

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 29/3/17 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)

Blitz

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

State lays claim to water of three Rajasthan rivers

Union minister Rao Inderjit cites 1966 agreement to plead case

VIBHA SHARMA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 28

Union Minister of State for Planning and Urban Development Rao Inderjit Singh today sought to open another front on the water-sharing issue even as the SYL row between Punjab and Haryana has remained unresolved. He quoted a 1966 agreement between the erstwhile united Punjab and Rajasthan and said it was time that Haryana is given its "rightful" share of the three rain-fed rivers originally flowing through the state.

He highlighted the water-related issues of the parched regions of south Haryana saying the agreement between Punjab and Rajasthan on sharing of waters of the Dohan, Krishnawati and Sahibi rivers of the neighbouring state penned in 1966

Modi, Shah to meet MPs

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah will be meeting party MPs from northern states, including Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, on Wednesday. The meeting is part of a series of engagements the BJP top leadership is holding with the party parliamentarians from different states.

should be made public.

He added that he had apprised Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar of the matter and would also take it up with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "It is time Rajasthan stands by its agreement and gives southern parts of Punjab, which later came under Haryana, their due share of waters of these rivers," he said.

The agreement was signed between united Punjab and Rajasthan in 1966, just before the division of the state into Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. While earlier the

waters of the three rivers were flowing uninhibited through the southern parts of Punjab (now in Haryana), fulfilling its irrigation and drinking water needs, over the years Rajasthan had built dams on them, restricting their flow.

Rao Inderjit said though some work had started on one of the rivers, there had been no trace of the records of the agreement for the past three decades or so.

Asked whether it was possible to revive the issue after so many years, especially when states were contesting well-established agreements with

proper records, the Union minister said now that the Central government had decided to constitute a permanent tribunal to adjudicate on all inter-state disputes over river waters, it would be possible to resolve all such issues.

"The expenses on building dams and other infrastructure on these rivers is a separate issue. The agreement between Punjab and Rajasthan on the three rivers needs to be made public. The southern parts of Haryana have a right on these rivers as much as Rajasthan," he said.

Notably, the government last year decided to constitute a permanent tribunal to adjudicate on all inter-state disputes over river waters, doing away with the current practice of a separate tribunal for every dispute. All existing tribunals would be subsumed in this new permanent tribunal.

The search for a water revolution

Sriroop Chaudhuri
and Mimi Roy

As the adversities of climatic aberrations start making inroads into global water resource development strategies, the need to protect and conserve freshwater resources and impetus to search for alternate water sources has soared. To meet growing demands, the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation had launched the Jal Kranti Abhiyan (JKA) on 5 June 2015 with the major aim of involving grassroots involvement of all stakeholders including Panchayati Raj institutions and local communities (e.g. Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM)).

Other objectives include encouraging the adoption/utilisation of traditional knowledge in water resources conservation and management, and utilising sectoral expertise from various administrative levels, NGOs and civil society. The key theme running through all is to fuel rural development efforts by innovating a variety of water security measures.

At the core of JKA sits the Jal Gram Yojana (JGY), an initiative to identify at least one water-stressed village in each of 672 districts in the country as Jal Gram. This will be supplemented by rigorous annual review on improvements, challenges and future needs. In a decentralised approach, a host of local inhabitants will be thoroughly trained, especially the rural women, to become Jal Mitra/Neer Nari. Main activities planned under JGY will



include rainwater harvesting, artificial recharge, wastewater recycling, water-efficient irrigation practices, developing mass awareness and capacity building, to name a few.

A major component of JKA is the development of 1,000 hectares of Model Command Area (CMA) in selected states, targeted to conserve water resources via artificial recharge, water-efficient micro-irrigation practices (drip and sprinkler), solar panels (to reduce evaporative losses), watershed management etc. States selected for CMA so far include UP and Haryana in north India; Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu in the south; Rajasthan and Gujarat in the west; Odisha in the east and Meghalaya in the north-east.

JKA is indeed a laudable move by the government and could be a torchbearer if explored to its full potential. But there's no

harm in drawing an analogy with a previous initiative on similar lines. In 2009 the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS) launched a similar programme named National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). Arguably, NRDWP was among the largest rural water supply services in the world promising potable water to billions.

But the fact is that after the few initial years, studies started surfacing that indicated major 'slip-backs', largely owing to miscalculated budgets, lack of apt Information-Communication-Education (ICE) and above all chances of corruption inherent to the system. A vast majority of the water quality-affected habitations in rural India are still in want of adequate and safe water supply networks at household levels. Over two-thirds of the rural households lack

access to piped water supply, deemed the safest of all water sources.

The earlier initiatives can be viewed as red flags for JKA. Like NRDWP, the JKA too involves cascading levels of administrative units, officials and planners ranging from talukas to districts to plan and implement/manage water projects. But this effectively means greater chances of mismanagement, miscommunication and misappropriation of funds. Because of the decentralised approach, this will call upon spontaneous participation of local rural communities.

But experience tells that rural folk are rarely aware of modern water resources infrastructure, or for that matter, regional climate/hydrogeology. A large percentage of the rural populace is still far from adopting hygienic water-sanitation practices. These are, however, musts

for villagers to be able to adapt to such diversified water schemes. So the authorities have to make special effort to impart relevant and most importantly sustained ICE on modern methods of water conservation and protection.

Apart from JGY and CMA, another component of the JKA is Groundwater Pollution Abatement in fluoride- and arsenic-affected districts by (a) building arsenic-free wells and (b) training and capacity building. About 276 districts in India suffer from fluoride contamination and 86 from arsenic (mainly the Lower Gangetic Alluvium). Under the circumstances, does the proposal sound realistic?

From a technical standpoint, it requires selection and deployment of highly trained personnel, technological advancements, major fund allocations and careful planning. It also calls for holistic participation from the research community from around the nation to identify pollutant sources, contaminant transport mechanisms through porous media and above all, finding cost-effective mitigation strategies. And each of these is a life-long pursuit for a researcher. But even accepting that, does the existing framework of JKA allow for such participatory involvement?

And why just fluoride and arsenic? There are long-standing issues of salinity, iron, nitrate and bacteriological contamination across the nation. Will they not be taken into account to select the Jal Grams? And then to target a handful (the proposed number is about 1300) among about 641,000 villages (Census, 2011) in the country is not only a difficult proposition but may also be unrealistic.

Last but not the least, a major emphasis of JKA is to build mass awareness. But even after conducting extensive search on the social, electronic and print

media, it is a tad baffling to note that only a handful of articles cropping up, and that also dated over a year ago. The JKA proposes to maintain websites, Facebook/twitter accounts, organise essay competitions for children as well as adults, organise workshops/seminars and international water user exchange symposiums. But which of these have actually happened?

Probably the 'minutes' of the third meeting of the National Level Advisory and Monitoring Committee, held in December 2016, is the latest document available to the public. However, there's yet no information made available to the public and research community on the details of the selection process. Similarly no information is yet available on identification and establishment of state-wise CMAs. Even the official portal of the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation portrays the JKA very sketchily. Optimistically, the bits and pieces of JKA will all fall in place as planned and it will measure up to expectations.

Recent reports of the Central Water Commission state that currently about 60-70 per cent of Indian landmass is under threat of drought owing to rainfall deficits and appalling groundwater depletion. So JKA is a praiseworthy and timely move indeed. But none of the activities proposed within the JKA can truly be labeled 'novel'. One way or the other they have been already tested in different parts of the country at different times as parts of different initiatives without appreciable success. Under the circumstances, is it realistic to only have clubbed them under a new umbrella?

THE WRITERS ARE ON THE FACULTY
OF THE JINDAL SCHOOL OF
LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES,
O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY,
SONIPAT, HARYANA

Station A
29/3/17

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 29/3/17 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)

Blitz

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

राजस्थान ने नहीं दिया हरियाणा के हक का पानी: राव इन्द्रजीत

आज पीएम से मिलेंगे सांसद

राजस्थान से पानी की मांग रखेंगे

पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क

rajasthanpatrika.com

नई दिल्ली. पंजाब के साथ अब हरियाणा ने राजस्थान से पानी लेने की मांग तेज कर दी है। इस के लिए हरियाणा के सांसद बुधवार को प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र



मोदी से मिलकर राजस्थान से हरियाणा को पानी देने की मांग करेंगे। बुधवार को प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी से हरियाणा, पंजाब, हिमाचल, राजस्थान सहित कई राज्यों के भाजपा सांसद से मिलेंगे। इसी दौरान हरियाणा के गुरुग्राम से बीजेपी के सांसद सहित मंत्री राव इन्द्रजीत पीएम के सामने यह मांग उठाने की तैयारी में हैं।

मंगलवार को पत्रकारों से चर्चा करते हुए केंद्रीय मंत्री राव इन्द्रजीत ने बताया कि राजस्थान से निकलकर हरियाणा आने वाली तीन नदियों कृष्णावती, दोहान और सहाबी का पानी उनके राज्य को नहीं मिल रहा। जबकि इन तीनों नदियों के पानी पर हरियाणावासियों

का भी हक बनता है। लेकिन राजस्थान सरकारने इन इन तीनों नदियों का पानी बांधों द्वारा रोक दिया है। जिसके कारण हरियाणा के किसानों को पानी नहीं मिल रहा है।

राव इन्द्रजीत ने कहा कि कि 1966 से हरियाणा लगातार अपने हिस्से का पानी मांग रहा है लेकिन पंजाब द्वारा हरियाणा को उसके हिस्से का पानी नहीं मिल रहा। उन्होंने बताया कि 1981 में तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री इंदिरा गांधी की मौजूदगी में पंजाब, हरियाणा और राजस्थान के मुख्यमंत्रियों की एक संयुक्त बैठक में पानी का बंटवारा किया जा चुका था। बावजूद इसके हरियाणा को उसके हिस्से का पानी नहीं मिल रहा।

पत्रिका - 29-3-17