

'I would take the same decision today..'

AMARINDER SINGH

We talk of disturbed conditions today, but when a major economic movement starts in our rural areas that further extenuates the existing economic distress, the thought is too frightening to contemplate. As a participant in Punjab's past over 40 years, the writer gives an insight into the past and current ground realities in Punjab

YOUR lead editorial of March 17 compels me to write to you. I hope you will publish it so that my views are also read by your readers.

The Tribune has always been the mouthpiece and bulwark of Punjab and its people. Your editorial "Checkmate", I believe impinges on this history of yours and your heritage which has always been your hallmark.

I give below some facts to give you an insight into the past and current ground realities in the State. I do so as I have been a participant, in one way or another, in Punjab's turbulent past over the past four decades or so. I do not propose to touch matters, other than water, that have inflamed opinion over these past 40 years. Today water is once again in the news. It has been the most contentious issue during this period, which led to those troubled times, that consumed over 35,000 Punjabi lives.

You end your editorial by saying "... his (Badal's) and his predecessor Capt Amarinder Singh's, actions have severely damaged our constitutional and federal arrangement. This has been virtually an act of secession, sponsored by the State Assembly, from commitments to the Union". Strong words, and amazingly soon too, for the past to have been consigned to the dustbin of history. To soften the blow somewhat you, however, add, "... Agonisingly, the demographic profile, history and geography of Punjab, all leave very difficult choices for any amends to be made". This is the very essence of our argument to protect Punjab's waters, by passing the Termination of Agreements Act in 2004.

State assemblies are there to debate and formulate Acts for the State and for the betterment of their people, as we did in 2004. They are not there merely as debating platforms. When a debate and subsequent action is contemplated by the Assembly, it is keeping in view, as in this case, the demographic profile, history and geography of the State. Your statement that we have, "damaged our constitutional and federal arrangement. This has been virtually an act of secession, sponsored by the State Assembly, from commitments to the Union" is, therefore, totally uncalled for.

We have been through various phases over the past 40 years. The emergence of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, still debated as a national or anti-national document, Operation Bluestar, Operation Black Thunder, and the politics of convenience, all this, while Punjab's issues which meant securing the future of the State and our people were put on the backburner. Punjab's economy went on a continual downslide and the issue of the State's river waters too went into the background. As a consequence today, Punjab has an enormous debt, industry in existence since Independence is today abandoning the State and nine million of our 29 million population in the age group from 18 to 40 are without jobs or are grossly underpaid. Agriculture is stagnant and farm produce leaves very little for a farmer to live on. Rural debt is staggering and not a day passes when one or two farmers do not commit suicide. How then does a government face this? Obviously by putting right what is wrong. It must enact laws, if necessary, to stabilise the position in order to maintain peace in the State, which is a prerequisite for any progress to begin. Will massive unemployment, and the writing off of 9



TRIBUNE PHOTO: RAJESH SACHAR

lakh acres of southern Punjab, with its brackish subsoil water which cannot be drunk or used for agriculture, ensure enduring peace in the State? If not, what is the answer?

As to the water dispute between Punjab and Haryana, the Supreme Court has ordered the status quo, the situation that existed at the time of the current Bill adopted by the Assembly to fill the canal and return the land to the farmers from whom it was acquired. What the final outcome is going to be is anyone's guess. Yet the ground realities will not undergo a change and need to be understood.

In 1966 when the Akalis dismembered Punjab for their selfish political ends by creating the Punjabi Suba, Himachal Pradesh was given all our mountain wealth — forests, water, tourism and hydro power sources. Haryana was created out of Punjab, and with its creation went our industrial belt of Faridabad and Gurgaon. All Punjab was left with was 200 miles across either way, and an agrarian economy.

A rejoinder

The former chief minister of Punjab and current President of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee, Capt. Amarinder Singh joins issue with *The Tribune* for its editorial views (March 17, 2016 "Checkmate") on the SYL controversy. In the interest of fairness and informed public debate, we publish in full his letter (dated March 28, 2016). — *Editor-in-Chief*

All assets, inclusive of buildings, personnel etc., subsequent to this dismemberment of post-Partition Punjab were shared in a 60:40 ratio. In arable land Punjab retained 105 lakh acres, while parting with 80 lakh acres to Haryana. As to the river waters, the situation was quite different as narrated below.

Punjab's five rivers, pre-Partition, had a total available water of 170 MAF. After the Indus Water Treaty of 1960, post-Partition Punjab was left with the water of the Beas, Sutlej, Ravi and the Yamuna, the total water availability of the three riparian rivers to Punjab being 32.7 MAF — (Sutlej) 13.60, (Beas) 12.7 and (Ravi) 6.4. Of this, the dependable flow has been accepted at 26.9 MAF. 5.58 MAF was the water being provided to Punjab from the Yamuna from the Tajewala headworks which, however, if considered on the riparian principle since the formation of Haryana in 1966, was now not riparian to Punjab, nevertheless it was part of pre-Punjabi Suba Punjab and should have been included in the 60:40 division.

The present Punjab's water require-

ment is a matter of simple arithmetic. We have 105 lakh acres of cultivable land, and according to our experts at PAU, the water requirement for a standard Punjab rotation of wheat and paddy is five acre feet, resulting in a total requirement of 52.5 MAF. The more intensive the cropping pattern, the more as a consequence would be the water requirement.

The 1955 decision was based on the available river water being 15.85 MAF, corresponding to the 1924 to 1945 flow series. The inter-State agreement of 1981 based its reasoning on the flow series of 1921 to 1960, where they somehow "discovered" that in the 1945 to 1960 period, the water had increased. In 1981, the flow series 1920-1981 were available, why then did they work on the 1921-1960 series?

The reason is that during the period 1945 to 1960, the Punjab rivers had three major floods, increasing the average water availability up to the year 1960, from then onwards, till 1981, the annual availability fell to around the 1921 to 1945 level, making it obvious that the 1981

agreement was more of political appeasement, rather than an attempt to seriously resolve a problem, and the Eradi Commission astonishingly went beyond even this, and has from somewhere discovered an additional 1.11 MAF over even the 1981 agreement, making it a surplus of 2.41 MAF over a reliably established average of a number of years, based on the actual flow, be it the 1921 to 1945 or the 1921 to 1981 series. Whether it is a grossly wrong interpretation or a complete violation of the terms of reference, the Commission's report is totally biased. Should the country then wonder why Punjab is up in arms?

It is interesting to note that the much-quoted figures of allocations of 1955, 1976 and 1981 are not part of the inter-State agreements. The 1955 allocations were, as a result of an Inter-State Ministerial Conference held on 29.1.55, where no agreement was concluded, nor were the minutes of the meeting laid on the table of the Punjab legislature. The Central Government order of 24.3.76, which instead of determining the rights of the two states, arbitrarily distributed

As to the division of Punjab's waters post-Partition, it was attempted on various occasions as follows:

State	Inter State award of 1955	PM's award of 1976	Inter State agreement of 1981	Justice Eradi Commission award of 1987
Punjab (Inclusive of PEPSU)	7.2	3.5	4.22	5.00
Haryana	-	3.5	3.50	3.83
Rajasthan	8.00	8.00	8.60	8.60
J & K	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65
Delhi	-	0.20	0.20	0.20
The total available water	15.85	15.85	17.17	18.28

(All figures in MAF)

JCB machines deployed by youth activists of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) at the SYL canal at village Thuhi, near Banur.

the entire Ravi-Beas water, based on the flow series established in 1955. The agreement between the three chief ministers of Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana on 31.12.81 was more a political sop, as the water purported to be distributed did not exist.

The water available to Punjab today, after these various allocations of 1955, 1976 and 1981, is 12.6 MAF from its rivers, and 20 MAF from 14 lakh tube wells, against an estimated total requirement of 52.5 MAF. Rain water, as precipitation varies each year, cannot be relied upon, however, the average annual rainfall is in the region of 70 cm which, assuming it is an average year, which 2015/16 has not been, would contribute around 23 MAF. The availability during the peak requirement periods, in Rabi and Kharif, would of course be less as part precipitation occurs in the non-crop season.

In addition to the diesel-operated tube wells producing water 12 times as expensive as canal irrigation, the 20 MAF subsoil water being utilised is far in excess of replenishment levels, as a result of which, our water level in the State is rapidly falling, and our experts predict that by the end of the century the water level will be so low that it will be impractical, for the average farmer to utilise.

Today 142 of our irrigation blocks are classified as "Dark Zones," where further tube wells cannot be permitted. Our subsoil water overall reduces each year by 55 cm, in central Punjab by 80 cm. To make matters simple, overall 72 per cent of our irrigation is by consuming our subsoil water and just 28 per cent is covered by our river waters. The scenario likely to develop in Punjab over the years is predictable. What are we, therefore, looking for, a short-term measure to stabilise the current situation as of today, or a solution that would bring about long-term stability? As to water, Punjab's altitude is between 600 and 1,200 feet above mean sea level.

Once the waters of our rivers go, and in the years to come subsoil water no longer exists, how can one sustain agriculture? In addition, the reduction of water in our rivers due to the dangerously soon melting of our glaciers that feed them, where will water come from? As it is, our river flow has reduced from 15.85 MAF in 1955 to 13 MAF in 2016 — a reduction of 2.85 MAF. This will further reduce as time goes by. Haryana can then get more water from the Yamuna. All other river basins are, however, less than 600 feet, which is the lowest altitude in Punjab, and water cannot flow uphill. Then what?

With the situation that presently exists, with the rural economic distress

What are we, therefore, looking for, a short-term measure to stabilise the current situation as of today, or a solution that would bring about long-term stability? As to water, Punjab's altitude is between 600 and 1,200 feet above mean sea level. Once the waters of our rivers go, and in the years to come subsoil water no longer exists, how can one sustain agriculture? In addition, the reduction of water in our rivers due to the dangerously soon melting of our glaciers that feed them, where will water come from?

and with the extremely large number of youth unemployed, can one foresee long-term stability? If not, where do my actions "severely damage our constitutional and federal arrangement?", I will always stand by Punjab and our people. The Constitution is there for the people, and not the other way around. If the situation demands it, and so do the people, it must be amended as it has been over a hundred times since its adoption.

As to the federal arrangement, what did the Constitution envisage? That only the major powers remain with the Union Government such as Defence, External affairs, Railways etc. The remainder were to remain with the States. If successive Union Governments have weakened the States by encroaching their powers, who has started the weakening process of the "federal arrangement"?

Why blame Amarinder Singh? Look beyond him, at Delhi. This, seems obvious from your editorial, that you do not propose to do. As to Amarinder Singh, I have always looked to the interests of my State and our people and I shall continue to take whatever steps necessary to safeguard our interests.

I took what I believed to be the right decision in the passing of the Termination of Agreements Act in 2004. If I was faced with the same situation today, I would take the same decision again, and will continue to take whatever decisions are necessary which are in the larger interests of Punjab, whether you and other intellectuals agree with me or not. For me, Punjab is beyond your opinion.

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Govt frames rules to manage construction, demolition waste

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New Delhi, Mar 29 () In a first, the Centre today came out with rules to manage construction and demolition waste by prohibiting its dumping on roadsides and drains, a move aimed at reducing dust which contributes around 20 per cent to pollution in big cities, including Delhi.

The Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2016 brought out by the Environment Ministry also makes it mandatory for local authorities to commission C&D waste plants in million-plus population cities within 18 months, cities with population of 5-10 lakhs within two years and cities having less than 5 lakh people within three years.

The rules also make it mandatory for large builders or waste generators to submit waste management plan along with their building plan, non-deposition of which may lead to non-grant of permission to the building.

Terming the rules as a "weapon" to tackle the issue of pollution, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said that the waste can actually be used as resource and the basis of the new rules is "recover, recycle and reuse".

"For the first time in the country, the government has come out with construction and demolition waste management rules. Its an initiative to tackle effectively the issue of pollution. Today as per Department of Science and Technology estimate, annual generation of such waste is 530 million tonnes. Without any rules, it is dumped in open spaces, drains, rivers, forest areas, landfills and roadside.

"It is unscientific dumping. These are not actually waste but resources. The basis of our new rules is recover, recycle and reuse. We can make tiles, pipes from it. This creates value to waste. So we came out with draft rules three months ago. 111

suggestions were recieved. We are now publishing the rules," Javadekar told reporters here, adding that the rules will be uploaded on the ministry webiste tonight.

Elaborating on some of the features, he said, "For every large generator, the permission for his building plan will only be given when he presents C&D disposal plan. So C&D waste management also becomes part of building permission.

"If the generator is generating more waste and collection is done by municipal authorities, the collection and taking it to the recyle unit, the builders will be charged by the authorities," he said.

Under the new rules, state governments or construction agencies will have to mandatorily procure and utilise 10-20 per cent materials made by construction and demolition waste in municipal and government contracts mainly in non-load bearing applications like kerb stones, drain covers, paving blocks in pedestrian areas. TDS SC

पल्यूशन फ्री मार्च, दिल्ली को राहत

■ नगर संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

दिल्ली में बीते एक हफ्ते से पल्यूशन लेवल काफी कम है। एनवायरनमेंट में प्रदूषित कणों का स्तर सामान्य दर्ज हो रहा है। मौसम वैज्ञानिकों के मुताबिक तेज हवाएं चलने और सामान्य तापमान दर्ज होने से इन दिनों दिल्ली में अच्छी क्वालिटी की हवा दर्ज हो रही है। कई पल्यूशन मॉनिटरिंग स्टेशनों में पीएम 2.5 और पीएम 10 का लेवल नॉर्मल के आसपास दर्ज हुआ है।

मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ अर्थ साइंसेज के प्रोजेक्ट सफर में मंगलवार को पीएम 2.5 का एवरेज लेवल 66.5 एमजीसीएम रहा। यह नॉर्मल के पास रहा। वहीं पीएम 10 का लेवल 131.7 एमजीसीएम दर्ज हुआ। पीएम 10 का नॉर्मल लेवल 60 एमजीसीएम होता है। सफर ने अनुमान लगाया है कि अगले दो दिनों में पीएम 2.5



File Photo

तेज हवा चलने और तापमान बढ़ने से पल्यूशन हुआ कम

और पीएम 10 का स्तर नॉर्मल के आसपास ही रह सकता है। दिल्ली में अगले दो दिनों में मौसम की स्थिति सामान्य रहने के चांस हैं, जिससे पल्यूशन लेवल के खतरनाक कैटेगरी

तक पहुंचने के चांस कम हैं।

मौसम वैज्ञानिकों के मुताबिक मार्च में प्रदूषण का औसत स्तर बीते चार से पांच महीने की तुलना में सबसे कम रहा है। मार्च में पीएम 2.5 का औसत स्तर 80 से 90 एमजीसीएम रहा। जनवरी-फरवरी में पीएम 2.5 का औसत स्तर 120 एमजीसीएम से ज्यादा रहा है। आमतौर पर जब तापमान कम होता है और हवाएं नहीं चलती हैं तो पल्यूशन लेवल काफी बढ़ जाता है। पिछले दो सालों में मार्च में पल्यूशन लेवल सामान्य के आसपास ही दर्ज हुआ है। वहीं करीब 4 दिन पीएम 2.5 का लेवल नॉर्मल से भी कम दर्ज हुआ है। इन चार दिनों में पीएम 2.5 का लेवल 60 एमजीसीएम से भी कम रहा। इस साल सबसे कम पल्यूशन लेवल मार्च महीने में ही दर्ज हुआ है। मार्च महीने में सबसे कम पीएम 2.5 का लेवल 48.4 एमजीसीएम दर्ज हुआ है।

**आज
दोपहर
बाद चल
सकती है
आंधी**

■ स, नई दिल्ली : दिल्ली में पिछले दो से तीन दिनों से सामान्य मौसम दर्ज हो रहा है। मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने बताया है कि बीते तीन दिनों में टेम्परेचर नॉर्मल के आसपास ही दर्ज हुआ है। मंगलवार को बादल छाए रहे। इस वजह से अधिकतम तापमान सामान्य के साथ 32.3 डिग्री सेल्सियस दर्ज हुआ। न्यूनतम तापमान नॉर्मल से एक डिग्री ज्यादा 18.6 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ। कुछ जगहों पर तेज हवा भी चली।

मौसम विभाग के मुताबिक बुधवार दोपहर बाद मौसम में बदलाव आ सकता है। दोपहर के समय आंधी चलने की आशंका है। इस दौरान मैक्सिमम टेम्परेचर 34 डिग्री और मिनिमम

टेम्परेचर 18 डिग्री रहने का अनुमान है। स्काइमेट के मौसम वैज्ञानिक महेश पलावत ने बताया कि 31 मार्च को एक और नया वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस उत्तर भारत में दस्तक देगा। इसके बाद 2 अप्रैल को दूसरा वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस भी पहुंचेगा। इनके कारण पहाड़ी इलाकों से तेज हवा दिल्ली और आसपास के मैदानी इलाकों में पहुंच सकती हैं। इससे तापमान थोड़ा कम रहने की संभावना है। मौसम विभाग ने बताया है कि इस हफ्ते दिल्ली में बादल छाए रह सकते हैं और मौसम सामान्य रहने की उम्मीद है। इस हफ्ते मैक्सिमम टेम्परेचर 32 से 33 डिग्री रहने का अनुमान है।

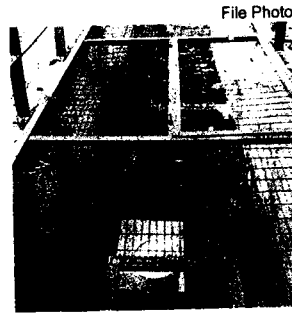
NDMC लगाएगा 100 रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट

अप्रैल में कुछ पॉइंट्स पर वॉटर एटीएम भी खोलने की है योजना

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नई दिल्ली : नई दिल्ली म्युनिसिपल काउंसिल अगले दो सालों में अपने एरिया में 100 रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट लगाएगी। एनडीएमसी के अधिकारियों की तरफ से दावा किया जा रहा है कि इससे काफी फायदा होने की उम्मीद है। एनडीएमसी ने 31 मार्च 2017 तक करीब 50 रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट लगाने की योजना बनाई है। इसके बाद अगले फाइनेंशियल ईयर में बाकी बचे प्लांट लगाए जाएंगे।

एनडीएमसी के वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने बताया है कि केंद्र सरकार के सेंटर ग्राउंड वॉटर बोर्ड की तरफ से एनडीएमसी एरिया में एक सर्वे किया गया है, जिसके तहत जहां पर ग्राउंड वॉटर को और भी बेहतर तरीके से बढ़ाया जा सकता है। ऐसी ही प्रमुख जगहों को आइडेंटिफाई किया गया है। एनडीएमसी की तरफ से सरोजिनी नगर, गोल मार्केट, चाणक्यपुरी, मोती बाग, लक्ष्मीबाई नगर जैसे एरिया में



सबसे पहले रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट लगाने की योजना है। इन जगहों में 100 फीट नीचे तक बारिश के पानी जाने की व्यवस्था की जाएगी। इसके जरिए बारिश का पानी जमीन के नीचे जमा होगा। इससे ग्राउंड वॉटर लेवल को और भी बढ़ाने में मदद मिलेगी। अधिकारी ने कहा कि इसके साथ ही कई सरकारी बिल्डिंगों, स्कूलों, रेजिडेंशियल कॉलोनियों में भी ऐसे

■ अपने एरिया में मौजूदा ग्राउंड वॉटर लेवल को बढ़ाएगी

■ 31 मार्च 2017 तक करीब 50 रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट तैयार करने की योजना बनाई है

■ इसके बाद अगले फाइनेंशियल ईयर में बाकी बचे प्लांट तैयार किए जाएंगे

ही रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट लगाने की योजना है। उन्होंने बताया कि एनडीएमसी एरिया में 180 रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट काम कर रहे हैं। नेहरू पार्क, लोदी गार्डन समेत कई बड़े पार्क, रेजिडेंशियल एरिया, सरकारी बिल्डिंगों में यह प्लांट चल रहे हैं।

अधिकारी के मुताबिक यह पब्लिक फ्रेंडली इनिशिएटिव है। एनडीएमसी की तरफ से वॉटर मैनेजमेंट पर तेजी से

काम किया जा रहा है। इसी को आगे बढ़ाते हुए अप्रैल महीने में कुछ पॉइंट्स पर वॉटर एटीएम भी खोलने की योजना है। बरसात के पानी को ज्यादा से ज्यादा स्टोर करने के लिए इंजीनियरिंग डिपार्टमेंट की तरफ से कई प्रोजेक्ट भी तैयार किए जा रहे हैं। इन सभी प्रोजेक्ट को रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट जैसे योजना के साथ जोड़ा भी जाएगा।

सभी प्लांट को स्टैंडर्ड साइज के हिसाब से तैयार किया जाएगा। जिससे पानी के रिसोर्सेज को ज्यादा से ज्यादा बढ़ाने का प्रयास किया जा रहा है। एनडीएमसी की तरफ से मौजूदा रेन वॉटर हार्वेस्टिंग प्लांट में स्टोर हुए पानी की बेहतर तरह से मॉनिटरिंग के लिए भी एक योजना तैयार की जा रही है। साथ ही नए बनने वाले प्लांट में भी एक मॉनिटरिंग टीम को लगाया जाएगा। जिससे प्लांट में पानी के लेवल को समय-समय पर चेक किया जा सके। इससे एनडीएमसी एरिया में पीने के पानी की स्टोरेज और भी बढ़ सकेगी।