

Hindustan Times

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A toxic neglect in Bhopal

Technology is available if the authorities really want to deal with hazardous waste

It is nothing short of criminal **our take** that 33 years after what was one of the world's worst industrial disasters, 336 tonnes of hazardous waste are still piled up at the site of Bhopal's defunct Union Carbide factory. The minister for environment quite nonchalantly informed Parliament that no funds have been sought or any allocation made to dispose of the dangerous material. The government has identified technology with which it has dealt with 10 tonnes of waste, which seems far too little far too late. Till today, there has been unusual apathy towards dealing with the fallout of the disaster and the compensation for those who died and those who survived with grievous injuries and disabilities.

There has been very little attempt so far to conduct an assessment of the groundwater around the area to examine how deep the chemicals may have gone and what effect this will have on the current generation and those to come. Studies show that the rate of cancer among the victims is 10 times higher than in the normal population. Surely, this cannot have escaped the authorities over such a long period of time. Chemical contamination of groundwater has affected thousands of people for several kilometres around the factory, yet nothing has been done to tackle this. In short, the factory, which once spewed out 42 tonnes of lethal methyl isocyanate all those years ago, is still killing and maiming people. The 336 tonnes of toxic waste are not the only danger. There are three ponds where waste has been systematically dumped as well as several sites within the factory premises where waste was buried. This underscores the need to frame a national policy to deal with contaminated sites.

The Bhopal case, which made international headlines and outlined how flimsy safety measures were in the factory and how easily those culpable were able to get away with minimum charges, should have been an eye-opener for successive governments and should have occasioned much stricter environmental laws to govern hazardous waste and industries that create these. There is no dearth of technology available across the world if the authorities really wanted to deal with this problem. The lack of safeguards is a problem in many hazardous industries, many of them in the unorganised sector. Until the issue of toxic waste, rehabilitation and continuing contamination of the surroundings and its effect on communities are addressed, the victims who live with crippling morbidities will have no closure.

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LG unveils 'most detailed' plan to clean Yamuna

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New Delhi: Yamuna River Project, unveiled on Wednesday, will use sustainable bio-remediation technologies to clean water and long-term management strategies to create city-level assets for all. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and University of Virginia in 2016 to work on the five-year project.

Launching the project at India Habitat Centre, lieutenant governor Anil Bajjal asked DJB to start work at the earliest. Citing it as the most concrete plan he had seen in the past 40 years, Bajjal asked officials to focus on any one aspect for the next four months to show people that the Yamuna could indeed be cleaned through it. "Then even sceptics will become believers," the LG said after

Sanjeev Rastogi



ACT FAST: LG Anil Bajjal asked DJB to start work on the project at the earliest

seeing an exhibition showcasing plans to execute the project.

Several plans had been drafted in the past to clean up the river but nothing had happened on the ground,

said Bajjal. "Within six months, they have prepared" such a detailed plan and "now it is time to take action", he added. "The implementation of the plan has to start and I promise all

help and support from DDA and the Delhi government. The members working on the project can meet once every 15-30 days and get the project started on the ground."

University of Virginia's School of Architecture researched and showcased a three-year river improvement project, Re-entering Delhi, in 2013. DJB has undertaken the project with the irrigation and flood control department as an important delivery partner.

"University faculty and students are excited and energised by this partnership and the opportunity that it represents to revive a great natural resource in India," said its president, Teresa Sullivan. "We hope that the project will lay the groundwork for many additional collaborations in India." DJB CEO Keshav Chandra was also present at the event.

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IMD predicts higher than normal temp for March-April

► Continued from P 1 Tp-30

Mohapatra, DGM of IMD's National Weather Forecasting Centre, said the freakishly hot conditions would abate slightly after the western disturbance passes, leading to northerly wind flows. "That should happen after April 1. However, the drop in temperatures would be only of a degree or two," he added. According to IMD's classification, heat wave conditions set in when the maximum temperatures touch 40 degrees C and are at least five degrees above normal.

Although south and central India get hot earlier than the north and temperatures peak around April-May, such high heat in March is rare and could be pointing to global warming signals. The IMD's seasonal forecast for March-April this year has predicted higher than normal average temperatures in the country. It said northwest India could be around one degree hotter than normal. These forecasts are generated by climate models that take into account the impact of global weather features such as warming of the oceans and changes in wind flows.

Heat blast across India, Maha town sizzles at 46.5°C ³⁰ Tp

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New Delhi: It's barely the end of March but temperatures across much of India are already racing to peak summer levels. Bhira town in Maharashtra recorded a searing 46.5 degrees on Tuesday — quite unheard of in March — as the Met office warned of heat wave conditions in parts of central, west and north India.

While IMD officials cautioned that the temperature reading in Bhira may not be very accurate, other places in Maharashtra were blazing as well. Akola recorded 44.1 deg-

► **Brace up for scorching heat this weekend, P 10**

rees Celsius on Wednesday, as officials said a set of meteorological conditions had come together to cause the heat.

"Hot conditions, including heat waves, are likely to continue till Saturday (April 1), after which temperatures may drop by a degree or two," said M Mohapatra, DGM of IMD's National Weather Forecasting Centre.

Heat wave warnings have been issued for Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, madhya Maharashtra, south UP, south Haryana, Chandi-

FIERY MARCH

City	Temp°	Above normal
Delhi (Palam)	39.6	+7
MAHARASHTRA		
Bhira	46.5*	+7
Akola	44.1	+6
RAJASTHAN		
Barmer	43.4	+6
UP		
Banda	43.2	+6
HARYANA		
Narnaul	42.0	+9

*Recorded on Tuesday

garh and interior Odisha.

Mohapatra said wind patterns, clear skies and a low-pressure pulse set to hit north India were contributing to the heat. "Clear skies over central India have been raising temperatures due to solar heating. Then, an approaching western disturbance has led to a change in wind direction, which is bringing in heat. An anti-cyclonic wind pattern over central India is also pumping in heat," he said.

► **Related report, P 14**

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गंगा सफाई पर और वक्त नहीं

17-30-3-17

मस्ती

नई दिल्ली | विशेष संवाददाता

गंगा सफाई मामले में अधिकारियों की अनुपलब्धता पर राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण ने बुधवार को उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार को और वक्त देने से इंकार कर दिया। एनजीटी ने कहा कि हमारे साथ राजनीतिक मुद्दों पर चर्चा नहीं करें, क्योंकि हम सिर्फ नदी के प्रदूषण को लेकर चिंतित हैं।

जस्टिस स्वतंत्र कुमार की अध्यक्षता वाली पीठ के समक्ष उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के वकील ने संबंधित अधिकारियों की अनुपलब्धता का हवाला देकर और वक्त मांगा। वकील ने अधिकरण से कहा कि व्यवस्था में बदलाव आया है और राज्य में नई सरकार है जिस वजह से प्रशासन में फेरबदल हुआ है।

इस पर पीठ ने वक्त देने से इनकार करते हुए कहा कि हमें यह सब न बताएं। पीठ ने हालांकि राज्य सरकार की ओर से कई बार गुजारिश के बाद नदी की सफाई और उसके कार्याकल्प से जुड़ी सुनवाई टाल दी है। पीठ गुरुवार को अगली



नदी में गंदगी

100 करोड़ लीटर गंदगी हर रोज गंगा में जाती है

10 सर्वाधिक प्रदूषित दुनिया की नदियों में से एक है गंगा

2800 गुना ज्यादा कॉलीफॉर्म गंगा के पानी में तय मानक से, कई जगह पानी नहाने के लायक भी नहीं

20000 करोड़ का बजट नमामी गंगा के तहत, 40 फीसदी आबादी देश की सीधे जुड़ी है गंगा से

सुनवाई करेगा। एनजीटी मामले के जल्द निपटारे के मद्देनजर सुनवाई रोजाना कर रहा है।

नोटिस जारी : इस मामले में

अधिकरण ने पहले कानपुर के नगर निगम आयुक्त और शहर के जल निकाय के अधिकारियों को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किया था। नोटिस में पूछा गया था

2958

करोड़ रुपये पिछले साल तक खर्च हुए 2016 में

37.41

करोड़ रुपये प्रथम चरण में जारी हुए नमामी गंगा के तहत

2526 किलोमीटर : गंगा भारत की सबसे लंबी नदी

- 2011 की जनगणना के अनुसार गंगा किनारे 53 करोड़ से अधिक जनसंख्या रहती है
- 14 जनवरी, 1986 में पहली बार 'गंगा एक्शन प्लान' बनाया गया था। इसका मकसद गंगा में मिलने वाले वाले सीवेज और औद्योगिक प्रदूषण को रोकना था।
- 2009 में मिशन क्लीन गंगा शुरू किया गया था

कि पर्यावरण को खराब करने के लिए उनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई क्यों नहीं करनी चाहिए। हाल ही में गलत जानकारी पर एक अफसर पर जुर्माना भी लगाया था।

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नदियों को वैधानिक दर्जा 30-3-17

गंगा-यमुना दोनों नदियों को जोड़ित इसान की तरह अधिकार मिल गया है। गंगा को देश की अमृतरेखा तो यमुना को जीवनदायिनी नदी कहा जाता है। इन दोनों नदियों का हिन्दू धर्म में ऊँचा स्थान है, लेकिन इन नदियों पर सही ध्यान न देने से ये नदियां गंदगी की चपेट में फँस चुकी हैं। इन्हें स्वच्छ करने के लिए इन में कारखानों से छोड़े जाने वाले प्रदूषित, रासायनिक जल पर पूरी तरह रोक लगाना जरूरी है और यही आज संभव नहीं है। प्रदूषित जल पर प्रक्रिया करके उस को नदी में छोड़ा जाना जरूरी होता है लेकिन इस महत्वपूर्ण बात पर कोई ध्यान नहीं देता। हजारों करोड़ रुपए दोनों नदियों की स्वच्छता पर खर्च हो चुके हैं फिर भी उस खर्च के अनुसार कुछ अच्छा काम नजर नहीं आ रहा। आखिर कब तक ये खर्च का मामाला चलता रहेगा।