooded and over 1,000 villages were inundated.

The LDF government should have seen the 2014 Kerala floods caused by an intense pre-monsoon cyclonic activity between April 1 and May 8 as a precursor to the present disaster and stayed in readiness. The 2014 floods had claimed 123 lives. Refusal to learn from the past and unwillingness to stay prepared for disaster management cost Kerala nearly 400 lives.

Now, the state government is blaming the Centre for not giving enough grants, even after it released Rs 600 crore and promised more after assessment of the damage. It has made an issue of unsubstantiated claims of the UAE's Rs 700 crore pledge for Kerala being blocked by the Centre.

In the Supreme Court, the state accused Tamil Nadu of worsening the flood situation by sudden release of large quantities of water from Mullaperiyar dam on August 15. Tamil Nadu coun-

ter-accused Kerala of ignoring repeated warnings about impending release and using the tragedy to force lower permissible water level of the dam at 142 feet. The SC had to tell both states to cooperate at the time of tragedy.

The Kerala chief secretary told the SC that almost 50% of 1,564 villages were inundated. However, he said of the 3.48 crore population, only

LEGALLY SPEAKING

16% or 54 lakh were flood-affected. He did not give details of how many state disaster response personnel were deployed. But credit must go to the 1,400-odd fishermen who brought their boats from the sea and ventured into remote parts to help with the rescue operation.

According to the chief secretary, NDRF deployed 59 rescue teams with 207 boats, Army had 23 columns with 104 boats, Navy had 94 rescue teams with 94 boats, Coast Guard 36 teams with 76 boats, IAF provided 22 helicopters and 23 fixed wing aircraft, BSF provided two companies and CRPF deployed 10 teams. Kerala pressed into service 4,100 fire and rescue services personnel with 69 rubber boats. Odisha deployed 244 firemen with 69 rubber boats in the rescue operation.

A 'all hands on deck' approach was a necessity given the dimension of the disaster, part of which was man-made according to Gadgil given the rampant mining and degradation of environment in Western Ghats within Kerala.

While Malayalis rose to the challenge, the LDF government appeared lacking.

The state government's unpreparedness stems from its disregard for the SC judgment in N D Jayal case [2004 (9) SCC 362], where it had said, "Disaster management means all aspects of planning, coordinating and implementing all measures which are necessary or desirable to prevent, minimise, overcome or to stop the spread of a disaster upon the people or any property and includes all stages of rescue and immediate relief.

"It is a proven fact that lot of human suffering and misery from large number of disasters can be mitigated by taking timely actions, planning and preventive measures. It is possible only through well-functioning disaster management frame-work. Our present relief centred reactive approach after the striking of disaster need to be changed into preparedness oriented proactive attitude."

That was the difference between the proactive approach of the Naveen Patnaik government against the Vijayan government's reactive approach, even though nature had served a warning in 2014 through flash floods across Kerala: When humanitarian aid and help is pouring in, the LDF government is expected to do its bit. Importantly, it must prepare a comprehensive disaster management plan and create a mechanism to stay in preparedness to minimise loss of lives in case of a natural disaster.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 27.08.2018 in the

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Statesman ✓
The Times of India (N.D.)
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40pc dists in South India received deficient rainfall: IMD data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 26 AUGUST

FACTS AND FIGURES

27-57

► The worst hit state by deficient rainfall in South India was Tamil Nadu

► Of 31 dists in Telangana, six reported large deficiency; 4 dists of Puducherry reported deficiency

► Of 30 dists in Karnataka 14 received deficient rainfall and two reported large deficiency

► All 4 dists of Rayalaseema region and 2 of 11 dists in Andhra Pradesh received deficient rainfall

More than 40 per cent districts in South India witnessed deficient rainfall this monsoon season, the India Meteorological Department data showed, despite the southern state of Kerala experiencing excessive precipitation.

Of the 125 districts in the region, 54 reported deficient rainfall and another two were "largely" deficient.

The worst hit state by deficient rainfall in South India was Tamil Nadu, according to the IMD data. Of its 32 districts, 20 received deficient rainfall while one reported large deficiency.

In neighbouring Kerala, where flooding and landslides due to monsoon rains claimed more than 290 lives and displaced over 10 lakh people since 8 June, of the 14 districts,

10 received excess rainfall and two received "largely excess" rainfall.

Of the 31 districts in Telangana, six reported large deficiency; all four districts of

Puducherry reported deficiency.

Of the 30 districts in Karnataka, another state neighbouring Kerala, 14 received deficient rainfall and two reported large deficiency in rainfall. Lakshadweep, too, received deficient rainfall.

All four districts of Rayalaseema region and two of the 11 districts in Andhra Pradesh received deficient rainfall.

At the country-level, the IMD said there was a 27 per cent rainfall deficiency in east and northeast India, followed by minus 3 and minus 1 in northwest and central India, respectively. The south peninsula division is the only one to

report 10 per cent more rainfall than the normal.

According to figures released by the Water Resources Ministry this week, the total storage of 91 major reservoirs in the country is 161.993 billion cubic metres, which is about 63 per cent of the total storage capacity of 257.812 BCM.

There are 15 reservoirs being monitored by the Central Water Commission in east and northeast India with the current water storage level at 65 per cent of the total capacity. In central India, water level is 57 per cent in 12 reservoirs, while the total storage in 27 reservoirs in western India is just 45 per cent.

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Oxygen levels show why Yamuna is dead for all practical purposes

Intensity Of Pollution Has Risen In Last 5 Years Or So

Jayashree Nandi
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Despite several SC and NGT orders, almost the entire stretch of Yamuna in Delhi continues to be severely polluted. In fact, the intensity of pollution may have increased in the last 4-5 years, an analysis of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee's Yamuna water quality data has revealed.

For example, dissolved oxygen (DO) levels — the amount of oxygen dissolved in water — ought to be a minimum of 4 mg/litre, but 2015 onwards, there is nearly no DO in any stretch of Yamuna downstream, even in September (post-monsoon).

The pre-monsoon data of May from 2010 to 2018 also shows DO levels to be nil everywhere except in Palla and Surghat (downstream of Wazirabad barrage) where Yamuna enters the city. DPCC's data reveals that while pollution levels haven't improved, they may have actually deteriorated further in most stretches as the inflow of sewage increased over the years.

Now, all eyes are on two interventions — implementation of National Green Tribunal's "Mailley se Nirmal Yamuna" and laying of interceptor sewage lines along Delhi's three biggest drains. Likely to be completed by January 2019.

Recently, Delhi Jal Board had submitted its draft report on sewerage management and performance of sewage-treatment-plants-to-NGT, which revealed that, at

How pollution is wreaking havoc on Yamuna



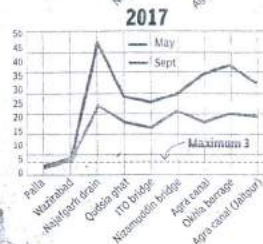
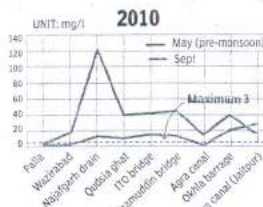
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015 NGT RULING

- 1 DJB must ensure that the 23 STPs closed due to inadequate sewage reaching them will be made operational within two months
- 2 A plan be prepared for installation of STPs along 32 major and minor drains

most places, the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) — the amount of dissolved oxygen needed for micro-organisms to breakdown the organic

BIOCHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND Amount of dissolved oxygen needed for micro-organisms to break down organic waste in water; at most locations, BOD found to be above the standard 3 mg/litre, even in Sept

The lower the BOD, the better...

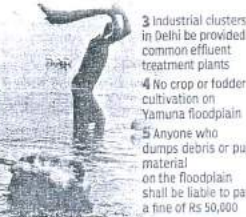
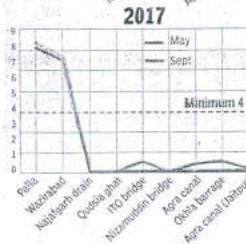
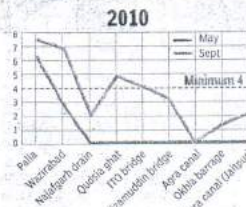


waste in water or, in simple terms, oxygen needed by the river to sustain life — did not meet the standard. (It should not exceed 3mg/litre).

DISSOLVED OXYGEN

Amount of oxygen dissolved in water ought to be a minimum of 4 mg/litre to sustain life; 2015 onwards, there is nearly no DO in any stretch of Yamuna downstream

...The higher the DO, the better



In layman terms, the lower the BOD, the better it is for river life. On the other hand, the higher the DO, the better it is. Most STPs are either closed or working way below capacity. Out of a total of 697.96 million gallons per day of operational capacity, only 476.74 MGD sewage is treated.

ted. "We have already recorded a clear finding of the failure of the administration in handling the situation and repeated failures in complying out binding directions. In various orders," a bench headed by chairperson Justice Arsh Kumar Goel said, "while evaluating the implementation of NGT's January 2015 order on a decentralised sewerage system where sewage falling into drains is tapped and treated."

NGT constituted a committee that will monitor compliance with the order on a day-to-day basis. The committee comprising Shalaja Chandra, former chief secretary, Delhi, and BS Sawan, former principal chief conservator of forests, will take stock of all action taken so far to comply with the January 2015 order.

The mandate of the committee will be to ensure safe standard of water quality at the entry and exit points of Yamuna in the long run. The committee may also consider approving collection of funds for the project by applying the "polluter pays" principle, the NGT order said.

They will also conduct regular inspections and analyse pollution levels with assistance from CPCB. "We are hopeful that this monitoring committee will ensure implementation of NGT's Yamuna order because the committee members are retired and not working in their full capacity unlike the present committee. NGT has also said that this committee will monitor implementation on a day-to-day basis. As far as DPCC's data is concerned, it's no surprise that even in September, DO is nil. It shows that intensity of pollution and sewage entering the river has increased. Yamuna, downstream of Wazirabad is all sewage except during monsoon," Manoj Mishra of Yamuna Jal Abhiyan said.

The highest rainfall recorded this season was on July 13 when Sadafpur recorded 33.6mm of rainfall in a 24-hour period. The Ridge station, meanwhile, received over 118mm of rainfall in a day. Rain activity over the past month has been hovering between light to moderate in most places across the city.

Rainfall between 2.5 to 15.5mm is considered as "light" while rainfall between 15.6 to 64.4mm in a 24-hour period is considered "moderate". Rainfall above 64.5mm is considered as "heavy" according to Met readings.

Rain over next 3 days to bring relief from heat

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: It is expected to return to the capital from Monday onwards, with the meteor office forecasting light to moderate showers over the next three days. According to officials, the intensity is expected to be higher on Tuesday, with most parts of the city receiving light to moderate activity, which will bring down the maximum and minimum temperatures by a couple of degrees.

Delhi's maximum temperature was recorded at 34.9 degrees Celsius on Sunday — one degree above the normal for this time of the season. Palm recorded the highest maximum at 36.2 degrees. The minimum temperature was also one degree above normal and was recorded at 27 degrees Celsius.

The capital has been witnessing sultry conditions for the last couple of weeks and humidity on Sunday oscillated between 61 to 80 percent through the day. Officials said the humidity level is expected to rise even further over the next few weeks, with rains providing only a temporary respite from the conditions.

"We can expect some rain over the next few days with the bulk of activity taking place on Tuesday. Maximum and minimum temperatures could fall to 32 and 26 degrees by Wednesday due to these rains," said a met official.

The highest rainfall recorded this season was on July 13 when Sadafpur recorded 33.6mm of rainfall in a 24-hour period. The Ridge station, meanwhile, received over 118mm of rainfall in a day. Rain activity over the past month has been hovering between light to moderate in most places across the city.

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- 3 Industrial clusters in Delhi be provided common effluent treatment plants
- 4 No crop or fodder cultivation on Yamuna floodplain
- 5 Anyone who dumps debris or puja material on the floodplain shall be liable to pay a fine of Rs 50,000

Hindustan Times
Statesman ✓
The Times of India (N.D.)
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The Times of India (A)
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and documented at Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section, CWC.

51,837 industries under NGT scanner

PTI
NEW DELHI, 26 AUGUST

The National Green Tribunal has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to constitute a committee to enquire about the status of 51,837 industries in the national capital which are running in residential areas without requisite approvals.

The green panel asked the apex pollution monitoring body to form a two member committee to look into the entire matter and take appropriate action in accordance with law.

"The North Delhi Municipal Corporation, East Delhi Municipal Corporation, South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation and Delhi Development Authority will co-operate and provide all assistance to the Committee constituted by the CPCB," a bench, headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, said.

The tribunal further direct-

ed the committee to submit its report on the issue within two months to a panel comprising former Delhi chief secretary Shailaja Chandra and retired NGT expert member Bikram Singh Sajwan.

"The committee constituted by the tribunal may take further appropriate action as may be found necessary, subject to any further order of this tribunal," it said.

The order came after taking note of a news report published in an English daily alleging that thousands of polluting industries are being brazenly run in the city right under the nose of the author-

ities.

The report had said that Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) recently listed 51,837 units operating from non-conforming/residential areas and asked the three municipal corporations to initiate action against them.

According to the news item, the industries were creating water and air pollution in the areas as they do not have license to operate.

"The analysis of the data released by DSIIDC shows most violations in Moti Nagar, Kirti Nagar, Ramesh Nagar,

The green panel asked the apex pollution monitoring body to form a two member committee to look into the entire matter and take appropriate action in accordance with law.

Najafgarh and Mansarovar Garden, all in west Delhi; Ashram, Bhogal, Jangpura, Maharani Bagh and Mahipalpur in south Delhi; Gandhi Nagar, Jheel, Shastri Nagar, Kailash Nagar, Jafabad and Shahdara in east Delhi; and Sadar Bazaar, Chandni Chowk, Malkaganj, Ballimaran, Lal Kuan and Kashmir Gate in north Delhi.

"Other highly affected areas are Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar, Anand Parbat, Rohtak Road, Rajinder Nagar, Old Rajinder Nagar in central Delhi; Shahdara, GT Road, Babarpur and Vishwas Nagar in northeast Delhi; and Burari and Jagatpuri in northwest Delhi," the report said.



News item/letter/article/editorial published on 27.8.2018 in the

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993 deaths due to floods in this yr's monsoon & still counting

27-710

Over 70 Lakh People Affected In Five States

Pradeep.Thakur
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Kerala has got widespread attention, with close to 400 deaths and massive destruction in one of the worst floods in the state's history but nearly 600 lives were lost in four other states due to overflowing rivers, with the home ministry putting the total figure at 993.

More than 70 lakh people have been affected and almost 17 lakh are living in relief camps, according to the disaster management division of the home ministry.

KERALA TOLL AT 387

States	Affected Districts	Lives Lost	In Relief Camps	Total Affected Population
Kerala	14	387	14.5 lakh	54.1 lakh
UP	16	204	10,800	2.4 lakh
W Bengal	23	195	NA	2.3 lakh
Karnataka	11	161	5,800	3.5 lakh
Assam	23	46	2.4 lakh	11.5 lakh

Data as on August 22; Source: Disaster management division, MHA

Apart from Kerala, the other flood-hit states are Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Assam.

While Kerala reported the highest loss of lives due to floods, UP saw 204 deaths, West Bengal 195, Karnataka 161 and Assam 46.

In Kerala, 54 lakh people have been affected and 14.5

lakh people are living in relief camps. In Assam, 11.5 lakh people have been affected and 2.4 lakh are in relief camps.

In 2017, more than 1,200 people were killed in flood-related incidents while the figure was 936 in 2016, according to official data.

► Continued on P 9

No action for 4 yrs despite warning on Western Ghats

More than four years and three draft notifications since March 2014 when the Centre recognised the need to prevent further degradation of the fragile ecology of Western Ghats, it has failed to bring six states on board for urgent action. As a result, 56,825 sq km of 'ecologically sensitive' area could not be earmarked as 'no go' zone for polluting activities and deforestation. Earmarking Kerala's 9,993 sq km as eco-sensitive area four years ago may not have saved the state from excessive rainfall but the delay is making the state more vulnerable. **P7**

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Six states sitting on edge as draft green norms hang fire

Centre's Draft On Preserving Western Ghats Notified In 2014

Vishwa.Mohan
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Over four years and three draft notifications since March 2014 when the Centre recognised the need to prevent further degradation of the fragile ecology of Western Ghats, it has failed to bring six states on board for urgent action.

As a result, 56,825 sq km of 'ecologically sensitive' area could not be earmarked as 'no go' zone for polluting activities and deforestation — a prerequisite to save the region from constant environmental degradation. Earmarking Kerala's 9,993 sq km as Eco-Sensitive Area (ESA) four years ago may not have saved the state from excessive rainfall but the delay is certainly making the state, along with five others in the Western Ghats, more vulnerable.

Since the demarcated areas remain on paper despite the draft being notified thrice in four years, continued deforestation has left the stretch of 1,500 km running through the six states prone to landslides

FRAGILE WESTERN GHATS:

SPREAD OVER SIX STATES
Gujarat, Maharashtra,
Goa, Karnataka, Tamil
Nadu and Kerala



Proposed area to stop polluting activities and deforestation:

56,825 sq km

State & Area (in sq km)	
Karnataka	20,668
Maharashtra	17,340
Kerala	9,993
Tamil Nadu	6,914
Goa	1,461
Gujarat	449

NOTIFIED THRICE, BUT
REMAIN ON PAPER

First	March 10, 2014
Second	September 4, 2015
Third	February 27, 2017

and floods even in a situation of 'above normal' rainfall during a short period of time.

"High rainfall needs vegetated hills to break the rain's energy and clear drainage lines (stream and rivers) to safely take the silt and water to the seas. Over time, denudation of hills, raising of dams, diversion of drainage lines and occupation of floodplains

created a recipe for what has been witnessed," environmentalist Manoj Misra said.

"Unless 'business as usual' is reversed, Kerala 2018 is not the last that the nation has seen," Misra, convener of Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan, said while noting that destruction of 'ecologically sensitive' area in Kerala was one of the reasons for the devastation it

witnessed this month.

Every time the environment ministry notified the ESA draft, as recommended by a high level working group (HLWG) headed by space scientist K Kasturirangan, it asked the Western Ghats states — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala — to submit their views or objections.

The process, however, has already seen a four-year delay. It has got entangled in states' objections — mainly from Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

"As a result, large-scale deforestation, mining and construction are continuing unabated, hurting the ecology of Western Ghats... This flood (in Kerala) would have happened in any case," said Chandra Bhushan, climate change expert at the Centre for Science and Environment. The HLWG had submitted its recommendations in April 2013 after examining an earlier report by ecologist Madhav Gadgil. Both reports had flagged need to earmark ESA to prevent deforestation in Western Ghats.

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Business standard

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



▪ Landslides, triggered by heavy rains, in Ramssoo and Magarkote areas of Ramban district, had completely blocked vehicular movement on the highway since Saturday morning.

HT PHOTO

Jammu-Srinagar NH reopens after 2 days

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

JAMMU: The 294 km-long Jammu-Srinagar national highway, a vital surface link with the rest of the country, reopened partially late on Sunday after remaining closed for nearly two days due to major landslides near Ramban.

The landslides had triggered a complete shutdown of vehicular movement on the highway, leaving more than a thousand vehicles stranded at different locations, and massive traffic snarls on the both ends of the blocked stretch. Hundreds of trucks, load carriers and passenger vehicles were seen parked along the highway since the wee hours of Saturday.

A major road clearance operation was launched immediately after the landslide but intermittent rains hampered the early reopening of the arterial road, an official told PTI.

"After hectic efforts, the road was cleared for one-way traffic this evening and accordingly the stranded vehicles are being allowed towards their respective destinations," the official said.

They said the road clearance

operation was still going on in full swing to remove the remaining debris, the official added.

Earlier in the day, the authorities used explosives to blast the huge rocks which had rolled down on the highway.

The landslides were triggered by rains in Ramssoo and Magarkote areas of Ramban district on early Saturday morning.

Though the landslides from a couple of locations were cleared on Saturday evening, but a fresh landslide again blocked the highway near Ramssoo town.

On Sunday, a few stranded passengers were seen crossing the affected area on foot to reach other side of the highway for their onward journey to their respective destinations. While number of vehicles have returned to the places of their origin.

More than 1,000 vehicles were stranded at various locations on the highway including Udhampur, Kud, Ramban, Ramssoo and Qazigund.

Meanwhile, hundreds on the stranded passengers had a night halt at Ramban, in a camp established by the local administration, where they were provided free lodging and food.

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U'khand rains: Boy swept away by river, landslides block roads

Abhinav Madhwal

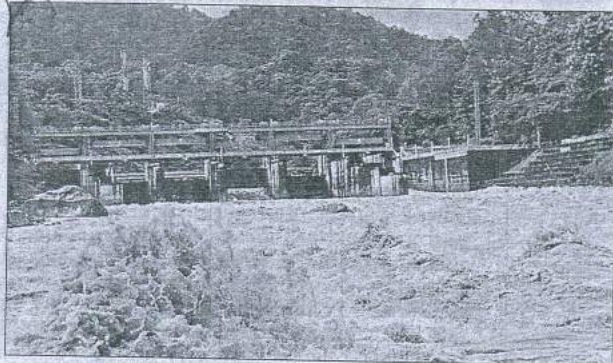
■ abhinav.madhwal@htlive.com

HALDWANI: A boy was swept away in Gola river in Haldwani on Saturday after rains lashed various parts of Uttarakhand, triggering landslides and rivers flowing in spate.

The boy, identified as Vivek Belwal (15), son of a street vendor, had gone to swim in the river with his friends when the incident took place. However, his friends hid his shoes and cycle in the bushes due to which his parents came to know of the incident several hours later.

Sixteen pilgrims of the 12th batch of Kailash Mansarovar are currently stranded in Gunji while the other pilgrims have returned to New Delhi after completing the yatra.

"The pilgrims are in a camp as the helicopters could not take off from Gunji due to incessant rain. We are waiting for the weather to clear so that pilgrims can safely return to Pithoragarh," said TS Martoliya, general manager of



■ Gola river in spate, flowing below the danger mark in Haldwani. HT

Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam, the nodal agency for Kailash Mansarovar yatra.

In another incident, a funeral pyre was swept away in the Gola river at Chitrashila ghat. The family of the deceased tried to catch the floating pyre but failed due to the raging torrent.

A culvert collapsed in Najibabad, forcing the roadways buses to take longer route to reach Dehradun from Haldwani. The buses are now plying via Muzaffarna-

gar and travelling an extra 70km.

Heavy rains lashed the state capital Dehradun. The Ganga was flowing close to the warning level in Rishikesh and Haridwar.

The Rishikesh-Badrinath highway at Lambagad in Chamoli district was also blocked due to landslides, the disaster management offices said. Rains continued in the Kumaon region on Sunday but no major incident was reported from any part.

(With PTI inputs)

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 27.08.2018 in the

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Kumaraswamy regrets spat between Ministers

Time to forget small differences, says Karnataka CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Seeking to bring the curtains down on the spat between Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and State Tourism Minister S.R. Mahesh during the former's visit to the flood-hit Kodagu district on Friday, Karnataka Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday said it was time to forget small differences, and join hands for the rehabilitation of the people of Kodagu.

"The grave situation in the district warrants it. Let us not be distracted from our key focus. I look forward to the continued support of



H.D. Kumaraswamy

the Central government and, in particular, of the Defence Minister," said Mr. Kumaraswamy on Facebook and Twitter on Sunday. "I am deeply pained at the turn of events with regard to the

visit of Ms. Sitharaman. She was kind enough to extend all possible support to the State when her help was sought for rescue operations," he said, and added that he had also called up Ms. Sitharaman.

He said: "Though the government and the district administration have ensured and followed protocol despite the tough situation in the region during her visit, it was unfortunate that the Defence Minister had to go through certain inconveniences, which we regret." He praised Mr. Mahesh's efforts in flood relief.

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Kodagu administration puts a stop to 'disaster tourism'

Relief hampered as roads blocked with visitors taking photos of affected areas

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

The Kodagu district administration has ordered a crack-down on 'disaster tourism' as large numbers of people are visiting flood and landslide-hit areas.

With the respite from rain over the past few days, many curious people – both locals and outsiders – began visiting some of the disaster-hit areas in and around Madikeri. Officials said this is an impediment to the free movement of relief supplies as the existing narrow roads were choked with vehicles, and people taking photographs.

Ban on hotel bookings

Earlier this month, following incessant rains, the district administration had directed



Not safe: There are areas in Madikeri town that bore the brunt of nature's fury but remain accessible. ■ M.A. SRIRAM

all hotels, homestays and resorts in Kodagu to not accept bookings till August 31. The ban on hotel bookings worked till last week, when the link to Madikeri from Mysuru and Kushalnagar was

cut off and numerous landslides disrupted road connectivity within the district.

In a release, the authorities issued a fresh directive to hotels, resorts and homestays to not to entertain visi-

Rescue teams called back

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Authorities in Kodagu announced that rescue teams from the Army, Navy and Air Force were being called back, while one team of the National Disaster Response Force will remain, as the flood situation in the district returns to normal.

tors till August 31. Srividya, Deputy Commissioner, Kodagu, also warned of legal action if the directive was violated. The ban is in the interest of the visitors' safety, the release added.

Hindustan Times

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Post-rains, plantation sector tots up losses

Impact pegged at ₹2,100 cr. in Karnataka, ₹800 cr. in Kerala

E. M. MANOJ

KALPETTA

Recent rains in Kerala and the Malnad region of Karnataka have left a trail of destruction in India's major spice-growing regions.

Coupled with landslips, the rains have adversely affected plantation crops such as ginger, black pepper, cardamom, coffee, nutmeg, rubber and tea. Though government agencies are yet to ascertain the quantum of loss in the plantation sector, farming sources said that the loss incurred by the sector is about ₹2,100 crore in Karnataka and ₹800 crore in Kerala.

Farmers cultivating short term crop such as ginger were relieved when they received good pre-monsoon showers in April. But ginger farms in Kerala and Karnataka submerging in floods starting June has dampened their hopes. Ginger rhizomes have since been



Ginger farms on 5,000 ha in Karnataka and 2,500 ha in Kerala bore the brunt.

affected by the soft rot disease. Heavy rains in ginger growing regions of Mysuru, Coorg, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan and Shimoga districts in Karnataka and Wayanad, Palakkad, Pathanamthitta and Idukki districts in Kerala in June flooded the fields.

"I have spent nearly ₹50 lakh to cultivate ginger on 10 acres of leased land but I am

not sure if I can recoup even a quarter of the expense," said Manjunath, a farmer at Kushalnagar in Coorg.

The rains wiped out ginger rhizomes on almost 5,000 hectares in Karnataka and 2,500 hectares in Kerala, Navrang Mohanan, president, South Indian Ginger Growers' Association told *The Hindu*.

Impact on pepper

"Torrential rains have washed off black pepper vines in many parts of the two States. This will adversely affect pepper production in the coming season," Kishore Shamji Kurawa, Cochin Chapter head, Indian Pepper and Spice Traders, Farmers, Producers and Planters Consortium, said.

"High moisture content owing to [the] rains has triggered fungal diseases like quick wilt and soft wilt." Pepper production may fall 40-50% next season, he added.

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In a time of loss, a bit of cheer on Onam in Kerala

Malayalis set aside their grief for a much loved king on his annual visit to the state

A pookalam (traditional flower arrangement) made of dustpans, brooms and gloves to bring in the festival of Onam at a relief camp in Kerala said it all. Despite the horrendous flooding in which over 250 people died, a million people were displaced and property worth thousands of crores destroyed, the resilient Malayali still retains a sense of humor. Despite a fairly tough future -- chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan estimates that the state will take a decade to get back to normal -- the festival was celebrated across the state in a remarkable coming together of all faiths. The tragedy has unleashed a spirit of camaraderie unseen in an intensely political state. Churches, mosques and temples have all done their bit to make Onam a little happier for people.

According to the legend of Onam, a beloved king Mahabali was so popular that the gods felt threatened and banished him to the netherworld in a deceitful manner. But such was the longing of his subjects to see him again, that he was permitted to return once a year, on Onam when people await him with a grand feast, dressed in new clothes amid festivities such as the famous snake boat races. It is the story of the perennial return of the man who has lost his home and land, something the indomitably courageous Malayalis can take heart from at this time. Kerala has much to celebrate in the manner in which the rescue and relief operations were conducted. Reports of unparalleled generosity from the rich and the poor and the proactive role played by the state government have given people hope in the midst of such loss. Even the controversy about foreign aid has not got much traction within the state.

The government has done well to divert its Onam celebration funds for flood relief. The extent of loss and deaths have yet to be ascertained accurately but for one day, on Saturday, the people of Kerala set aside their grief and put their best face forward for a much loved king on his annual visit. Well played, Kerala.

Hindustan Times

Statesman

The Times of India (N.D.)

Indian Express ✓

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Village battling IS tag is part of relief team

KERALA FLOODS

PICKING UP THE PIECES

ARUN JANARDHANAN ✓
IDUKKI, AUGUST 26



Nearly 100 youth from
Padanna are helping out. ✓

**STATE GOVT THANKS
CENTRAL FORCES,
DEFENCE PAGE 7**

ous symbols" before coming to
Central Kerala since they didn't
want any unwanted attention.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IN MAY 2016, after over 25 people from Kerala fled to Afghanistan to join the Islamic State (IS), Padanna, a village in the north Kerala district of Kasargod, earned the uncharitable tag of being the "IS's recruitment hub" — a majority of those who left were from Padanna.

Now, nearly 100 youngsters from the same Muslim-majority village are among the many such groups who are playing a major role in helping Kerala recover from the devastation of the recent floods. At least five of these youngsters said they trimmed their beards and avoided other "obvi-

Village battling IS tag

Ever since the disaster began on August 15, over 30 youth from Padanna have been working on the ground in flood-hit areas while about a dozen others have been travelling up and down, ferrying supplies. Back in the village, a team of 60 people and about seven local clubs have also been working round the clock to source items and raise funds for the relief work, mainly to Ernakulam, Chengannur and Alleppey.

Shabeer Ali, a Gulf-based businessman who is coordinating the relief work and raising resources online, said at least 25 trucks with supplies have left Padanna since August 17. The main collection centre for these supplies is at Edappalli in Ernakulam, where a native of Padanna has turned his hotel into a godown for relief items.

One of the 30-odd volunteers from Padanna who are working on the ground is Zuhair Ismail, a 31-year-old who works for a Qatar-based radio station. Ismail says he flew down on August 17 after seeing the magnitude of the disaster. "I was personally very upset. Since it was difficult to get a ticket to airports in Kerala, I flew down to

Goa and reached Kozhikode by train," he says. He then borrowed a friend's and drove down on August 18 to Changanassery, where he set up a base camp.

Over the last 10 days, Ismail and team have managed to get four trucks from Padanna through Ernakulam. "We have distributed some 25,000 litres of drinking water in Chengannur, Kolenchery and Thiruvalla. We managed to mobilise several local people to assist us in the distribution of items," says Ismail, who has been staying in a small lodge in Changanassery with four others. He has also managed to source truck loads of provisions from Malappuram district.

On Sunday, Ismail's team had just returned after delivering food and drinking water in areas such as Pandanadu near Chengannur. "The water is receding but still it is knee deep in many places. So we have been carrying items in small boats," he says.

At Ernakulam, at least five of the 18 men from Padanna who are camping to coordinate the relief work, said that before leaving their village, they did something unusual — they trimmed their long beards that they had been keeping as part of their

faith.

Mohammed Salih, a 27-year-old construction engineer from Padanna who has been volunteering at the camp in Edappalli, said he joined the relief mission on August 18. "Almost every household in Padanna has contributed money or materials for the flood victims. For the mistake done by a handful of people in 2016, we suffered a lot in the last two years. Probably that is what forced some of us to trim our beards before coming here. We were conscious not to display any banner or religious symbol. Most of the people involved in the relief work are Muslims because ours is a largely Muslim area," Salih said.

Another volunteer, Mohammed Ali, 34, who deals with surgical equipments in Ernakulam, says they are not here "to become heroes". "I don't want to tell you about the work we have done. But people should know that Padanna is not a terror factory. Irrespective of religion, we celebrate our temple festival in Padanna once every three years. Padanna has never had any communal tension. But I have been stopped at different airports for being a Muslim with an address in Padanna," he said.