

# BBMP takes the first step to revive Bengaluru's dying lakes

#### Niveditha Jain

**Bengaluru:** The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) plans to develop and restore more than 100 lakes it maintains in the City, by using the funds allocated for the purpose in the State budget for the financial year 2016-17.

It has invited tenders for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for development of 10 lakes, including Panathur, Bhattarahalli, Garudacharpalya/Achchanakere, Siddapura, Horamavu Agara and Iblur lakes. The civic body maintains a total of 108 lakes, including 22 earlier managed by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA).

BBMP Chief Engineer (Lakes), B V Satish, said 56 lakes had been rejuvenated in the last five years. Nineteen lakes are no longer in use are they have been encroached upon and residential layouts have come up on them. The remaining 33 lakes will be developed in a phased manner, he said.

The DPR preparation will include study of the lake, its water level, quantum of sewage, checking the encroachments and the related details. Thereafter, the Lake Development Authority (LDA) will approve the project, Satish said. The Karnataka government has sanctioned Rs 100 crore for development of lakes in Bengaluru over two years, according to BBMP officials.

Meanwhile, the BDA which maintains 95 lakes, including large ones like Bellandur and Varthur, is yet to plan their rejuvenation. M Manjunath, BDA Assistant Executive Engineer (East), said they would think about developing some lakes if the government gave funds out of the sanctioned allocation.

The Forest Department and the LDA maintain four lakes each. While forest officials could not be reached for comment, an official in the LDA said the budget allocation didn't apply to them. The LDA maintains Nagavara, Hebbal, Agara and Vengaiahnakere lakes.

#### **DH News Service**

## Rs 370-cr project to revive lakes

The BDA has planned to treat the dirty, flammable foam in Varthur and Bellandur lakes and submitted a Detail Project Report (DPR) in this regard to the Urban Development Department in January this year. The same DPR has been sent to the Ministry of Urban Development, according to BDA officials. The project will be implemented once the approvals come. The revival of Bellandur lake will cost Rs 200 crore and Varthur Rs 170 crore.

Lakes under government bodies
BBMP
108
total
211
Forest Dept
4
BDA
95
LDA

4

# 35 of city's lakes are highly polluted, finds KSPCB study

#### **Bosky Khanna**

Bengaluru: It is not only just the Ulsoor Lake which is polluted. According to a report released by Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) of the 75 lakes, studied in the City, 35 fall under E-Category, which means, the water is not fit for consumption, bathing and for animals.

Following the findings of the report, KSPCB on March 15, 2016 sent a letter to Bangalore Development Authority, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board and Lake Development Authority to ensure lakes get adequate protection.

KSPCB chairman Lakshman told Deccan Herald that 35 lakes in the City are highly polluted and not fit for fishing also. The lakes are filled with sewage, industrial effluents and all types of pollutants. The stakeholders have been directed to take immediate measures since groundwater, especially in a one-kilometre radius of the lakes, is also highly polluted. There is no lake falling under A, B and C categories.

#### Monthly assessments

The KSPCB had made monthly assessments of lakes from April 2015 to February 2016. The lakes were located across the City and the regional offices of Bommanahalli, City-West, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru City-East, Dasarahalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Peenya, Yelahanka, Bengaluru City-South, Nelamangala, Hoskote and Sarjapur.

#### Various categories

Some lakes which fell under E and Below E category throughout the assessment period were Kaikondarahalli, Bellandur, Agara, Varthur, Tubarahalli, Benniganahalli, Kundalahalli, Nallurahalli, Hoodigiddanakere, Garudacharpalya, Basavanapura, Rampura, Varthur Kodi, Puttenahalli, Sarakki, Doddakere, K Mallasandra and Bommasandra

Some of the important lakes and their categories: Sankey Tank, Ulsoor, Dasarahalli, Jakkur, Yelahanka, Lalbagh and Yediyur lakes (all under 'D' category). Mahadevapura, Hulimavu and Dasarahalli lakes fall under the E category.

#### **DH News Service**

The categories

[] A- Drinking water source without conventional treatment but after disinfection
[] B- Outdoor bathing
[] C- Drinking water source with conventional treatment followed by disinfection
[] D- Propagation of wildlife and fisheries
[] E- Irrigation, industrial cooling, controlled water disposal
[] Below E- Not meeting any of above categories.



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# Hyderabad's water has deadly faecal bacteria, says report

DECCAN CHRONICLE. | COREENA SUARES (/byline/coreena-suares-1)

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 Mar 27, 2016, 2:54 am IST

 Updated
 Mar 27, 2016, 2:57 am IST

Samples picked up from 20 divisions of the Water Board earlier this month show contamination.



Hussainsagar lake

**Hyderabad:** High presence of Euscheria coli bacteria has been found in drinking water at Alwal and Saroornagar, according to a water quality report from the Institute of Health Systems for March 2016.

The two areas have an E. coli count of 1,600 per 100 ml of water, while many other areas have varying counts. E. coli is expelled into the environment within faecal matter, both from humans and animals. Drinking water is contaminated when sewage comes in contact with it.

Some virulent strains of E. coli can cause gastroenteritis, urinary tract infections, and neonatal meningitis. E coli infections also cause abdominal cramps and diarrhoea that could turn bloody and sometimes lead to fever.

Out of 688 km Water Board pipelines, 324 km is old. It is through the damaged pipelines that water contaminated with bacteria enters the drinking water. In many areas, consumers receive water with turbidity, smell, hardness and even color change.

"Cross mixing of drains with drinking water pipelines is the main factor for the presence of E. coli. The main source of bacteria is from human faecal matter. Core areas of the city have old networks. If there is any leakages in joints, water could get polluted," said Mr S.V. Ramana Rao, general manager of the Water Board's quality and analyses unit.

E. coli can be identified only through analyses. Samples are daily picked up and quality test is conducted. If contamination is found, the division general manager is asked to carry out rectification, he said.

When the board authorities identify pollution in water, they stop supply on a temporary basis, or send out advisory to filter or boil the water.

"Primarily it is human faecal presence that leads to E. coli being built up while other sources include mixing of pond water which has E. coli through other organisms," said Dr C. Srinivasulu, assistant professor, zoology, at Osmania University.

Contamination is more during the rainy season, he said adding that it was surprising to see it during the summer. "In this case, 99 percent the drinking water line has been mixed with sewerage," he said.

E. coli belongs to a group of bacteria known as coliforms that are found in the gastrointestinal tract of warm-blooded animals. E. coli colonises an infant's gastrointestinal tract within 40 hours of birth, arriving with food from the people handling the child.

**Tags:** bacteria (/content/tags/bacteria), drinking water (/content/tags/drinking-water), Institute of Health Systems (/content/tags/institute-of-health-systems)

**Location:** India (/location/india), Telangana (/location/india/telangana), Hyderabad (/location/india/telangana/hyderabad)

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# Printed from THE TIMES OF INDIA

# In the pipeline: Water supply to all by 2017

TNN | Mar 29, 2016, 12.17 AM IST

ew Delhi: The government has increased the budgetary allocation for water and sanitation from Rs 1,468 crore in the last fiscal to Rs 1,976 crore this year, which is 9.6% of the total plan outlay. Other than continuing with its policy of providing up to 20 kilolitre of free water to each household with a metered connection, it has also set itself highly ambitious goals—from making tap water available to every household by 2017 and ensuring that the quality of this water is so good that no additional forms of filtration or treatment are required.

Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, who also holds the finance portfolio, said: "The government has taken a historic decision to provide clean drinking water supply to each household by December 2017. This year, we will be adding 300 unauthorised colonies to the network of piped water. Our aim is to eradicate water tankers from our system. We are allocating Rs 676 crore for this purpose."

However, the promise comes with a rider. The water will be made available only to those unauthorised colonies that have received a no-objection certificate and where it is feasible to lay pipes for water supply. Sources said there were 96 such colonies that did not have an NOC and 43 where it was so far not feasible to provide piped water supply. "We are expecting to add another 2 lakh households to the network once we are through with adding all households to the system. There are 365 JJ clusters and 22 slum relocations for which there is a feasibility. At present, DJB has 22.15 lakh connections," said a source.

The government has also promised a network of laboratories across the city for constant testing of water quality to ensure that tap water is suitable for drinking.

Instead of waiting till 2036 to provide sewerage facilities to the city according to the sewerage master plan, the government now plans to cover entire Delhi through such a system in the next 10 years.

Delhi will also see a massive thrust on rainwater harvesting and a revival of water bodies and baolis. The move assumes significance in the wake of the recent water crisis in the city after a section of the Munak canal was damaged by Jat agitators in Haryana. The government is now looking at means of making the city self-sufficient or at least capable of lasting a few days if supply is disrupted in near future.

# THE HINDU

#### **NATIONAL** » OTHER STATES

Published: March 28, 2016 00:00 IST | Updated: March 28, 2016 08:00 IST BHUBANESWAR, March 28, 2016

#### Odisha lost 21% of live storage capacity of reservoirs in 10 years

• Satyasundar Barik



Hirakud, the largest reservoir in Odisha, full of water and (right) in dry state.



At a time when uncertain monsoonal rain is upsetting farmers' annual crop plan, significant drop in live storage capacity of Odisha's major and medium reservoirs seems to have made the matters worse.

Odisha's live storage (LS) capacity has dropped alarmingly by about 21 per cent during the past 10 years.

The aggregate live storage capacity of seven major and 38 medium reservoirs has shrunk from 1.43 million hectare metre (m ha. m) in 2006 to 1.12 m ha.m in 2015.

Many reservoirs were constructed in early 1970s. Hirakud, the largest reservoir in Odisha, was built in 1950s.

Till 2006 the aggregate LS of all reservoirs was 1.43 m ha.m, which was 87.31 per cent of full reservoir level (FRL) – a loss of around 13 per cent.

But the past one decade saw the LS capacity getting reduced at a faster rate from 87.31 per cent to 68.89 per cent, the State government said in response to a query in the Assembly.

Seven major reservoirs -- Hirakud, Rengali, Indravati, Upper Kolab, Balimela, Jalaput and Salandi -- had suffered a loss of 19.69 per cent from 1.33 m. ha.m to 1.07 m ha.m between 2006 and 2015. The loss of LS capacity of Rengali, Indravati and Salandi is real cause of concern. Rengali's LS capacity has come down from 90.10 per cent to 59 per cent in 10 years. During the same time, Indravati's capacity shrank from 90.51 per cent to 51.86 per cent.

The biggest loss was, however, experienced in case of Salani, LS capacity of which has gone down from 71.24 per cent to 12.74 per cent – a loss of mammoth 83.52 per cent between 2006 and 2015.

The comforting aspect in whole depressing situation is Hirakud. The loss of Hirakud's capacity in the past 10 years has been estimated at 1.86 per cent from 0.43 m ha.m to 0.42 m ha.m.

In case of medium reservoirs, the aggregate LS capacity has dropped sharply from 63.72 per cent in 2006 to 38.10 per cent. Some of medium reservoirs are likely to become dead in near future. Reservoirs such as Jambira, Kunaria, Nesa and Sundar are now left with less than 10 per cent of their LS capacity. "The process of sedimentation is becoming quicker as there has been rapid loss of forest cover in the upper catchment of reservoirs, especially Hirakud. In some places, uncontrolled mining has also added to siltation," said Ranjan Panda, convenor of Water Initiative of Odisha.

Mr. Panda pointed out: "During the past one decade, rise in temperature annually is breaking record of previous year and as a result of which evaporation loss has also been increasing."

Loss of water-holding capacity of reservoirs has been consistently directly affecting irrigation in several districts. Reservoirs were apparently of no use as far as providing water to crop field was concerned at several places during 2015 which was a drought year.

 $Printable\ version\ |\ Mar\ 29,\ 2016\ 2:39:33\ PM\ |\ http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/odisha-lost-21-of-live-storage-capacity-of-reservoirs-in-10-years/article8403376.ece$ 

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# Water revolution

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Community awareness and participation needed

HE recent flare-up over the SYL Canal shows how serious the water problem is and threats it poses to peaceful co-existence. Water is the new weapon, which Haryana Jats used recently by shutting the supply to Delhi. Water politics is played, regardless of the consequences. In future as the demand-supply gap widens, water wars would become more frequent, more violent. In Maharashtra's Latur district Section 144 of the CrPC has been promulgated to avert violence over water. Usable water is no longer available from at least seven Marathwada dams. The north-western and south-eastern parts of the country account for most of India's groundwater-stressed blocks.

The per capita availability of drinking water has declined sharply due to a rapid growth of population and its growing needs. Fast urbanisation has aggravated the crisis. This has not prompted matching efforts to either conserve water or penalise waste. Last year the Supreme Court heard a petition seeking regulation of groundwater extraction, but left it to the government to consider limiting its use, metering and charging its consumption. Water is not adequately priced and the well-off use it lavishly. New gated housing colonies are coming up boasting of swimming pools. Failing to recover costs, fund-starved municipalities find it difficult to invest more in improving access or plugging leakages.

The deficient monsoon rains in the two consecutive years have worsened the situation in the drought-prone regions. Dangers emanating from a depleting water table such as lower farm yields, installation of more submersible pumps and a consequent impact on rural incomes and livelihoods have not been fully recognised. These have not deterred policy-makers from encouraging the cultivation of high water-consuming crops like paddy and sugarcane, and subsidising water and power. According to the 2015-16 Economic Survey, the system encourages the use of more inputs such as fertilisers, water and power, to the detriment of soil quality, health and the environment. The way forward is to encourage community participation in preserving water resources, water conservation through small dams, regulation of water use and a shift to low-water consuming crops. We need to work towards a water revolution.

# रिपोर्ट देखी तो...

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चुके हैं बंद

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प्रदेश में

# पीएचई की ताजा रिपोर्ट में सामने आई पेयजल संकट की भयावह स्थिति

देश में जबरदस्त जलसंकट है। गांवों में पानी के लिए हाहाकार मचा है। पीएचर्ड विभाग की ताजा रिपोर्ट में नो रिथित सामने आई है. उसे देख सरकार के साथ नौकरशाहों का भी हलक सुख रहा है। अब तक दोनों यही मानकर चल रहे थे कि सब ठीक है। रिपोर्ट के बाद सरकार मान रही है कि २२ हजार ६०० से ज्यादा हैंडपंप बंद हो गए हैं। वह भी तब, जबकि गर्मी शुरू ही हुई है।

#### भोपाल @ पत्रिका

mp.patrika.com पदेश में नल-जल योजना में भ्रष्टाचार को लेकर कैबिनेट बैठक में ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री गोपाल भागव व लोक स्वास्थ्य मंत्री कसम महदेले के बीच तीखी तकरार हुई थी।

#### कागजों में पानी

प्रदेश में 1509 हैडपंप तो ऐसे पाए गए हैं, जो सिर्फ कागजों में पानी दे रहे थे। सरकार इन

# 22 हजार से ज्यादा हैंडपंप बंद, नल-जल योजनाओं की भी दयनीय हालत



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१६६ योजनाएं सखने के कारण बंद

435 योजनाएं पंप रवराख होने के कारण बंद

485 योजनाओं के बिजली कनेक्सन कटे व तकनीकी खराबी

५१० योजनाएं **પાइप লাহ**ন फूटने से बंद ८४० योजनाएं अन्य कारणों से बंद

हैडपंपों को चालू ही मान रही थी लेकिन मैदानी शिकायतों के बाद इन्हें परखा गया तो हकीकत सामने आई। इन हैडपंपों को फिर सुधार कर चालू होना बताया जा रहा है।

## ये भी सवालों के घेरे में

प्रदेश सरकार जिन 505951 हैडपंपों को अब चाल बता रही है वह भी सवालों के घेरे में है। वजह यह कि विधानसभा में पक्ष-विपक्ष दोनों ओर के विधायक आरोप लगा चके है कि अफसर गलत रिपोर्ट पेश कर रहे हैं। जिन हैंडपंपों को चालू बताया जा रहा है, वे बंद पडे है। बंदेलखंड व मालवा में ऐसे अनेक हैडपंप होने की शिकायतें की है। इसमें भाजपा विधायक भी शामिल है। इसलिए इन हैडपंपों के सत्यापन की मांग की गई है।

प्रदेश में जल संकट नहीं है। जहां वल-जल योजवाओं में

दिक्कत है. वहां समस्या दूर की जा रही है।



कुसुम महदेले.

मंत्री, पीएचई, मप्र

पानी की जंग े पंजाब के पास एक बूंद फालतू पानी नहीं : हरसिमरत कौर

# एसवाइएल नहर के मुद्दे पर मंत्रियों में घमासान

हक का पानी नहीं छोड़ेंगेः वीरेन्द्र सिंह

नई दिल्ली @ पत्रिका ब्यूरो

patrika.com/india एसवाईएल नहर के पानी को लेकर पंजाब हरियाणा सरकार के अलावा केन्द्रीय मंत्रियों के बीच घमासान शुरू हो गया है। हरियाणा जाट नेता केन्द्रीय मंत्री चौ. वीरेन्द्र सिंह ने कहा कि हरियाणा के हक का पानी लेकर रहेगा क्योंकि पंजाब से हरियाणा अलग प्रदेश बना था तथा पंजाब का छोटा भाई है हरियाणा का सतलुज- यमुना लिक नहर पर पूरा हक हैं। वहीं दूसरी ओर केन्द्रीय मंत्री हरिसमरत कौर बादल ने कहा कि पंजाब के पास एक बूंद फालतू पानी नहीं है

। उन्होंने कहा कि मुख्यमंत्री प्रकाश सिंह बादल ने एसवाईएल मुद्दे को समाप्त करने का बिल लाकर ऐतिहासिक फैसला किया है।

 $E_{I}[e]_{I}[e$ 

उन्होंने कहािक देश के बंटवारे के बाद केन्द्र की कांग्रेस सरकारों ने पंजाब के साथ हमेशा भेदभाव किया। हरिसमरत कौर ने बताया कि पहले पािकस्तान को पानी दिया गया। फिर राजस्थान व हरियाणा को पंजाब का पानी दिया गया। बादल ने दिख्ली के मुख्यमंत्री अपनाने का आरोप लगाते हुए कहािक जब वह पंजाब आते हैं तो पंजाब का पानी दूसरे राज्यों को न देने की बात कहते हैं परन्तु जब दिख्ली में होते हैं तो और बयान देते हैं।

### आप कांग्रेस की बी टीम

आम आदमी पार्टी को कांग्रेस की बी टीम बताते हुए हरसिमरत कौर बादल ने कहा कि अरविंद केजरीवाल ने दिख्ली विधानसभा चुनावों दौरान कहा था कि वह शीला दीक्षित के खिलाफ लगे भ्रष्टाचार के आरोपों की जांच करवायेंगे परन्तु मुख्यमंत्री बनने के बाद उन्होंने किसी कांग्रेसी के विरुद्ध कोई कार्रवाई नहीं की। उन्होंने कहांकि पंजाब में आप पार्टी का कोई आधार नहीं व वह शीघ्र ही पीपीपी की तरह समाप्त हो

वही हरियाणा के मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा कि पंजाब हरियाणा को पानी दे क्योंकि एसवाईएल हरियाणा की जीवन रेखा है। मुख्यमंत्री खट्टर ने कहा हरियाणा सरकार ने कोर्ट के अलावा केन्द्रीय सरकार से दखल देने की मांग की हुई हैं। उन्होंने कहा पानी तो लेकर रहेंगे लेकिन समय लग सकता हैं।

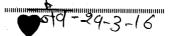
## पंजाब सरकार को खाप भी दे चुकी है धमकी

हरियाणा में जाटों की खापों ने पंजाब सरकार को धमकी दे रखी है अगर पंजाब सरकार ने जल्द ही सतलुज यमुना लिंक नहर पर रोक नहीं हटाई तो वे पंजाब के दिल्ली हरियाणा में आने वाले रास्तों को रोक दिया जायेगा।

# आज छा सकते हैं बादल



■ स, नई दिल्ली : दिल्ली में मौसम फिर से बदलने वाला है। इस हफ्ते बादल छाए रह सकते हैं। मौसम विभाग के मुताबिक, 3 मार्च को हल्की बारिश होने की संभावना है। दिल्ली और आसपास के इलाकों में बादल छाए रह सकते हैं। मौसम विभाग ने अपने बुलेटिन में कहा कि मंगलवार को बादल छाए रह सकते हैं। मौसम विभाग ने अपने बुलेटिन में कहा कि मंगलवार को बादल छाए रह सकते हैं। मौससम टेंपरेचर 32 डिग्री और मिनिमम टेंपरेचर 18 डिग्री रहने का अनुमान है। सोमवार को मैक्सिमम टेंपरेचर 31.8 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ। मिनिमम टेंपरेचर नॉर्मल से एक डिग्री कम 16.5 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ।



# िर्-२१-३-१४ 'यमुना सफाई को विशेष टीम बने'

नई दिल्ली (प्र.सं.)। मुख्यमंत्री अरविंद केजरीवाल ने सोमवार को कहा कि यमुना को साफ करने में कई पेचिदियां है। नदी के बहाव क्षेत्र की जमीन केंद्र सरकार के पास है और आसपास के इलाके दिल्ली सरकार के पास है। इसके लिए दिल्ली व केंद्र सरकार मिलकर विशेष टीम बनानी होगी।

टीम बनानी होगी।
मुख्यमंत्री ने बताय़ा कि इसके लिए
दिल्ली सरकार ने एक योजना तैयार की
है और इसे केंद्र सरकार की मंजूरी के
लिए भेजा है। इस योजना में केंद्र की
मंजूरी मिलते ही सरकार इसे सौंदर्यीकरण
की दिशा में काम शुरू कर देगी।

## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

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# West Bengal polls: One last vote before the river swallows Ghoramara Island

By Prithvijit Mitra, TNN | Mar 29, 2016, 12.14 PM IST

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GHORAMARA ISLAND: About 30 families at Sunderbans' Ghoramara Island -a fast-sinking delta landmass on the Muriganga river in South 24 Parganas, 150km south of Kolkata could be casting their last votes at home constituency this election.

Soon after the polls, they will be shifted to the neighbouring Sagar Island and given pieces of land to build homes and to till. Each of the families to be moved has lost their land repeatedly to the river which has been steadily eating into the island. Over the last 25 years, the 200-year-old island has shrunk in size from a healthy 120 sq km to just 5 sq km. According to some oceanographers, more than 51% of the island has been washed away since 1972. It's withering away every day and experts believe it could disappear into the river by 2025.

Even though efforts are on to prevent erosion and to save the island, the move points at the fact that Ghoramara is gradually being written off. The local panchayat that has been fighting tooth and nail for grants to fight erosion, admits that parts of the island can't be saved and their inhabitants must be shifted quickly.



According to oceanographers, more than 51% of the island has been washed away since 1972. Experts believe it could disappear into the river by 2025

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"We have requested the government to shift 30 families to Jamunakhali in Sagar. Some more could be moved in phases. They've lost everything over the last 30 years and it is difficult to accommodate them anywhere else on the island. Some parts of Ghoramara, particularly the northern and southern fringes, can't be saved. There is a limit to which families can be moved away from the river. These 30 families have shifted home at least six times in the last 10 years. They now have their backs to the wall," said Sanib Sagar, Trinamool Congress leader and panchayat chief.

Nearly 40 years ago, a few families from Ghoramara had been moved to Bankimnagar in Sagar Island. Each had received six bighas of land. This time, one-and-half bighas could be allotted to each family. That was the only time when residents had been rehabilitated elsewhere, even though many would prefer to shift rather than rely on measures to prevent erosion.

Take for instance Shyamal Jana, a landless farmer who lives on the island's southern edge. Jana lost his home for the third time last monsoon. He has moved to a piece of land about 500 metres away, but fears that the river might swallow that too in less than two years. "The rate at which the river is advancing, I don't think we'll be safe for long. We're tired of running around the island and would rather move to Sagar. Even if the government gives us a smaller piece of land there, it will be better than living in constant fear. There is no hope for us in Ghoramara," he said.

With a population of just over 5000, it won't be difficult to move all the affected families, believe local authorities."But that won't be necessary if steps to check erosion are taken properly . There is no dearth of funds and we have a blueprint in place. All we need to do is to execute the plan correctly . But for some families, it's too late. They would be better off in Sagar Island," said Sagar.

Sheikh Murshed of Chunpuri village, which has been reduced to onefourth of what it was in 1972, is ready to sell off whatever little land he is left with and move to Sagar."Over the years, I have seen my village being eaten away by the river, inch by inch.Nothing can save us now.lf they give me a piece of land at Sagar, I will pack my bags and leave immediately .There is nothing that ties us to this condemned island," said Murshed.

Oceanographer Sugata Hazra, who has done extensive studies on the island, believes the move to shift a few families would be 'imprudent and short-sighted'."I am not aware of any such decision. First, we need to ascertain if moving a few families would be worthwhile. The Port Trust, government and the coastal authorities need to sit together and discuss. The island and its people can't benefit from ad-hoc measures like this one," said Hazra.

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# 'Yamuna floodplains drastically narrowed'

Mar 28, 2016, 11.37 PM IST

New Delhi: With land regulation along the Yamuna remaining lax, there is danger ahead. Not only is the river being constricted, but the floodplains itself has narrowed drastically between 1980 and 2014 - leading to fears that there can be massive flooding in Delhi in the coming years.

The signs are already there. In recent monsoon seasons, many areas in southeast Delhi have seen basements of buildings getting submerged under water.

A recent study by IIT Kanpur and Delhi University published maps that showed how the Yamuna's floodplains has narrowed drastically in three and half decades. The fear is that in the absence of an unambiguous policy to protect the floodplains, more river zone land will be diverted for construction, compounding the problem.

"The topographic and satellite maps of Delhi from 1980 to 2014 indicate temporal variation in channel geometry and the position of river Yamuna ... it is observable that after 1980 the remaining floodplain areas were rapidly occupied by settlements, civic structures, roads, bridges, flyovers, playgrounds and metro stations," said a study published in 2014 in the International Journal of Research in Engineering and Technology. It concludes that identifying and "delineating" features such as older and active floodplains, paleo-channels and meandering channels are essential for hydrogeological evaluation.

Afzal Khan, assistant professor at Shimla University and co-author of the study, said that the considerable impact of the encroachment on the Yamuna's channels has to be studied more thoroughly. The narrowing of the riverine plains has taken place despite the regulations provided for under Delhi Development Authority's "O" zone that disallow any permanent

constructions and despite the Central Ground Water Authority having declared the Yamuna floodplains a "recharge zone".

Shashi Shekhar, head of the National Green Tribunal's Principal Committee on Yamuna and secretary of the ministry of water resources, said the panel was aware of the river's constriction, but explained there were no laws at the moment to protect against encroachments. "The land belongs to three agencies - DDA, Delhi irrigation department and UP irrigation department - which adds to the problem," said Shekhar.

The flow in the Yamuna ranges from 3,500 cusecs between December and February to as much as 8 lakh cusecs for a few days after the monsoon rains. According to experts, the much awaited notification of the River Regulation Zone drafted in 2002 could help regulate or prohibit activities on specified stretches of the river on both sides of the natural levee. The draft notification did go to the law ministry, but hasn't moved forward after it came back to the ministry of environment and forests.

The National Water Mission under the National Action Plan on Climate Change has also recommended zoning og floodplains to avoid climate change induced disasters. "We know that Germany and England and other countries have started to gradually remove dykes and embankments to be better prepared for floods," said Shekhar.

Contradicting the common belief that the Yamuna floodplains is fallow land that is much required by land-starved Delhi, Shashank Shekhar, professor at the department of earth sciences in Delhi University, said, "That is not so - the floodplains is the most important water reservoir for the city in times of crisis." He is worried about the encroachments that are visible in the bund road along Jaitpur and Sarai Kale Khan.

He believed that the sudden flooding of basements in areas such as Okhla, Sukhdev Vihar and Lakshmi Nagar in recent years have been caused by "lack in connectivity of the floodplains to its catchment or its basin due of encroachments".