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S. Mahan
28.8.18
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Kerala deluge may shave off 2.2% of state GDP, push deficit to 5.4%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, 27 August

The deluge that ravaged Kerala earlier this month has shaved off at least 2.2 per cent of state GDP, which will push up its fiscal deficit to 5.4 per cent this fiscal year, says a report.

Most of Kerala was marooned between August 8 and 20, and around 260 peo-

ple were killed and over a 1.5 million driven out of their homes. The state administration has pegged the damages — over 90,000 km of roads, hundreds of bridges and around 50,000 acres of crops and over 10,000 homes were destroyed, at over ₹ 350 billion, which is much more than its annual budget. According to an initial estimate by rating agency Acuit

Ratings (earlier Smera Ratings), the flood has shaved off at least 2.2 per cent or nearly ₹108 billion of state GDP. Without central grants-in-aid, state fiscal deficit may exceed 5.4 per cent this financial year compared to 3.2 per cent in FY18. The key sectors of tourism and agro-based industries are expected to suffer severe losses.

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Business Standard

Volume XXV Number 95

NEW DELHI | TUESDAY, 28 AUGUST 2018

Judicious decision

Allahabad High Court has sent the right signal

The Allahabad High Court has taken the right decision by denying interim relief to power companies from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) February 12 circular, which set a 180-day deadline for the resolution of all non-performing assets. The RBI circular requires banks to finalise a resolution plan in case of a default on large accounts of ₹20 billion or more within the deadline, failing which insolvency proceedings will have to be invoked against the defaulter and assets would be taken to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). As many as 34 power plants, with a combined capacity of 39 GW, have been identified as stressed assets. The central bank also introduced the concept of a one-day default under which banks have to identify incipient stress even when repayments are overdue by a day.

Reports suggest that 70 large companies with a debt of around ₹3.8 trillion would have to face Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) proceedings. Three-fourths of this debt — that's roughly ₹2.6 trillion — pertains to a handful of power producers for whom Monday was the last date. To be sure, power producers were not the only ones dithering on submitting to the IBC process. The government and even the lenders, mostly public sector banks, were also not keen on implementing the RBI circular and were putting pressure on the central bank to relent on the ground that the power sector's problems had more to do with external factors than any real fault of the companies or their promoters.

It is true that power producers have been struggling both on supply and demand factors ranging from inconsistent or costly supply of coal to lack of power purchase agreements. Moreover, given the absence of power pricing reforms, these companies have been struggling to attain viability. The IBC process is most likely to end in liquidation as there are hardly any buyers for such assets. Liquidation would thus mean destruction of the existing power generation capacity. The government and the power producers used this logic to try and convince the court to create an exception for them and allow them more time to find a solution.

It's not yet clear whether the power producers will move the Supreme Court. Till that happens, the RBI deadline stands and banks are bound to start IBC proceedings. The high court has, however, done its bit by cementing the RBI's position as an independent regulator and avoiding a precedent that could easily be misused. It is for the RBI and nobody else to decide whether any particular sector deserves regulatory forbearance — in this case, it has decided against granting any exception, which is a sound, rule-based approach. Any judicial intervention would have sent a signal to other defaulters that they could seek judicial reprieve from the RBI's circulars.

The central government, of course, has the option of directing the RBI to take corrective action in public interest under Section 7 of the RBI Act. However, the truth is that the crisis in the power sector has been brewing for a long time and the government has not shown any urgency in resolving the issues that the sector has been facing. There is no real reason to believe that power producers' worries will be over anytime soon in the absence of real reforms. Why, then, spoil the credibility of the IBC process?

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AI, inequity, and our choice and agency

Predicting the future is really hard, especially ahead of time," warns Rodney Brooks, former director of MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. Public conversation around artificial intelligence (AI) is growing, shaping perceptions and impacting policy. How should we anticipate our interactions with technology? What can we influence?

First, recognise that AI and automation will unfold at different speeds within the same economic system. AI has been called the "electricity for the Fourth Industrial Revolution". AI, big data, automation and quantum computing could fundamentally alter economic progress. Governments are pushing national strategies. China is aiming for AI superpower status by 2030. The EU, France and Japan are pursuing increased R&D investment while developing ethical and legal frameworks. A US taskforce called for a detailed R&D plan and an AI R&D workforce. A NITI Aayog discussion paper proposes an inclusive vision of "AI for all" for India.

But the shift will not be discrete. Old and new industries, technologies and methods of production will co-exist. This multi-velocity automation will complicate industrial strategy. There is already a push to acquire emerging technologies and corner larger market shares. China's 2025 strategy identifies 10 sectors (including robotics and semiconductors) in which its homegrown firms want to dominate the domestic market while competing globally. Predictions are difficult. Among the top 10 applications in which China anticipates robots to have much promise are energy and mining, medicine and defence. The list also includes cleaning, filmmaking and companionship!

There are limits to what top-down industrial policy can achieve. Technology is an enabler, not an end in itself. Responsible production and consumption will depend on how AI and automation improve resource efficiency, reduce food losses and increase recycling and reuse of materials. Outcomes are not

given. Policy can direct which way innovation leads.

Second, resist the temptation to predict the future of jobs. Commentary about AI and automation is replete with predictions about job losses, including high-skilled work. Meanwhile, the US already has about 78,000 AI researchers; China about half that number. This is an important indicator of technological development, but not of jobs losses and gains in specific sectors. A 2017 report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (disclaimer: I was

a member of the steering group) identified several drivers that would shape the jobs ecosystem. Among them were lifelong learning systems, shapes and sizes of enterprises, social security systems, and whether technology and innovation would enable inclusive growth.

For productive employment and decent work, we need to look for opportunities for new skills and new sectors. Water, sanitation, waste management and (clean) energy would be important growth areas. Imagine new jobs for those

installing rooftop electricity systems, or in decentralised water and sanitation infrastructure, or for those trained in optimising, recycling and reusing critical minerals and materials.

But what about workers' rights? In an economy enabled by new technologies, one's personal economic value is likely to be inversely proportional to the standardisation of tasks. The more unique the job, the greater would be one's value in the workforce. Workers are likely to develop multiple skills spread across multiple jobs. In this evolved "gig economy", if everyone became their own boss, who would one ask for a raise or for health coverage?

Third, understand the coming pressures on democratic engagement. In 1949, B.R. Ambedkar warned that inequality in social and economic life endangered political democracy. If AI, automation and other emerging technologies widened economic inequality, how would that affect nominal political equality in democracies?

Take taxation. If robots were more productive

than humans, should they be taxed? Many developing countries rely more on indirect taxation due to shallow direct tax bases. If robots increased economic production, which in turn increased indirect tax revenues, the same could be potentially redistributed to those adversely impacted by growing automation. But if robots also made it cheaper to deliver essential services (say, public healthcare or clean water), then governments ought to embrace new technologies.

In such a political environment, who would have a say? Robots? Their owners? Or those affected? If AI replicated and magnified social and cultural biases and widened inequalities of opportunity, it would become harder to use democratic processes to mediate differences.

Fourth, reimagine how technology could empower sustainable development. Potential AI applications for energy, water, cities or climate change are significant. Machine learning algorithms can improve climate modelling by assigning weights to models according to their accuracy against observations. AI can support more flexible and autonomous electricity grids to integrate renewables. Wind turbines can increase efficiency when each propeller "learns" about wind speed and direction from other propellers. Sensors and control systems can improve irrigation efficiency in water-stressed regions, or guide farmers in sowing practices for increased yields. AI has helped to significantly improve accuracy in identifying cyclones.

The conversation about AI has to shift from technology to society. We are far from artificial general intelligence. In 2013-14, a supercomputer with 82,944 processors took 40 minutes to compute what 1 per cent of the human brain calculates in a second. There is no pre-AI and post-AI world. Technology will develop and get adopted at varying speeds, with attendant inequities and opportunities. How we channel their potential will depend on how our political systems make conscious efforts to give primacy to human agency. This is a very fuzzy boundary and the causality cuts both ways.

The writer is CEO at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (<http://ceew.in>)

Twitter: @GhoshArunabha; @CEEWIndia



INFLEXION POINTS

ARUNABHA GHOSH

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Centre approves use of drones but with riders

ARINDAM MAJUMDER

New Delhi, 27 August

A legal framework has finally been set for the use of drones. From December, drones can be used for mapping, surveying and photography.

However, following global norms, using drones to deliver goods and food items has not been approved which may hinder its commercial usage.

Jayant Sinha, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, while announcing the policy indicated that this was done keeping in mind the security aspect and the government will be looking to liberalise the guidelines in future.

E-commerce major Amazon has used a drone to deliver a bag of popcorn to an address in rural England, in the first commercial outing for a technology that is the US group's boldest step towards automating deliveries.

"There are opportunities for our aviation sector and for India's start-up industry as India is set to become a global leader as far as drone ecosystem is concerned. It's important for us to have a policy roadmap and regulations that support growth of the drone ecosystem," Sinha said.

According to the policy unveiled by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which will be the regulating agency for such vehicles, drones have been classified into four parts based on their weight.

For the lightest category Nano, a payload of up to 250 grams and flight to a maximum height of 50 feet have been approved. A user need not seek prior approval for operating a nano drone.

However, for an equipment which is more than 250



WHAT YOU CAN FLY

Types of drones	Weight	Height restriction (ft)
Nano	Up to 250 gm	50
Micro	250 gm - 2 kg	200
Small	2 kg - 25 kg	400
Medium	25 kg - 150 kg	400
Large	More than 150 kg	400

Source: Directorate General of Civil Aviation

gm, the operator has to get security clearance each time the drone is operated.

The government has approved a full digital ecosystem for granting permission for use of drones with an intention to make life easier. Termed 'No permission-No Take Off,' the software programme will enable the user to seek approval from DGCA, home ministry, security agencies, and the Indian Air Force for all kinds of license.

"What we intend to do is to connect one police station in a district to the digital system. Any person who intends to use drones can comply with the norms digitally to seek approval," Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Nayan Choubey said.

Drone manufacturers, however, said the government has been conservative

in its policy. An executive of a Bengaluru-based drone manufacturer said that any drone intended for commercial use will invariably weigh more than 2 kg and will fall in the bracket of medium to large category needing permission every time it is operated.

Also, a blanket restriction on the height limit of 400 feet will be difficult to follow if it is to be used for surveying and mapping. "With such restrictions, the use of drones would remain limited to amateur usage like wedding photography and recreational use," the person said.

Sinha said that the government will look to liberalise its usage in future terming the current policy as 1.0. "We will form a task force on the usage of drones and continuously update the regulations in future," he said.

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Court refuses interim relief to power firms

Banks will have to start resolution process for assets whose deadline is over

SHREYA JAI, ABHIJIT LELE & SOMESH JHA
New Delhi & Mumbai, 27 August

The Allahabad High Court (HC) refused on Monday to provide relief for privately-owned stressed power projects from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) February 12 order.

The RBI circular directed lenders to undertake insolvency resolution of defaulting companies within a strict timeline. The central bank had ordered banks to identify stress even when repayments were overdue by only a day. Resolution proceedings must be completed in 180 days, a deadline that ended on Monday.

The court has, however, allowed the affected companies to try the legal route for individual grievances.

Monday's order sets the clock ticking on 34 stressed assets with a cumulative debt of ₹1.74 trillion. A dozen of these are expected to immediately face proceedings. Across sectors, about 70 companies face insolvency because of the RBI notification. Fifteen have since been resolved, including eight power companies.

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"INDISCRIMINATE LENDING TO CHASE GROWTH AT THE COST OF MACROECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS WAS A POLICY MISTAKE"

Arun Jaitley, finance minister



PROJECTS UNDER SDR/S4A

Project Debt funding
₹ billion

SBI	
Athena Singhitarai	62.97
Jaypee Bara	109.4
Madhucon Simhapuri	24.74
SKS Binikote	43.57
TOTAL	240.68

PNB	
Essar Tori	28.5
Jaypee Nigrie	73.15
Jindal Derang	55.14
Lanco Vidarbha	42.49
Lanco Babandh	65.39
Vandana Chhattisgarh	14.88
Visa Power Chhattisgarh*	NA
TOTAL	279.55

Project Debt funding
₹ billion

AXIS BANK	
Avantha MP	34.6
GMR Raikhedra	81.5
TOTAL	116.1

PFC	
Essar Mahan	86
Maheshwar Hydro	11
Ind Barath Utkal	42
KSK Mahanadi*	17.8
Lanco Amarkantak	47
Rattan India Nasik	80
Rattan India Amravati	129
TOTAL	412.8

Power Finance Corporation is lead lender in a consortium; total exposure: ₹300 billion

* In NCLT now
Sources: Banks, PFC, finance & power ministries

ECONOMY
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CAN GOVT GIVE DIRECTIONS TO
RBI ON POLICY, REGULATIONS?

NEW PROVISIONING SEEN AT
₹1 TRN FOR NCLT-3 ACCOUNTS

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For water-intensive crops, farmers need new OKs

regarding acceptance or refusal, for cultivation of (the) water-intensive crop".

Earlier this month, the Maharashtra government made purchase of any farm commodity below the official minimum support price (MSP) by even a private trader an offence attracting a one-year jail term and a fine of Rs 50,000.

The draft rules for groundwater mandate the grower to furnish an undertaking "that he will use micro-irrigation methods" for growing the water-intensive crop. Incidentally, the rules do not explicitly mention the crops that are "water-intensive". Nor is there any definition of the "notified areas", where these cropping restrictions would apply.

GSDA officials told The Indian Express that sugarcane and banana would fit the definition of "water-intensive" crops. They said the original Maharashtra Groundwater (Development and Management) Act of 2009 — under which the draft rules have been made — was also silent on this. "We may have to seek further clarification from the Water and Land Management Institute (WALMI), Aurangabad or the state agricultural universities," they noted.

As regards "notified areas", the officials said that these would basically refer to those wa-

tersheds — Maharashtra has 1,531 of them — that are categorised as over-exploited or critical, where the rates of groundwater extraction exceed annual recharge level.

There are 80 such watersheds in Maharashtra, which include 13 in Ahmednagar, 12 in Jalgaon, 11 in Nashik, nine in Amravati, seven each in Pune, Solapur and Latur, six in Sangli, three in Osmanabad, two in Buldhana, and one each in Satara, Aurangabad and Jalna. While Jalgaon is India's largest banana-growing district, the others (barring Buldhana and Amravati) have major sugarcane-growing tracts.

The draft rules have proposed that district officers of the agriculture department be assigned the task of preparing cropping plans for the "notified areas" in consultation with the WWRs. Such plans should take into account the cropping pattern of the area as per the agro-climatic zone in which it is located, the average water consumption for each crop as determined by WALMI, the precipitation levels in the previous hydrological cycle, and the GSDA's assessment.

The agriculture department "shall make all possible combination of crops that could be cultivated within the notified area until the total

water requirement of all the crops in a given season is less than or is equal to groundwater available for that season". In the event water-intensive crops are grown, the area under them will not be allowed to "exceed the area of the (same) crops taken in the previous year". The farmer, in this case, will have to seek special permission from the WWR/GSDA, while "mentioning the name of the crop and the area to be cultivated, along with the payment of fees as decided by the State Groundwater Authority, if any".

Raju Shetti, farmer leader and Lok Sabha MP from Hatkanangale constituency that includes Kolhapur district, criticised the rules, claiming these will add one more layer of bureaucracy and promote rent-seeking.

"The government seems to want to extend ease-of-doing-business for everybody, except the farmer. Farmers plant sugarcane and banana only because these are crops that give some return. If the government wants to wean farmers away from them, they should make other crops financially rewarding enough," he said.

GSDA officials said that the deadline for inviting objections and suggestions to the draft rules is August 31, but "we might extend them till end-September".

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Maharashtra again: For water-intensive crops, farmers need new OKs

**PARTHA SARATHI
BISWAS**

PUNE, AUGUST 27

SUGARCANE AND banana growers in "notified" groundwater-stressed areas of Maharashtra may soon require permission to plant these crops.

The draft Maharashtra Groundwater (Development and Management) Rules, 2018 — for which the Devendra Fadnavis government has invited comments — states that any farmer intending to cultivate a crop which is "water-intensive" will have to apply to a Watershed Water Resources Committee (WWRC) 30 days before the

sowing period of the crop.

The WWRC — it is headed by the chairman of the concerned taluka/block-level panchayat samiti and with members that include the block development officer, elected representatives of the district/zilla parishad, and officials from the water supply and sanitation, agriculture and animal husbandry departments — will then consult the senior district geologist of the Groundwater Surveys and Development Agency (GSDA).

Based on that, the committee shall "communicate, within thirty days from the date of receipt of application, in writing to the applicant, about its decision

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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DEAR CM FADNAVIS

The best way to help farmers realise better prices is by ensuring more buyers — not by threatening them

IF THE MAHARASHTRA government has its way, the onus for implementing the Centre's "historic" decision to fix minimum support prices (MSP) for crops at 1.5 times their average production costs will not lie with state procurement agencies. Instead, that responsibility shall be with private trade. The Devendra Fadnavis administration has taken a decision to make purchase of any farm commodity at below MSP even by private players — be it traders or processors — a punishable offence attracting a one-year prison term and a fine of Rs 50,000. Currently, tur (pigeon-pea) is being sold in most wholesale markets of Maharashtra at Rs 3,600-3,700 per quintal, which is not only below the MSP of Rs 5,675 declared for 2018-19, but even last year's rate of Rs 5,450. The same goes for other pulses and jowar (sorghum) — this, when the crop now being grown is due to arrive in the mandis only after about a month's time. Even soyabean is hovering just above the MSP, after having ruled much lower last year during the peak marketing period of November-December.

If market prices for crops are below the MSPs, it only means that the latter do not reflect supply-demand fundamentals. No rational trader would obviously buy at the MSP to sell at a lower rate. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation is, in fact, now offloading tur, moong (green gram), urad (black gram) and groundnut that it procured at MSPs last year at market prices, which are far lower. The apex state procurement agency is able to do this only because its losses will be borne by the government. Who will compensate private trade's losses for purchases at government-determined MSPs? If they are going to risk being jailed for not paying the MSP, the safest option is not to buy at all. Who else will suffer but the farmer, if traders desert the market and there are no buyers for produce?

If the government, in Maharashtra or at the Centre, wants farmers to receive the MSP, that should be done without distorting the market. Farmers could be paid the difference between the MSP and the market-determined prices through direct benefit transfer for the quantity of produce sold by them — which is what Madhya Pradesh has attempted to do. Even better is the Telangana formula of making a flat per-acre payment, which is de-coupled from production. Let the farmer grow any crop based on market signals and let him sell at the price that traders are willing to pay. Simultaneously, introduce competition by allowing anybody from anywhere in India to buy from any mandi within the country, to create a truly national agricultural market. The best way to help the farmer realise a better price is by ensuring more buyers — not by threatening them.

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Indus Waters Treaty talks in Lahore from tomorrow

SMITA SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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CHENAB PROJECTS MAY BE DISCUSSED

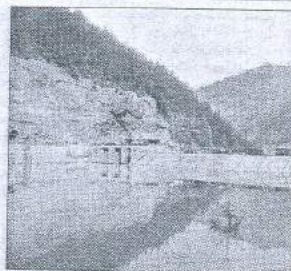
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

Officials of India and Pakistan will meet in Lahore this week to continue ongoing dialogue on the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), having held the last round in March this year.

The 115th meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC), led by the Indus Commissioners on both side and comprising technical experts, is scheduled for August 29 and 30. The Indian delegation led by PK Saxena will hold discussions with the Pakistan side led by Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah.

This will be the first round of official dialogue on the subject since the Imran Khan government took over this month. The two-day talks are expected to focus on Indian hydropower projects at Lower Kalnai (48 MW) and Pakal Dul (1000 MW) under construction in Jammu and Kashmir in Chenab basin.

Islamabad had objected to the construction in the last



■ The talks are expected to focus on India's hydropower projects at Lower Kalnai and Pakal Dul under construction in J&K's Chenab basin

■ While Pakistan objects to the construction and calls the designs violative of the treaty, India dismisses the objection as baseless

■ The two sides may also discuss data sharing, flood information and administrative matters

round of talks and called the designs violative of the IWT. India dismisses the objection as baseless and insists the designs are in compliance with the treaty.

The PIC, formed under the IWT signed in 1960, comprises Indus Commissioners for both countries. It is an established mechanism under the IWT to promote cooperation in development of Indus Water Systems.

The treaty signed with World Bank mediation after nine years of negotiations mandates the PIC to meet at

least once a year alternately in India and Pakistan. The IWT allows control of water flowing in eastern rivers of Beas, Sutlej and Ravi to India, while Pakistan has control over Indus, Chenab and Jhelum.

In the March meeting, according to sources, Pakistan had requested India to allow tours to the Indus Basin, including to Kishenganga and Ratle hydro projects. The request has been pending since 2014 and as per norms under the PIC, the tour has to take place within five years of request.

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Activists seek environment impact assessment of dams on Satluj 2851

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, 27 AUGUST

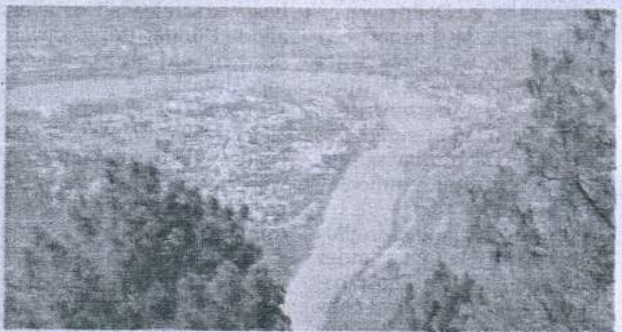
Environment activists in Himachal Pradesh have sought Cumulative Environment Impact Assessment (CEIA) of dams on Satluj.

Raising objection to the grant of clearances to dams on the last free flowing stretch of the Satluj River, Himdhara Collective, an environment group in Himachal has sent a submission to the Expert Committee of Ministry of Environment demanding Cumulative Impact Assessment for individual projects on the Satluj river basin.

They have demanded that the CEIA of Satluj river basin should be first finalised and till then, all projects on the Satluj river basin must be put on hold.

Manshi Asher from Himdhara Environment Research and Action Collective said, "The issue of dam building in the Himalayas has now become a major concern amongst mountain communities and environmentalists, given the threat of disasters like cloud bursts floods and earthquakes to the lives and economy of the region."

The move to build bumper to bumper dams on a single river basin in Himachal is destructive and this is the reason why we have been saying that the Ministry of Environment should look at the cumulative impacts of the dams



rather than for individual projects, she asserted.

"It was due to the objections of the local community that the massive tunnel will disturb the geology of the region, already prone to landslides, that the Luhri project was dropped," she said. Instead, the HP government has now allocated three dams, namely, Luhri Stage I and Luhri stage II (163MW) and Sunni (355MW) in the same stretch.

The key objection raised in the submission is that the committee instead of studying the over-all impact of the three projects put together, was looking at each project in a singular way.

The total land requirement for the three proposed projects is 654.02 hectares, that is twice the size of the land of the earlier proposed 750 MW Luhri project and considering 70 per cent of the required land falls in the category of 'forest', this would lead to more deforestation in the Satluj River

basin which has already faced severe forest diversion, erosion and slope de-stabilisation, she stated.

In 2013, on clear directions from the Ministry of Environment, the HP Directorate of Energy (DoE) had commissioned CEIA studies for all the major river basins of Himachal and the process for the Satluj river basin was initiated. Series of public consultations were held in Pooh, Rekong Peo in Kinnaur district and Rampur in Shimla district where local communities and environmentalists had filed detailed objections.

The DoE even appointed an independent Panel of Environmental and Social Experts, which submitted a damning report to the HP government in 2015, raising that the state government was apathetic to the adverse impacts these projects had on the lives of local communities. She said since then, there has been complete silence on the CEIA study of Satluj river basin.

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.



A resident shows sprouted paddy amidst the debris next to his house after the floods and landslips, near Mandalpatti in Madikeri. • SAMPATH KUMAR G.P.

₹3,000 cr. needed to repair infrastructure: Karnataka

Detailed proposal to be submitted to Centre in two days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Amid challenges to mop up resources to fund the ambitious ₹40,000 crore farm loan waiver, the Karnataka government has estimated that about ₹3,000 crore is required to rebuild roads, bridges and buildings alone across many districts in Karnataka that were affected by heavy rainfall, flooding and landslides in the last three months.

A detailed proposal to be submitted to the Union government, with estimated cost for rebuilding, will be prepared in the next two days.

Road damage

At a meeting to review rain-related damage in the State, Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy was informed that ₹3,000 crore was required to put back nearly 2,225 km of National and State Highways, and major district

42 acres for rehabilitation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has identified 42 acres in Kodagu to be used for rehabilitation of victims in rain ravaged parts of the district. Houses, which can be a model for the country, will be built for the victims.

"The blueprint to identify the model house design is currently under process. Of the 42 acres

identified, survey work has been completed on 24," Urban Development Minister U.T. Khader told reporters here on Monday. He said that a total of 758 houses were completely damaged in the rain and subsequent landslips.

Stating that constructing houses on a hilly terrain was a challenge, he said land had been identified in suitable locations.

roads besides the 240 bridges that had collapsed. Monday's meeting took stock of rain-related damage across nine districts in the State that have been battered by rain in the last three months.

The meeting had been convened to discuss proposals to be sent to the Union government seeking compensation for the losses suffered.

Mr. Kumaraswamy has asked officials to prepare detailed reports outlining the damage and estimated costs of repairing public property, including roads, bridges and buildings.

Besides they have been tasked with estimating losses to private property, plantation crops such as coffee, pepper and arecanut, and paddy.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 28.08.2018 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

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.

Taking Stock

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan reviewed relief and rehabilitation activities on Monday. The situation in the evening:

3,42,699

PEOPLE IN 1,093 CAMPS

322

DEATHS SINCE AUGUST 8

ANIMALS BURIED

BIRDS

4 lakh

SMALL BEASTS

18,532

LARGE BEASTS

3,766

KOCHI AIRPORT OPS RESUME TOMORROW

Kochi: Closed due to the flood, Kochi airport will resume operations at 2 pm on Wednesday, according to an official communication. It said that Cochin International Airport Limited is all set to commence full-scale operations, domestic and international, and services from Kochi naval base would be suspended from Wednesday noon.

The release said all airlines will follow the current schedule for operations. ENS

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RELIEF AND REHAB

Cess or ordinance, we need help from Centre: Finance Minister

KERALA FLOODS

PICKING UP THE PIECES

LIZ MATHEW &
AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

WITH FLOOD-RAVAGED Kerala awaiting more financial aid from the Central government for rehabilitation and rebuilding, its Finance Minister Thomas Isaac wants the Centre to issue an ordinance to change GST laws to permit the state to levy cess for mobilising resources.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Isaac said he was busy supervising relief and rehab work in Alappuzha district and would write to the GST Council by September 2.

"I will write a formal proposal to the GST Council requesting permission to levy cess on the State GST. The existing rules have to be changed for it. I will



Supreme Court judge Justice KM Joseph sings at the fundraiser for Kerala in Delhi, Monday. Seated in the front row (from right) are Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, Justice Kurian Joseph, Senior Advocate Vikas Singh, and Justices Madan B Lokur, A K Sikri and Deepak Gupta. Anil Sharma

also seek an appointment with the Union Finance Minister by September 10 to request him to issue an ordinance making the required changes in the law," Isaac said.

He said he would talk to other state finance ministers for their support. "No one can object to it," he said. "The council has to

meet and agree and the Centre can issue an ordinance."

The next GST Council meeting is scheduled for the end of next month.

Kerala floods

The amendment Kerala is seeking is to enable the Council to impose a special rate or rates for a specified period to raise additional resources during any "natural calamity or disaster".

Isaac claimed that allowing the state to levy cess on SGST is the "minimum" the Centre can do and "there is no logic denying the state permission for it as it's an intra-state tax."

Meanwhile, sources said pending a formal proposal from the Kerala government, the Finance Ministry has begun informal discussions on the legal feasibility of the cess.

A senior official said that various options were discussed internally including a separate law which could be either Kerala-specific or provide for natural calamities in all states. If not a cess, then the state could also consider a change in tax rate of State GST (SGST).

For instance, the state government could consider a change in tax rate, say, a cumulative 19 per cent GST (9 per cent Central GST (CGST) + 10 per cent SGST) over the current rate of 18 per cent (9 per cent CGST + 9 per cent SGST). The broad categories of tax rates under GST are zero, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent.

But experts warn that this could derail the inherent structure of GST since it gives scope for other states to also change their SGST rates and that it would imply moving to the pre-GST era when states had different VAT rates.

"Altering the GST architecture by imposition of a state-specific cess at a time when GST is in a stabilization phase would be inadvisable. This could create a precedent and over time lead to rate differences across states, prevailing in the erstwhile VAT regime," said M S Mani, Partner, Deloitte India.

Isaac further said that the situation in Kerala is a "perfect example to show that laws have to be more flexible." He said: "States have no other means to collect resources if there is a situation like this. I have always been arguing that states need more federal flexibility."

Earlier, Isaac told *The Indian Express* that the Kerala government will need at least Rs 21,000 crore to reconstruct basic infrastructure following the unprecedented floods and will look at various options to meet the burden including approaching the GST Council to allow the state to levy a cess.

However, if not a cess, the Kerala government will have room to raise the state GST rate up to 20 per cent, as provided in the state's GST Act.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 28.08.2018 in the

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The Times of India (A)

Business standard

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

KCR: refer Krishna disputes to tribunal

Calls on Union Minister Nitin Gadkari

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has requested Union Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari to take steps to refer the water disputes pertaining to sharing of Krishna water to a tribunal for adjudication and ensuring that justice is done to the people.

The Chief Minister, who called on Mr. Gadkari as part of his three-day stay in New Delhi on Monday, said in spite of the request made by the State in accordance with the provisions under Section 3 of the Inter State River Water Disputes (ISRWD) Act, 1956, the Central government had extended the term of Justice Brijesh Kumar Tribunal and referred the matter under Section 89 of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014.

The provisions under Section 89 of the Act were limited in scope and would not be able to do justice to the rightful claims of Telangana. It was therefore necessary that the matter was referred to the tribunal under the ISRWD Act.

"Despite considerable delay and repeated pleas from our side, I once again take the opportunity to refer the complaint of Telangana to Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal II under Section 5 (1) of the ISRWD Act for ensuring justice to people of my State," he said in a representation submitted to the Union Minister. The State also requested the Union Surface Transport Ministry to notify the road connecting Choutuppal with Kandli as a national highway and entrust the development work to the NHAI.

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
Indian Express
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A wake-up call for canal irrigation

It is ironical that the area under canal irrigation saw stagnation and decline despite so much investment



RAMESH CHAND & SHAMBHAVI SHARAN

The development of canal irrigation through investments in medium and major irrigation projects has been a priority of the government of India since the beginning of the First Five Year Plan: As a result, the area irrigated by canal (refer to government canals) increased from 71 lakh hectares during 1950-51 to 144 lakh hectares during 1980-81. In these 30 years, the share of public canals in the net irrigated area under all sources of irrigation also increased from 34 to 37 per cent. The area irrigated by government canals continued to increase in the next decade and reached a peak level of 173 lakh hectares by the year 1991-92. However, in this period, groundwater irrigation expanded at a much faster rate than canal irrigation. After 1991-92, the area under canal irrigation at the national level stagnated for about eight years and then followed a steep decline and reached bottom level of 138.7 lakh hectares in year 2002-03 (see Figure). There was some recovery in the next four years, which was again followed by a stagnation and a small decline. The net result is the net irrigated area under canal hov-

ered around 160 lakh hectares during 2011-12 to 2014-15, which is 10 lakh hectares less than what was achieved 20 years back.

It looks ironical that the area under canal irrigation witnessed stagnation and decline for such a long period despite so much investment in medium and major irrigation in the country. During the period 1993-2014, the country spent on an average about ₹176.63 billion per year at current prices on capital expenditure for major and medium irrigation projects. This disquiet trend necessitates closer examination and urgent action to ensure the resources spent on canal irrigation gives the expected return.

It took almost two decades for the erstwhile Planning Commission to take note of the stagnation and decline in the area under canal irrigation that set in in the early 1990s. The approach paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2011) acknowledged that large investments have been made in major and medium irrigation but the irrigated area served by canals has not increased significantly in the past decade. The paper informs that a large number of major as well as medium projects have been going on for 30-40 years without completion whereas the normal gestation period is 15-20 years for major projects and five-ten years for medium ones. The paper goes on to say "this reflects the chaotic state of affairs in the development of irrigation schemes across the country".

The main reason for the lack of progress in area under canal irrigation is poor utilisation of the irrigation potential created. The gap between



potential created (IPC) and potential utilised (IPU) was 25 per cent during the ninth Plan (1997-2002) and increased to 36 per cent during the 10th Plan (2002-07). Irrigation potential utilised further dropped to 21 per cent of IPC during the 11th Plan (2007-12). This despite the fact that ₹1744.73 billion was spent on major and medium irrigation projects in the 11th Plan period. Though IPU remained poor, even this should have resulted in an increase in the area under canal irrigation, which is not visible in the irrigation statistics. Besides IPC not fully translating into utilisation, there are several other reasons for the decline in the area under canal irrigation. Before discussing them we look at a state-wise picture because all states do not follow the all-India trend.

Andhra Pradesh spent ₹35.37 billion per year during 1992-93 to 2011-12 without any significant increase in the area

AREA IRRIGATED BY GOVERNMENT CANALS (1951-2015)

Area under canal, in thousand hectares



under canal. Maharashtra topped in spreading canal irrigation during 1992-93 to 2004-05, after which the area under canal irrigation stagnated around 10.80 lakh hectares despite annual investment of ₹66.69 billion. The decline was less than 3.5 per cent in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, but it ranged from 10 to 65 per cent in other major states. Jharkhand topped with 65 per cent decline in canal irrigation followed by Himachal Pradesh (42 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (23 per cent). Uttar Pradesh showed highest decline in canal irrigated area (6.82 lakh hectares) even though it spent ₹921 billion per year on major and medium irrigation projects during 1992-93 to 2013-14. In the case of West Bengal, canal area declined by 6.2 per cent during 1992-93 to 2003-04, while the annual capital expenditure was ₹864.9 million at current prices. The data on canal irrigation for the state after 2003-04 is not available.

On the other hand, Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir and Rajasthan show more than 30 per cent increase in the area under canal irrigation during 1992-93 to 2013-14. The increase was 29 per cent in Chhattisgarh and 11 per cent in Assam.

The decline in the area under canal irrigation is putting strong pressure on use of groundwater leading to its over-exploitation, which has several adverse implications. The share of canal irrigation in the total irrigated area has declined from 37.5 per cent in 1984-85 to 23.43 per cent in 2014-15. Other reasons for poor progress of canal irrigation are reduced flow water at the source, low reliability of canal water forcing farmers to shift to groundwater irrigation, poor maintenance of canal and distributaries, an increase in cultivation of water intensive crops and adoption of water intensive practices.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana launched in 2015 aims at fixing the problem of poor performance of medium and major irrigation projects and correct the trend in the area under canal irrigation. This involves a paradigm shift in public investments in irrigation to close the gap between IPC and IPU and targets early completion of ongoing projects that are facing the problem of last mile connectivity. It is hoped that this change in the approach to public irrigation will help in getting the right returns from the investments in medium and major irrigation schemes.

Chand is member, NITI Aayog; Sharan is a Young Professional
Views are personal

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Times of India (N.D.)
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Aaj (Hindi)
Indian Nation
Nai Duniya (Hindi)
The Times of India (A)
Business Standard

and documented at: Enquiry/English & Publicity Section, CWC

NITIN SETHI
New Delhi, 27 August

Last week, a well-recognised doyen of ecological studies, Madhav Gadgil sparked a controversy by saying that the Kerala floods were partly a result of governance failures. He took a side-swipe at state authorities claiming the damage from extreme rains would not have been as bad had the states implemented recommendations of a committee he chaired in 2011 — the Western Ghats Ecology Experts Group.

He said, "Our recommendations would have been accepted in any law-abiding society that believes in good governance. Unfortunately, we have a lawless society and extremely poor governance."

Gadgil's words found immediate resonance with many. He could not be contested on his assessment that a more sustainable development growth pathway in Kerala could have ensured the damage from the extreme precipitation was not as bad.

But, was Gadgil right in claiming that implementing his report was the path to sustainable development for Kerala?

The Gadgil group was tasked by the Union government to demarcate an "Ecological Sensitive Zone" or ESZ of over 175,000 square km of the Western Ghats cutting across six states. The committee recommended notifying 75 per cent of the Western Ghats (132,000 square km) into an ESZ where economic and development activities would be banned, restricted and regulated to an unprecedented degree.

Further, 60 per cent of this 175,000 square km was to be notified as protected area. This implied the highest level of restrictions would be imposed: no use of pesticides and fertilisers in agriculture over five years; no land-use change except to increase size of existing villages; an end to mining in five years; a phased ban on quarrying; no new hydro and thermal power plants; a stop to diversion of surface waters to existing thermal plants; and a ban on new railway lines and major roads.

How was this to be ordered and implemented? By establishing an over-arching authority. The panel had also been asked by the government for a blueprint to set up an effective authority under the Environment Protection Act to regulate development activity in the region cutting across political boundaries of the six states.

The Gadgil committee suggested a legally empowered central authority of experts, headed by either a retired judge or an ecologist, to permanently oversee, approve and regulate all development activity in the ecological sensitive area. The committee suggested a super-structure from the central authority down to the district level, which would run parallel to the existing administration, and a political executive that would have a veto over projects in the region.

Such authorities had existed under the Environment Protection Act but had only been deployed at state levels. What Gadgil recommended was an administration of nominated experts, which would operate across states and veto any activity that it found ecologically damaging.

To some, this sounded like a parallel executive — that too, one that would prioritise ecological

Kerala's floods and the Gadgil dilemma

The notable ecologist correctly ascribed the disaster to governance failures, but his own panel's recommendations may not have been the right solution



DIFFERENT VIEWS

Gadgil Panel

- Cover 75% of the Western Ghats under Ecologically Sensitive Zone
- Set up a Western Ghats Authority with state and district level structures holding veto over economic activity

Kasturirangan Panel

- Cover 37% of the Western Ghats under Ecologically Sensitive Zone
- Keep 'cultural landscapes' out of the ambit of the restrictive regime

security, be run by nominated and ethically clean people who had not been sullied by the reality of India's political economy, which is dominated by the elected representatives. The Gadgil panel believed it was a bottom-up approach to governance. But others believed it was short-circuiting democratic processes instead of finding a slow but more valuable way of factoring in ecological values in the democratic processes, which would necessarily involve negotiation and accommodation with other economic functions of a society.

Of course, the Gadgil report faced opposition from those whose economic interests would be

hurt, especially industry. But it also faced opposition from state governments, and some local communities (Gadgil maintained that the communities had been misled by vested interests).

Had the Gadgil panel jumped the gun even in practical terms? The committee had identified the ESZ using satellite imagery at a relatively crude level. The authors acknowledged this shortcoming, suggesting that finer granular maps could be drawn up later. But showing impatience, the committee recommended that entire talukas provisionally be notified as protected areas based on these crude estimates. It said the fine granular

boundaries at village level could be drawn up later, once the authorities had been set up and village level consultations held. This method — to first establish a blanket ban and then gradually relax it — the states and partly the Union government too thought was a recipe for disaster.

In Kerala's case alone, that meant putting 41 per cent of its geographic area under a restrictive regime and 69 per cent of its land demarcated as part of the Western Ghats under various levels of restrictions. This would include 17,214 square km of "cultural landscape" where human habitation, cultivation and economic activity were already being practised, besides the "natural landscape".

Thiagarajan Jayaraman of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) recently wrote, "The top-down approach of the Gadgil committee constrains development first, begins with bans and prohibitions, to then resort to pious allusions of participatory development. In this view ecological concerns take first place...while the economic consequences and the economic costs of such a transformation are not even subject to a minimum of reasoned analysis."

Responding to the overwhelming opposition from the six states, the Centre set up another committee under K Kasturirangan. The committee recommended demarcating only 37 per cent of what it defined as Western Ghats as an ESZ compared to the 75 per cent the Gadgil panel had asked for. It used finer satellite imagery to segregate "cultural" and "natural" landscapes. Most importantly, it kept quiet on a central authority holding veto powers, and the Centre did not form one either.

Kerala carried out an elaborate taluk-level exercise to ground-truth the Kasturirangan recommendations, and notified 9,997 square km as ESZ and removed the "cultural landscapes" of 17,214 square km from its ambit. There is no detailed study as yet to understand whether this exclusion was done to protect legitimate livelihoods.

But the argument over the efficacy of the Gadgil panel's plans to protect the Western Ghats in the face of global warming connects to the heart of a debate that engulfs the climate change discourse: between the need to balance intra-generational and long-term inter-generational equity. And, that both basic short-term economic growth and the long-term climate and ecological security should not work in tandem as a double whammy against those economically less powerful or endowed.

Jayaraman of TISS adds in his note, "What eco-warriors always miss, and even the more sober sections of the environmentally concerned do not pay heed to, is the fundamentally important aspect of the economic drivers that lead to environmental damage."

It is useful to remember that Gadgil's report did not get implemented, with the largest-ever ecological sensitive zone covering 57,000 square km across six states being identified but not notified. His report did arguably create a marginally larger space for environmental priorities in the political economy of these six states but it did not end up setting an ecologists' dream team at the helm of economic decision-making.

But it also did not end up making the current executive and its processes any more sensitive to the need for environmental integrity of growth than they were before.

Hindustan Times
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Lives lost, no connectivity, tourism washed away, flood deals Munnar a body blow

ARUN JANARDHANAN
MUNNAR (KERALA), AUG 27

WITH AT least 18 deaths in Munnar alone in the heavy flooding from Mattupetti dam and landslides, the famed tourist destination in Kerala was perhaps the worst affected area in India, one of the most impacted districts in the recent floods.

Almost all major roads and bridges connecting Munnar, in the Western Ghats, with other parts were damaged, and Munnar was completely cut off for the last 10 days.

By Sunday, the district administration managed to restore connectivity between Munnar and Ennakulam after dozens of landslides between Neriamangalam, in Ennakulam district, and Munnar left traffic blocked since August 12. Remains of cars, buried under landslides, could still be found even as the hill town struggled to make a comeback.

A kilometre from Munnar town, the dog Blackey, which helped save at least five lives by barking nonstop minutes before a heavy landslide hit a village in the early hours of August 16, lay



A road connecting Munnar with Marayoor and Udumalpet in Tamil Nadu will not be opened anytime soon as Periyar bridge has developed a major crack. *Arun Janardhanan*

sick. A house with four people were destroyed in the landslide, killing the occupants.

Recounting the incident, Taiju, who had come that day to visit relatives in the vicinity, said, "Around 3 am on August 16, Blackey's unusually loud barking woke us up. Minutes later, the landslide hit Satheesh's house. His mother slept in a small hut outside, and had come out along with another family due to

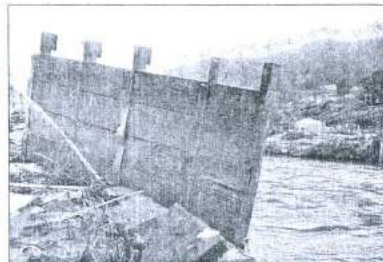
Blackey's warning through barking (and were saved)."

Satheesh (40), who worked with a private firm in Munnar, wife Lakshmi (38) and their two children could not escape. Eleven days on, the site where Santosh's house stood lay scattered with household goods. After the incident, Taiju said, Blackey fell sick.

A road connecting Munnar with Marayoor and Udumalpet in

Tamil Nadu will not be opened soon as Periyar bridge developed a crack. Last week, Kerala Electricity Minister M M Mani said the government will seek Army's help to build a Bailey bridge. P K Shaji, tehsildar of Devikulam, 10 km southwest from Munnar, told *The Indian Express* that the government has decided to start construction of the bridge from Tuesday.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



Munnar's hanging bridge destroyed in deluge

Margaret Bridge or the hanging bridge in Old Munnar town, a 70-metre bridge built in 1942 by the British that sways towards either side, was one of the casualties of deluge that hit the tourist town this month. The bridge, made of iron pillars and wooden planks, was mainly used by local residents to cross the Muthirapuzha river across old Munnar town and

Chokkanad Estate. P Kumar, who runs a hotel nearby and suffered severe losses in the flood that destroyed a portion of his hotel, said, "The bridge was a landmark. It was used by my late father in his teenage years, and by me during my school days. This saddens me more than the damage to the building," he said.

ARUN JANARDHANAN

Hindu.
28.8.2018.

Rescue, relief and renewal

H. 28

The Kerala model of disaster management shows how we can rethink our style of governance



SHIV VISVANATHAN

Disasters as narratives tend to follow a predictable grid. They begin with a moment of scandal or crisis, move to limited period of action, and slowly fade into indifference. People get tired of consuming disasters and move on. Policy echoes the usual clichés and fades away, only the victim continues to struggle fighting to recover her sense of citizenship. But disasters as narrative clichés eluded the Kerala floods of 2018.

Leading from the front

The Kerala flood has been huge in scale and almost unprecedented. One has to go back to 1924 to think of a flood of a similar scale. Yet this is one disaster that has avoided exaggeration. A wise observer, in fact, said, "This is a flood that has avoided sentimentality. The response is realistic and pragmatic. Citizens have moved into action and yet they knew the limits of aid and relief." Central to this, in style and leadership, is the role of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who has been a hands-on administrator. Interestingly, he has set a style emphasising concern with no self-denial, a clear-cut statement of the scale of the problem and the long-range effort required to address it.

Mr. Vijayan has no time for blame games or electoral politics. His even-tempered handling of the

Centre and the southern States reflects a maturing of leadership. By avoiding nitpicking, he has brought a new maturity to the discourse on floods. There are no blame games but he is clear about the chain of responsibility. He has signalled that his concern is with people first, regardless of ideology or religion. He has made sure that relief is not parochialised or seen through a party lens. He might be of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M), but he has convincingly acted as the Chief Minister of Kerala. All the malignant rumours spread by the right wing asking people to deny aid to Kerala as it helps missionaries leave him cold. He is clear about focus and priority, clear that this is not the time for electoral bickering or factional politics.

The very style of Mr. Vijayan's presence has opened up the discourse. The debate now is not a short-run narrative about relief, but a larger discussion on the flood as a metaphor for Kerala's development. People are listening to each other. One saw it when Madhav Gadgil, our leading ecologist, argued that heroism is not enough. The Kerala flood has to be read also as a man-made disaster. It could not be dismissed as originating in excess rain.

Mr. Gadgil, people realised, was raising a set of long-range questions about the nature of Kerala's development which both the CPI (M) and the Congress have been party to. The general response was open-ended because the audience realised that he was not arguing for his report. What he was looking at is the mitigation of future suffering. Politics and science met to create this mutual responsibility



ty for the future.

The power of the narrative is that timelines were established, and timelines also defined the nature of responsibility. The quality of the debate, in fact, borrowed from the tenor of the response of the people. Kerala responded with dignity and courage. Over a million people went to temporary camps, realising that their houses had been destroyed or damaged.

A social solidarity

The responses, especially of older people, added to the dignity of the discourse. Kerala did not behave like a victim population. It insisted on agency and created the ground for citizenship. Keralaites outside the State responded immediately; and between the style of governance and the spirit of voluntarism, Kerala created a social solidarity which was almost unique. People owned up to each other and voluntarism added a powerful sense of competence and sympathy. It is this exemplary notion of citizenship that set the contours of the debate. The survivor and the victim insisted that they are citizens, and this elaboration of citizenship in disaster situations makes Kerala an exemplar of a democratic imagination. Suffering found a language beyond the political

economy, but suffering also found a long-range locus in ecology and development. The flood became not an act of god or nature, but a social event to be analysed sociologically.

Even if the Centre responds locally and parochially, the Government of Kerala realised that in the long run, floods not only challenge the democratic imagination but ask us to reconsider the future of federation. When there were suggestions from West Asia of a grant beyond the Centre's dreams, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) regime at the Centre refused. The question was whether old dreams of statist autonomy could be questioned or does foreign aid still carry that touch of stigma. Sadly, the BJP goes ecstatic over NRIs in Shikhar Valley but understands little of their role in the political economies of the Gulf states.

But more than state, what was renewed was a sense of the social. There was a recognition that the floods have erased the Kerala of the last phase. A new society has to be invented to replace the old. The standard disaster narrative of rescue, relief, rehabilitation is yielding to rescue, relief, reconstruction. Mr. Vijayan is clear that a new Kerala reflecting on ecology and development has to be invented. The old resilience has to be backed by a new infrastructural sustainability. As Mr. Vijayan himself said, during the 1924 flood there was one dam, "while today there are a total of 82 dams, including 42 major ones". New forms of control and sustainability have to be invented. Behind it there was a sense that governments must use disasters as moments of paradigmatic change. To

build infrastructure of the kind Kerala need will take at least two decades. A flood becomes an initiation to rethink democracy and governance, reconnecting it to issues of environment, culture and livelihood.

Yet there are issues still to be worked out. Mr. Gadgil is right. One needs an ecological insight both as a moral and economic imagination. Nature has to be rethought as an act of trusteeship. Its force and fury have to be understood. A survivor was cited as claiming that the river has reclaimed its lost self. Maybe it is time Kerala, which combines traditional and global in creative ways, rethinks its lost ecological self beyond consumption and the amnesia of development.

Learning to remember

Finally, one has to emphasise the biggest danger, one of the greatest faults of the old model of disasters. For all their scale and the scandals of new ideas they raise, disasters as policy memory are forgotten too easily. Old lessons are never learnt and new ones also forgotten. A disaster as a narrative must possess the quality of storytelling. Like a fable it must be repeated again and again, retold and rethought. The storyteller and the policy-maker must weave a new tapestry where the floods renew and rebuild a new Kerala. Talk of suffering has to be translated into new models of justice. One hopes Kerala creates new panchayats of the mind to work on this problem.

Shiv Visvanathan is an academic associated with the Compost Heap, a group in pursuit of alternative ideas and imagination.

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 **Bnagarath(English) & Publicity Section, CWC**



Picking up the pieces: People returning from relief camps in Kuttanad; residents rebuilding a house in Palakkad; cattle displaced by the floods being brought back in Kuttanad and ruined household items dumped on the roadside in Aluva. ■ AP, K.K. MUSTAFAH & H. VISHU

Kerala to get rice free for now: Paswan

Decision whether to charge as per MSP rates will be taken later, says Minister

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI
The Centre is still considering whether flood-hit Kerala will have to pay ₹26/kg for the rice supplied as part of relief efforts, according to Food Minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

Mr. Paswan told *The Hindu* that the food is being provided free for now and any decision on payment will be taken later.

His Ministry's directive, on the other hand, instructs the Food Corporation of India to provide the grains free but makes it clear that the bill – at a rate derived from the minimum support price (MSP) for paddy – will come

due later. The amount will be adjusted against what the State is receiving from the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF) or under the Food Security Act, says the August 21 order.

"There are reports that the relief will be charged as per the MSP rates. But let me clarify that we have not asked the State government for any money right now. We will mull over it once the situation comes under control. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said already that Kerala has never faced such a situation," Mr. Paswan said.

According to the August 21 order by the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD), "It has been decided



Ram Vilas Paswan

to make additional allocation of 89,540 metric tonnes of rice at MSP derived rate to Kerala for flood relief."

As the MSP for paddy this year is ₹17,500 per tonne, and the common variety yields about 67 kg of rice for every 100 kg of paddy, the MSP derived price of rice is ₹26,110 per tonne or about ₹26 per kg.

In a footnote marking a copy to the Chairman of the

Food Corporation of India, the DFPD order cites a Home Ministry memo dated August 20 regarding the National Crisis Management Committee's August 19 meeting where the issue of supplying rice to Kerala was discussed.

"It was agreed that since rice is required for immediate relief to people residing in the relief camps, DFPD may provide the required quantities to Kerala without insisting on payment," says the note.

Government policy

"Subsequently, this may be adjusted from their eligible entitlement of Kerala from NDRF or other schemes including Food Security Act, etc."

The order is in line with government policy from the

last months of the previous UPA government. In 2013, food grains had been supplied to flood-hit Uttarakhand at economic cost, a higher rate than MSP.

In January 2014, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs retrospectively reduced the price that Uttarakhand was charged to MSP rates.

It also decided that henceforth, MSP-derived prices would be the rate for allocation of food grains to States for natural calamities and festivals, while States would be charged at economic cost for all other purposes.

Accordingly, food relief for the August 2016 Bihar floods and the March-April 2017 Manipur floods were supplied at MSP-derived prices.

More aid likely for State, PM tells Governor

Modi monitoring situation, says Raj Bhavan release

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sought to clear the air on the quantum of assistance available for flood-ravaged Kerala, telling Governor P. Sathasivam during a meeting that the amount announced so far was only an advance. The State could expect more money once it submits an additional memorandum, Mr. Modi said.

According to a Raj Bhavan press release, Mr. Modi told Mr. Sathasivam, who called on him in New Delhi on Saturday, that the Centre had sanctioned ₹600 crore considering the likely delay in assessing the extent of damage suffered by the State. This was in addition to the ₹562.45 crore sanctioned for the State Disaster Management Fund.

The Centre had also made available medicines, water, food and foodgrains to meet urgent needs. All this was done waiving all normal procedures, the Prime Minister pointed out.

The release said Mr. Modi had told the Governor that he had kept a close watch on the emerging situation in



Narendra Modi

Kerala during the calamity.

The National Crisis Management Committee had also met on all days from August 16 to 21 to oversee and coordinate the rescue effort. Senior civil and military officials had attended these meetings, as well as the Kerala Chief Secretary via video conferencing. The massive deployment of Central forces was carried out based on the assessments made at these meetings, the press note quoted the Prime Minister as saying.

Foreign aid

Another press note from the Raj Bhavan on Monday said Chief Secretary T. J. Jose had briefed the Governor on steps being taken by the State to rehabilitate the flood-affected people. The Chief Secretary also requested the Governor to persuade the Centre to accept the assistance, if any, being offered by foreign nations, including the UAE, the press note said.

CBSE offers helping hand

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In a special gesture, the CBSE has decided to allow students in Kerala who have lost their marksheets, migration certificate and pass certificate in the floods, to retrieve them from its digital academic repository 'Parinam Manjusha'. Over 1,300 schools are affiliated to the CBSE in Kerala.

This academic repository has been integrated with DigiLocker.

Students can visit <https://digitallocker.gov.in>

Rahul to visit relief camps, meet fishermen

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Back from his Europe tour, Congress president Rahul Gandhi will pay a two-day visit to flood-ravaged Kerala, starting Tuesday.

Mr. Gandhi said he would visit relief camps and meet fishermen and party volunteers involved in relief work.

"I will be in Kerala tomorrow [Tuesday] and the day after, visiting flood-hit areas and relief camps in the State. I will also meet with fishermen, volunteers and others who have been working tirelessly & selflessly to help those in need," he tweeted on Monday.

Senior leader and general secretary in charge of Kerala, Mukul Wasnik, flew in to the

State for the party chief's visit.

'Helping millions'

Ahead of Mr. Gandhi's visit, Indian Youth Congress vice-president B.V. Srinivas tweeted pictures of relief material arranged by the youth wing of the party. "IYC has left no stones unturned to help the millions left homeless in Kerala. We have faith that the spirit and resilience of the people will help rise our beloved God's Own Country to its glory once again," Mr. Srinivas tweeted.

The Congress chief has been urging the Centre to declare the floods a national calamity.

"Dear PM, Increasing funds allocated for Kerala relief to ₹500 cr. is a good step but nowhere near enough. It is critical you declare the floods as a National Disaster. Please do not vacillate as the people of Kerala are suffering," the Congress chief had tweeted soon after the Centre announced the interim relief after Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the State last week.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 28.08.2012 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

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.

1,200 killed in 8 States this monsoon season

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

More than 1,200 people have so far lost their lives due to rains, floods and landslips across eight States this monsoon season.

While 443 people died, over 1.72 crore poultry and 46,867 animals perished in Kerala. Over 22,000 houses were damaged and crops on

43,727 hectares destroyed.

In Uttar Pradesh, 218 people have died, 198 in West Bengal, 166 in Karnataka and 49 in Assam. According to government data, 139 people died in Maharashtra, 52 in Gujarat and 11 in Nagaland. The Central forces have rescued over 60,000 people from flood-hit areas across the country.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 28.08.2018 in the

Hindustan Times

Statesman

The Times of India (N.D.)

Indian Express

Tribune

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Punjab Keshari (Hindi)

The Hindu

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Deccan Chronicle

Deccan Herald

M.P. Chronicle

Aaj (Hindi)

Indian Nation

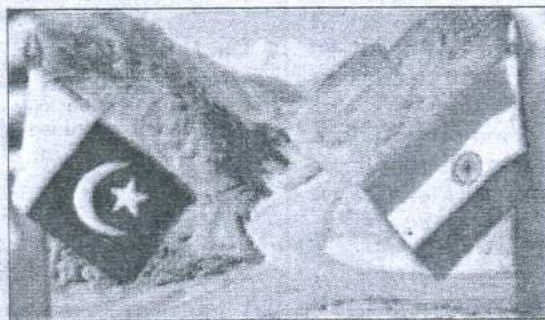
Nai Duniya (Hindi)

The Times of India (A)

Business standard

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

सिंधु जल संधि पर फिर बातचीत करेंगे भारत-पाक



इस्लामाबाद, (भाषा):
प्रधानमंत्री इमरान खान के
कार्यभार संभालने के बाद
पहली द्विपक्षीय वार्ता
के तहत भारत और
पाकिस्तान
बुधवार को
लाहौर में सिंधु
जल संधि के
विभिन्न आयामों
पर फिर से अपनी
बातचीत शुरू करेंगे।

दोनों
पक्षों ने 1960 की
सिंधु जल संधि के तहत
जल बहाव और इस्तेमाल
किये जाने वाले पानी की
मात्रा पर ब्यौरा साझा
किया था

भारत-पाकिस्तान के स्थायी
सिंधु आयोग की पिछली बैठक

मार्च में नयी दिल्ली में आयोजित
की गयी थी। इस दौरान दोनों पक्षों
ने 1960 की सिंधु जल संधि
के तहत जल बहाव
और इस्तेमाल
किये जाने वाले
पानी की मात्रा
पर ब्यौरा साझा
किया था।
इमरान खान के
प्रधानमंत्री बनने के
बाद भारत और
पाकिस्तान के बीच यह पहली
अधिकारिक वार्ता होगी।

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 28.08.2018 in the

Hindustan Times

Statesman

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Tribune

Hindustan (Hindi)

Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)

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Deccan Chronicle

Deccan Herald

M.P. Chronicle

Aaj (Hindi)

Indian Nation

Nai Duniya (Hindi)

The Times of India (A)

Business standard

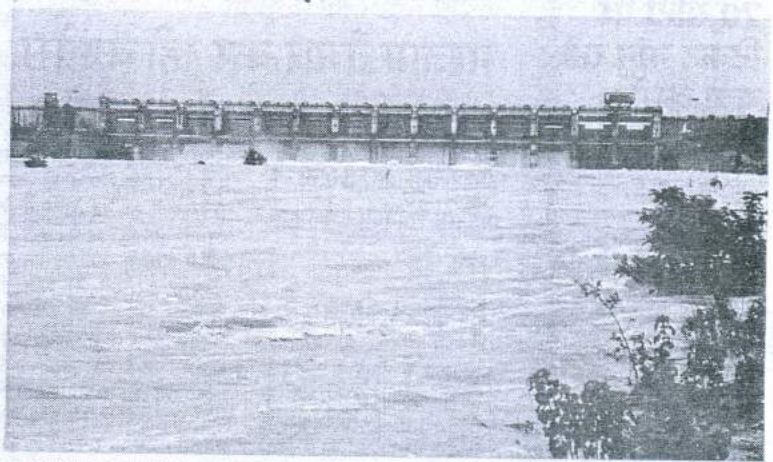
and documented at Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section, CWC.

बारिश से नदी- नाले उफान पर, जलाशय छलके

रायपुर /धमतरी /भिलाई. ©
पत्रिका. छत्तीसगढ़ में पिछले तीन दिनों से लगातार बारिश हो रही है। इससे जनजीवन अस्त-व्यस्त हो गया है। प्रदेश में सबसे ज्यादा बारिश दुर्ग जिले में दर्ज की गई, जहां पिछले 24 घंटे में 136.8 मिमी पानी बरसा है। इसके बाद रायपुर में 24 घंटे में 133 मिमी बारिश हुई। माना एयरपोर्ट में 126 मिमी, जबकि राजनांदगांव में 24 घंटे में 116.4 मिमी बारिश हुई। महानदी, शिवनाथ इंद्रावती और खारून समेत प्रमुख नदियां उफाना गई हैं। ज्यादातर जलाशय भी ओवरफ्लो होने की स्थिति में पहुंच गए हैं। धमतरी स्थित गंगरेल के ओवरफ्लो होने से 11 गेट खोल दिए गए हैं। इससे आसपास के गांवों के लिए खतरे की स्थिति पैदा हो गई है। मौसम विभाग के अनुसार प्रदेश में कुछ स्थानों पर भारी वर्षा तथा रायपुर और दुर्ग संभाग के जिलों में

एक-दो स्थानों पर अतिभारी बारिश होने की संभावना है। मंगलवार को भी राजधानी में रुक-रुककर वर्षा होने तथा एक-दो बार बौछारें पड़ने की संभावना है। दुर्ग संभाग के बालोद जिले के तांदुला जलाशय में 90 फीसदी जलभराव हो गया है। नदी के कैचमेंट एरिया से लगातार पानी आ रहा है। इससे ओवरफ्लो हो सकता है। उधर राजनांदगांव जिले के मोंगरा बैराज से 14 हजार क्यूसेक पानी छोड़ा गया है। इसी तरह सुखा नाला से 2250 क्यूसेक और घुमरिया नाला से 400 क्यूसेक पानी छोड़ा गया है। इसके कारण शिवनाथ नदी का जलस्तर लगातार बढ़ रहा है। नदी के सारे एनीकट डूब चुके हैं।

इधर, रायपुर की निचली बस्तियां से लेकर कॉलोनियों के घरों में घुटने तक पानी भर गया है। सोमवार की सुबह से शाम साढ़े पांच बजे तक 60.3 मिमी बारिश हुई।



**चार साल बाद
खोले गए गंगरेल
के 11 गेट**

धमतरी @ पत्रिका. झामझम बारिश से धमतरी जिला में जन-जीवन अस्त-व्यस्त हो गया है। चार साल में पहली बार ओवरफ्लो होने के बाद गंगरेल बांध के 11 गेट खोले गए हैं। कैचमेंट एरिया में अच्छी बारिश होने से यहां 1 लाख 77 हजार क्यूसेक पानी की आवक हो रही है। इससे 1 लाख 30 हजार क्यूसेक पानी छोड़ा जा रहा है।

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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M.P.Chronicle
Aaj (Hindi)
Indian Nation
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The Times of India (A)
Business standard

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

एक्वीफर मैपिंग... भविष्य की प्यास के साथ शहर के विकास में भी मिलेगी मदद सुधरेगी तापी की सेहत, नियोजित होगा विकास

नदी किनारे के इलाकों में नए निर्माण कार्यों के लिए सुरक्षा कवच बनेगी रिपोर्ट, मेट्रो का टनल रूट तय करने में भी सहायक होगी

विनीत शर्मा
patrika.com



सूरत. मनुष्य के हाइड्रोलिक विभाग ने भले भविष्य की प्यास को देखते हुए तापी नदी में एक्वीफर मैपिंग कराई हो, इसके दूरगामी लाभ शहर को मिलने तय हैं। इससे जहाँ नदी की सेहत को समझने और सुधारने में मदद मिलेगी, शहर में तापी नदी किनारे नियोजित विकास का खाका खींचने में भी मनुष्य को मदद मिलेगी। इसके अलावा भूकंप के असर को पढ़ने में भी यह रिपोर्ट सहायक साबित होगी।

भविष्य में पानी की जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए मनुष्य के हाइड्रोलिक विभाग ने तापी नदी में एक्वीफर मैपिंग की मदद से कैविटी स्पॉट खोजने की कवायद शुरू की थी। इसके लिए हैदराबाद से एनजीआरआई की टीम कई बार सूरत आई और गाय पगला से मगदल्ला तक नदी का हवाई सर्वे कर एक्वीफर मैपिंग की। रक्षा मंत्रालय से मंजूरी के बाद हाल ही इसकी प्राथमिक रिपोर्ट मनुष्य प्रशासन को मिली है। हाइड्रोलिक विभाग फिलहाल इसका अध्ययन कर रहा है। प्राथमिक रिपोर्ट में बताया

गए कैविटी स्पॉट्स और नदी में वास्तविक हालात के तुलनात्मक अध्ययन के बाद इसकी विस्तृत रिपोर्ट तैयार होगी।

हाइड्रोलिक टीम ने शुरुआत में एक्वीफर मैपिंग कर नदी में कैविटी स्पॉट्स को समझकर भविष्य की जरूरत के हिसाब से फ्रेंचवेल और पानी के अन्य स्रोतों को खोजने पर फोकस किया था। यह रिपोर्ट हाइड्रोलिक टीम के साथ ही शहर के समग्र विकास में भी सहायक होने जा रही है। एक्वीफर मैपिंग की विस्तृत रिपोर्ट के आधार पर मनुष्य का शहरी विकास विभाग नदी किनारे नए निर्माण को मंजूरी देते समय एहतियात बरत सकता है। नए हाइवे या नदी पुलों के साथ ही मगदल्ला में प्रस्तावित कोजवे और कई अन्य प्रोजेक्ट्स में भी यह रिपोर्ट मार्गदर्शक बन सकती है। नदी की हाइड्रोलॉजी को समझने में भी



यह होंगे खास फायदे

- शहर की टाउन प्लानिंग में सहायक होगी रिपोर्ट।
- तापी की हाइड्रोलॉजी समझने और नदी की सेहत सुधारने में मदद मिलेगी।
- तापी पर बने पुलों के साथ ही भविष्य में बनाए जाने वाले नदी पुलों की लोकेशन तय करने में मदद मिलेगी।

एक्वीफर मैपिंग रिपोर्ट मददगार साबित होगी। इस रिपोर्ट के माध्यम से सिल्ट और अन्य वजहों से नदी

- एक्वीफर मैपिंग मगदल्ला में प्रस्तावित वीयर कम कोजवे के निर्माण में सहयोगी रहेगी।
- भविष्य में अकाल पड़ा तो पीने को भरपूर पानी उपलब्ध होगा।
- मेट्रो ट्रंक की टनल का रूट तय करने में मदद मिलेगी।

की खराब हो रही सेहत को सुधारने में मदद मिलेगी। विशेषज्ञ बताते हैं कि इस रिपोर्ट के आधार पर नदी में

नीचे तल पर बैठे रेत की खराब हो रही गुणवत्ता और रेत के साथ मिट्टी के मिलने से प्रभावित हो रही नदी की भरण क्षमता को दुरुस्त किया जा सकता है। एक्वीफर मैपिंग नदी के नीचे बहती नदी को समझने का ही विज्ञान नहीं है। एक्वीफर मैपिंग की रिपोर्ट शहरभर में जमीन के नीचे का एक्सरे भी है। इसकी मदद से नदी में डेजिंग करने के लिए भी गाइडलाइन तय की जा सकेगी। सूरत में प्रस्तावित मेट्रो ट्रेन के ट्रंक के लिए भी यह रिपोर्ट सहायक दस्तावेज साबित हो सकती है।

यह है एक्वीफायर मैपिंग

जमीन के नीचे एक कैविटी स्पॉट बनता है, जहाँ भूजल रिचार्ज से पानी का अथाह भंडार जमा होता रहता है। यह जल प्राकृतिक रूप से प्यूरीफाई होता रहता है और सीधे पीने लायक होता है। एक्वीफायर मैपिंग के तहत हैलीकॉप्टर ड्रोन की मदद से जमीन के नीचे कैविटी स्पॉट खोजे जाते हैं। इसमें ड्रोन जमीन के नीचे लेजर बीम छोड़कर सेंसरिंग करता है। इसकी थोड़ी इमेज जमीन के नीचे कैविटी स्पॉट (पानी के स्रोत) चिह्नित करती है। कैविटी स्पॉट पर ही पंपकर करने से कम मेहनत में उच्च गुणवत्ता का पानी मिल जाता है।

सूरत भूकंप जोन तीन में

सूरत भूकंप जोन तीन में आता है। ऐसे में हाइड्रोज इमारतों में रह रहे लोगों की सासें अटकी रहती हैं। देशभर में कहीं भी भूकंप के झटके लगते हैं तो आसमान छू रही इमारतों में रह रहे सूरतीयों के दिल भी हिचकोले खाने लगते हैं। इस रिपोर्ट के आधार पर सॉलल टैस्मिंग कराकर हाइड्रिक एरिया में हाइड्रोज को रोका जा सकता है।

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केरल में बाढ़ से धान, मसालों व गन्ने की फसलों को नुकसान, मकान और अन्य बुनियादी ढांचे भी क्षतिग्रस्त

45,000 हेक्टेयर में लगी फसलें बर्बाद



बाढ़ से हाहाकार

नई दिल्ली। एजेसी

केरल को बाढ़ से 45,000 हेक्टेयर कृषि भूमि पर धान, केला, मसाले और अन्य फसलें क्षतिग्रस्त हो गई हैं। राज्य में गन्ने की फसल को भी भारी नुकसान पहुंचा है।

कृषि सचिव शोभना के. पटनायक ने सोमवार को कहा कि राज्य सरकार से इस बारे में केंद्र से कोष के लिए एक विस्तृत प्रस्ताव देने को कहा गया है ताकि किसानों को राहत दी जा सके। पटनायक ने कहा, राज्य में करीब 45,000 हेक्टेयर में कृषि फसल खराब हो गई है। हमें भी इसी तरह की रिपोर्ट मिली है। फसलों से ज्यादा राज्य में मकानों और अन्य बुनियादी ढांचे को नुकसान पहुंचा है। उन्होंने बताया कि 20,000 हेक्टेयर में धान की फसल लुप्त हुई है। गन्ने की फसल को भी भारी नुकसान पहुंचा है। 2,000 हेक्टेयर में इलायची जैसे मसालों की फसल प्रभावित हुई है। आधिकारिक आंकड़ों के अनुसार, केरल में पिछले सप्ताह तक धान की बुवाई 57,000 हेक्टेयर में हुई थी, जो एक साल की समान अवधि के 62,000 हेक्टेयर से कम है।



दक्षिणी केरल के अलापुजा जिले में सोमवार को बाढ़ का स्तर घटने पर अपने घरों को लौटते लोग। • एपी

कब्रिस्तान में पनाह ले रखी है बाढ़ पीड़ितों ने

अलापुजा। केरल के अलापुजा जिले के गांव केनाकारी में जैसे-जैसे घानी घरों में घुसने लगा, लोगों ने सुरक्षित आश्रय की तलाश शुरू की। यहां के कम से कम 20 परिवार ऐसे हैं जिन्होंने गिरजाघर के कब्रिस्तान में शरण ली। ये लोग फिलहाल अपने मवेशियों के साथ यहीं पर रह रहे हैं। उन्हीं में से एक हैं थानकाचन और उनका परिवार जिन्होंने मदद लेकर सुरक्षित स्थान पर जाने से इसलिए इनकार कर दिया क्योंकि उन्हें अपनी गायों और बकरियों की चिंता थी।

राहुल गांधी आज राहत शिविरों का दौरा करेंगे

नई दिल्ली। कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष राहुल गांधी मंगलवार को केरल के दो दिवसीय दौरे पर पहुंचेंगे। वह यहां बाढ़ प्रभावित इलाकों के राहत शिविरों में जाएंगे और लोगों की मदद कर रहे स्वयंसेवियों से मुलाकात भी करेंगे। गांधी ने ट्वीट कर कहा, मैं मंगलवार और बुधवार को केरल में रहूंगा। बाढ़ प्रभावित इलाकों का दौरा करूंगा, राहत शिविरों में जाऊंगा और मछुआरों, जलरतमयों की निःस्वार्थ भाव से मदद कर स्वयंसेवियों एवं अन्य लोगों से मुलाकात करूंगा।

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

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

Down south, some need water, many lost to floods

ACUTE DISPARITY

Half of TN, AP, T'gana, K'taka suffered from less rainfall; in nearby Kerala, around 10 lakh people lost their home due to excess water

M Manikandan, Srinivas Rao
Apparasu, Vikram Gopal

letters@hindustantimes.com

CHENNAI/BENGALURU/HYDERABAD:

S Chellappan, 68, faces losses for the third year in a row for the want of water to irrigate his two-acre farm at Nagudi in Tamil Nadu's Pudukkottai district.

Pudukkottai is not alone. Out of the 95 districts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, around half (47) have received deficient rainfall. In contrast, excess rainfall has caused the worst floods in Kerala, a few hundred kilometres away, in nearly 100 years. Over 300 people have been killed while around 10 lakh people have been displaced.

"It is always a battle to receive water from the Grand Anicut canal as we are at the tail-end. Most people in the village gave up on Kuruvai (short-term) cultivation in the June as a result. We were hopeful about Samba (rice cultivation that happens from August) this time as there was a good rainfall in Coorg, where the Cauvery River originates. However, our expectations have not been realised," said Chellappan.

At least 1.3 million acres of agricultural land in eastern Tamil Nadu continues to be parched with no supply of water even as the rivers have been in spate and dams full in the state. Experts blame the failure of infrastructure in ensuring better utilisation of water for it.

Cauvery Delta Farmers' Association secretary Mannargudi S Ranganathan said the government has failed to remove silt from canals and strengthen the



A flood affected man, left, sends a bank passbook through a boatman so that his family, which has taken refuge in a relief camp, can apply for aid from the government in Alappuzha, Kerala, on Monday.

government) has also failed to maintain dams. This is the reason we are facing the issue now," Ranganathan said.

The public works department (PWD) had sent a proposal to both the Centre and the state government to strengthen and restructure the Anicut Canal, which provides water to Chellappan's village, at an estimated cost of ₹2,264 crore.

But the work could not start because the state has not sanctioned the initial funds even though the Centre accepted the proposal, a PWD official said requesting anonymity.

Tamil Nadu food minister R Kamaraj claimed the de-silting works were executed properly and accused the opposition of levelling allegations without evidence. In neighbouring Karnataka, the southern, coastal and hilly regions have received good rainfall. But the northern region has not had much rain. This has resulted in lower sowing in the Kharif season.

Raichur has recorded 51% deficit rainfall. The northern Kar-

AT LEAST 1.3 MILLION ACRES OF AGRI LAND IN EASTERN TAMIL NADU REMAINS PARCHED WITH NO SUPPLY OF WATER. IN ANDHRA PRADESH, SIX DISTRICTS ARE FACING A DROUGHT-LIKE STATE

27% deficit rain. In southern Karnataka, Kodagu district recorded very heavy rainfall that resulted in landslides and death of 17 people.

Raichur joint director (agriculture) Chetana Patil said so far sowing has happened only on 53% of the 3,55,000 hectares in the district. "Even if the rains pick up in the next month, as the monsoon stretches till September, it will be too late for the farmers here." She said the sowing can reach maximum of 60% of the targeted area by September end.

Veeresh, a Raichur farmer, blamed the government's failure in removing silt from Tungabha-

upper Krishna project for the situation. He said Raichur is located between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.

He said it should ideally have not faced such a situation especially when both rivers had seen good inflows because of heavy rainfall in the hilly regions of Karnataka and Maharashtra.

"If silt is removed from the Tungabhadra dam, an additional 32 tmcft of water will become available. But this was never done. The apathy of the administration and the political class as a whole is completely responsible for this pathetic condition of the people here," said farmer Maruthi Manpade.

In Andhra Pradesh, six of the 13 districts are facing a drought-like situation. Four Rayalaseema districts (Kadapa, Chittoor, Anantapur and Kurnool), and two south coastal districts (Prakasam and Nellore) are among the worst hit. As many as 120 mandals in Srikakulam, East and West Godavari have faced flooding because of excess rainfall. Crops worth ₹600 crore have

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How dams can control floods

There should be space for greater storage of water in reservoirs before the onset of monsoon



MATHEW ABRAHAM

In the aftermath of any tragedy, people struggle to comprehend what happened and how to cope. Kerala is no different. With the floodwaters finally receding, a number of experts and politicians have stated various possible reasons for the tragedy. Some have cited ill-thought-out development plans that have affected the sustainability of the Western Ghats, arguing that without thoughtful conservation, this was a tragedy waiting to happen. Some have said that the rainfall was unprecedented. Some others have said that Kochi airport was bound to flood given that it has been built on fields and wetlands adjacent to the Periyar river which swelled to dangerous levels during the floods. And some have blamed dams, which were all opened when they were nearly full, causing heavy floods downstream and greatly affecting the lives of the people there. While criticism and suggestions are natural after a tragedy of this magnitude, we should learn lessons from the experience. The question is, how do we avoid or minimise destruction after such an event?

The purpose of dams

The world over, dams are constructed mainly for the purposes of irrigation, power generation, and flood control. While the first two roles are acknowledged, the role of dams in flood control has always been underestimated. It is unfortunate that in both irrigation and hydel projects, flood control is completely ignored. Authorities always look to store the maximum amount of water in reservoirs during the monsoon season, which is then used for irrigation and generation of electricity during the summer months. It is an internationally accepted practice that the water level of a reservoir should be kept below a certain level before the onset of the monsoon season. This is so that when the monsoon rains come, there is space to store the excess rainwater and also so that water can be released in a regulated manner, thus preventing floods downstream when



"Policies for reservoirs must be such that dams are used to control floods, not cause them." All the four shutters of the Malampuzha dam were opened on August 1 when the water level in the reservoir increased. *K. K. MUSTAFAH

there is heavy inflow to the dams. In May, Thailand, for instance, wisely brought down the water level in the dams in the country to below 60% of the storing capacity before the rainy season.

However, it is unfortunate that the maximum amount of water is stored in reservoirs even before the close of the monsoon, only to ensure greater electricity generation and irrigation. How the reservoir water was managed in the dams prior to the Kerala floods requires no explanation. While earlier too there was no practice of keeping space for greater storage of water, rainfall has never been as torrential as it was this year. Hence, there were no floods either. It is difficult to predict what will happen during the ensuing northeast monsoon in Kerala in case of heavy inflow. Whatever be the extra quantity of electricity produced and area of land irrigated because of the risky storage of water in our dams, that cannot compensate for the loss of human lives, infrastructure and agricultural land. Nor can the agony caused by such destruction be compensated for. The estimated loss to the State was into thousands of

crores. It will take years to rebuild Kerala.

Space in reservoirs

In view of all these problems and to ensure that the flood control purpose of dams is met, it is important that at least 30% of the storage capacity of dams be kept free before the monsoon. While simultaneously allowing discharge of water, it is possible to increase storage slowly as the monsoon progresses. Kerala receives rainfall mainly during the southwest monsoon (June-September) and northeast monsoon (October-November). These rains are controlled by winds that carry clouds from the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Atmospheric depression that controls wind movement cannot be predicted months in advance. The meteorological department can predict rains or cyclones only a few days in advance. Therefore, keeping space in reservoirs before the monsoon begins must be done whether or not there are heavy rains, as no State can afford to take risks in the manner that Kerala did.

Some argue against the existence

that dams are useful. We need them for irrigation and electricity generation. However, even if the monsoons fail and dams fall short of water and there is a shortfall in electricity generation, this is not a loss compared to the possible loss of lives in the event of a flood of this magnitude.

Ensuring thoughtful policies

It is time for the government and the public to formulate water management policies for reservoirs in such a manner that dams are used to control floods, not cause them. In 2015, hydropower generation was only 16.6% of the world's total electricity production. The tendency to hold the maximum amount of water in our reservoirs while ignoring the high risk involved in doing so can be attributed to our over-dependence on hydel projects to produce electricity. Therefore, it is time to think of non-conventional sources for electricity generation such as solar, wind and tidal power. The practice of solar power generation in Kochi airport can be copied in similar large-scale projects by other government agencies. The public too should be encouraged to adopt the practice of solar power generation. This will greatly reduce our dependence on dams for power generation.

It is also crucial to follow good reservoir water management policies. At present, the task of dam and water management is vested with the Public Works Department, the Electricity Board, and the Irrigation Department. Even in normal conditions, given contradictory opinions from various departments, it is difficult to implement decisions. Hence, the State Dam Security Authority, if competent, should be entrusted with the task of water management in reservoirs and with taking decisions in emergency situations.

The State government, the State Dam Security Authority and the National Water Commission should all be prepared to take bold decisions together on water management so that there are no such devastating floods in the future. If this happens, we hopefully won't see another day where we rue decisions of the past that are causing untold suffering to millions in the present.

Mathew Abraham is a Principal Scientist (retired) from the Indian Council of