

Central Water Commission
Technical Documentation Directorate
Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section

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Subject: Submission of News Clippings.

The News Clippings on Water Resources Development and allied subjects are enclosed for perusal of the Chairman, CWC, and Member (WP&P/D&R/RM), Central Water Commission. The soft copies of clippings have also been uploaded on the CWC website.

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For information of Chairman & Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned,
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India has for long undervalued one of its most precious resources — water. Now the impact of the country's chronic mismanagement is being felt. As one of life's essentials water is crucial to all societies. Its importance is all the greater in India not least because 600 million people make a living off the land. They rely on the monsoon to replenish their water sources and the unpredictable nature of rain leaves them vulnerable



According to World Bank data, farmers use nearly 70 per cent of the total groundwater that is drawn in the country each year. India uses more groundwater every year than China and the United States combined. The water extracted from the wells constitutes more than one-quarter of the world's total. Due to this heavy overuse, groundwater levels are being depleted all over the country by an average of 0.3 metres a year. In some areas, the levels are falling by as much as 4 metres a year. It is groundwater that once boosted the Green Revolution and ensured food security, but today we are in danger of "killing the goose that laid the golden egg". We have drilled deep for groundwater, without taking this basic hydro-geological fact into account. Water is in every sense a multi-dimensional resource requiring an understanding of many other disciplines for its sustainable management. So we have to take farmers and agronomists on board so that farmers can work out an approach to manage their water in an equitable and sustainable manner.

Indian utilities compound the problem by callously losing an estimated 40 to 60 per cent of water produced... in contrast to cities like Tokyo which loses 3.7 per cent, Singapore at 4.9 per cent and Phnom Penh's 6.5 per cent.

India is not a water-scarce country. Apart from the major rivers, it receives an average annual rainfall of 1170 millimeters. It boasts renewable water reserves of 1,608 billion cubic meters a year. Given this robust back-up and with the world's ninth largest freshwater reserves, India's water woes reflect inefficient management, and not

scarcity.

Successive Indian governments have done little to conserve water for off-season use. A staggering \$ 52.7 billion have been allocated to so-called major and medium irrigation projects ever since the first five-year plan (1951-56) to the 11th (2007-12), but irrigation has reached only 45 per cent of India's net-sown area. Even after constructing 4,525 large and small dams, the country has managed to create per capita storage of only 213 cubic meters — compared to 6,103 cubic m per capita in Russia, 4,733 in Australia, 1,964 in the United States, and 1,111 in China.

Even after constructing 4,525 large and small dams, the country has managed to create per capita storage of only 213 cubic meters — compared to 6,103 cubic m per capita in Russia, 4,733 in Australia, 1,964 in the United States, and 1,111 in China.

India's water crisis stems from a thorny mix of economic, geographic, and political factors. For one thing, it is highly dependent on a few major river systems, especially the Ganga and its tributaries, for its water supply. But India also uses almost twice the amount of water to grow crops, as compared to China and the United States. It has been observed that even though Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) are currently announced for 23 crops, the most effective price support is for sugarcane, wheat and rice. This creates highly skewed incentive structures in favour of these water intensive

crops.

Today, the country's agricultural sector accounts for over 90 per cent of the total water drawn, but contributes only around 15 per cent to the country's GDP. An estimated 89 per cent of the extracted groundwater is used in the irrigation sector (in comparison, household use occupies the second slot at nine per cent, with industrial use accounting for two per cent of groundwater use).

The Asian Development Bank has forecast that by 2030, India will have a water deficit of 50 per cent. The Union Ministry of Water Resources has estimated the country's current water requirements to be around 1100 billion cubic metres per year, which is estimated to be around 1200 billion cubic metres for the year 2025 and 1447 billion cubic metres for 2050.

The average Indian had access to 5,200 cubic metres of water a year in 1951, when the population was 350 million. By 2010, that had dropped to 1,600 cubic metres,

a level regarded as "water-stressed" by international organizations. Today it is at about 1,400 cubic metres and analysts say it is likely to fall below the 1,000 cubic metre "water scarcity" limit in the next two to three decades.

In ancient India, people understood the art of water governance. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, written around 300 BC, has details of how tanks and canals must be built and managed. It sought to clarify the enabling role of the state, the king, and the management role of local com-

munities.

The kings did not have armies of engineers; they provided fiscal incentives to communities and individuals who built water systems. The British upset this traditional norm by vesting the resource with the state and creating large bureaucracies for management.

Water harvesting techniques have been employed for thousands of years to conserve water for cultivation. Traditionally, this has been the primary use of rainwater harvesting. But this traditional wisdom and knowledge has been abandoned in the race to adopt new economies which have upset the ecological equation. India is currently using only 35 per cent of the rainwater that it receives. If rainwater harvesting projects are effectively implemented, 65 per cent of the rainwater which is wasted can be used.

Watershed development is not a new concept in India. People have conserved water by harvesting, storing, and managing rainfall, runoff and stream flows. Most of the water management has been done at the community level, relying upon diverse, imaginative and effective methods for harvesting rainwater in tanks and small underground storage systems.

These were abandoned when we introduced reforms which we attributed to so-called superior knowledge compared to traditional wisdom. They are now little more than a fad.

Climatic complications are increasing and India needs to take a call on the issue. For any planned intervention to be successful, we need firm timelines. The country's impressive economic growth must translate to faster progress in this critical area. It will have to change course and shift away from the business-as-usual approach before water



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The Hindu
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)
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Experts predict death of six rivers in Kerala

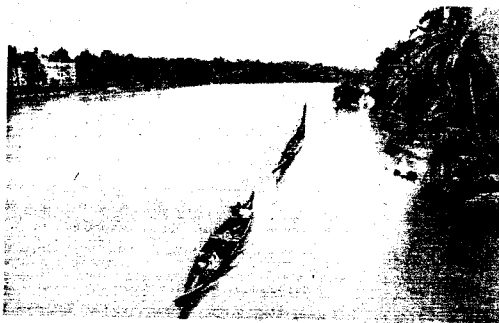
Unscientific sand mining, degradation of tributaries and illegal fishing are posing major threats

RADHAKRISHNAN KUTTOOR
PATHANAMTHITTA

Is Central Travancore fast becoming a graveyard of rivers and natural streams? At least this is what the studies conducted by a team of experts led by scientist Ajayakumar Varma hint at.

Dr. Varma has predicted that the Pampa will die in 55 years, if the present situation with the river system continues.

The study report, prepared by Dr. Varma and his team, gives just another 15 years for the Achencoil, 20 years for the Manimala, 45 years for the Meenachil, 30 years for the Muvattupuzha, and 15 to 20 years for the Chalakudy rivers. However, climate change and changes in the pattern of rains can improve or worsen the situation, says Dr. Varma.



Criminal negligence: The study predicts that the Pampa will die in 55 years if the present situation continues.

Degradation of virgin forests in the catchment areas, unscientific sand mining, degradation of tributaries, pollution caused by garbage, and illegal fishing using poison, dynamite, etc. are posing major threats to these once vibrant river sys-

tems of region comprising Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and parts of Alappuzha.

Dr. Varma said extensive deforestation in the catchments during 1940-1980 had resulted in drying up of many tributaries of these river systems, badly affect-

ing the regular flow, especially during summer.

Land conversion

Land conversion as part of urbanisation too has blocked many natural streams leading to the rivers. Without sand deposit, the riverbeds have lost their water-holding capacity, leading to fast flow of flood waters into the downstream immediately after cessation of the rains.

The situation in the Pampa along the upper reaches of Kozhencherry amply testifies the degradation of the river system as a whole, says N.K. Sukumaran Nair, Pampa Parirakshana Samiti general secretary, who has been campaigning for the Pampa river for three decades.

Mr. Nair said the condi-

tion of bridges across the rivers as well as water pumping stations was precarious because of the drastic lowering of riverbeds.

Experts pointed out that sand-mining from the vicinity of the piers led to the caving in of the concrete bridge across Pampa in Ranni on July 29, 1996.

Mr. Nair says the Pampa and Achencoil, regarded as the lifeline of Central Travancore, are the worst affected by man's criminal negligence towards environment and river conservation.

He stressed the need for an integrated action plan for the conservation of the Pampa, Achencoil, Manimala and Meenachil rivers that empty out into the Vembanad lake.

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The Hindu

Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)

Deccan Chronicle

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Yamuna pollution

One often wonders how tolerant the River Yamuna is. While one rejoiced at the sight of the river swollen with monsoon waters, a spate of festivals served to negate the feeling. First there was Ganesh Chaturthi, then Durga Puja and now Chatth puja. While images of Ganesh and Durga were immersed in the river, considerably increasing the turbidity of the water, devotees performing the Chatth puja left the river banks littered with the remains. Little shrines are built and offerings of fruits, sweets and puja ingredients are made to them. Weeks after the puja, one can see the remnants lying around. While children and birds may pick up eatables and sugar cane, the non-degrading portions, including plastic bags, clay pots, diyas (earthen lamps) and chunni (cloth with zari and glitter work), are left

around.

While the civic authorities rightfully claim to have cleaned up the river banks and waters before the immersion and puja, what about the aftermath, one wonders. It's a sad sight to see the debris floating in the river and the banks piled up with idols that did not disintegrate, cloth and accessories used to decorate the gods and the pandals, as well as tonnes of plastic bags.

True, people need to be educated about the problem - in fact, there is an increased awareness and several measures have been taken to mitigate it. But some effort needs to be done by the civic authorities as well to clean up and ensure the river and its banks remain clean. Solutions are certainly not simple but not impossible. All it needs is a will and some amount of out-of-the-box thinking to resolve matters.



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कश्मीर घाटी में 5.7 तीव्रता का भूकंप

श्रीनगर, (भाषा) कश्मीर घाटी में बीती रात मध्यम तीव्रता का भूकंप का झटका महसूस किया गया, लेकिन इसमें किसी नुकसान की कोई खबर नहीं है। रिक्टर पैमाने पर 5.7 तीव्रता वाला यह भूकंप अफगानिस्तान के हिन्दुकुश क्षेत्र में केंद्रित था। जिसमें विज्ञान विभाग के एक अधिकारी ने पीटीआई-भाषा को बताया कि बीती रात सवा आरह बजे 5.7 तीव्रता का भूकंप आया जो अफगानिस्तान के हिन्दुकुश क्षेत्र में 100 किलोमीटर की गहराई पर केंद्रित था। पुलिस के एक अधिकारी ने कहा कि घाटी में कहीं से भी नुकसान के नुकसान की कोई खबर नहीं है। भूकंप के चलते लोग अपने-अपने से बाहर निकल आए। भूकंप के लिहाज से कश्मीर अत्यंत संवेदनशील क्षेत्र में स्थित है। कश्मीर में पिछली बार बड़ा भूकंप अक्टूबर 2005 में आया था जिसमें 1,400 लोगों की जान चली गई थी और उत्तरी कश्मीर में नियंत्रण रेखा के पास एक बड़ा क्षेत्र तबाह हो गया था।

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The Hindu

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पंचेश्वर बांध का विरोध नहीं

नैनीताल, (वार्ता, संजय): पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री एवं नैनीताल के सांसद भगत सिंह कोश्यारी ने कहा है कि भारत और नेपाल के बीच बनने वाले महात्वाकांक्षी पंचेश्वर बांध परियोजना का प्रभावित क्षेत्रों में कोई विरोध नहीं है। निहित स्वार्थ के खातिर कुछ लोग इसका विरोध कर रहे हैं। श्री कोश्यारी ने कहा कि वे जनता से मिले सुझावों को केन्द्र सरकार और पर्यावरण मंत्रालय के पास रखेंगे। बांध प्रभावित क्षेत्रों का दौरा कर आपस लौटे हैं। पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री ने पत्रकारों से बातचीत करते हुए कहा कि पंचेश्वर बांध को बनाये जाने को लेकर पिथौरागढ़,



अल्मोड़ा और चंपावत के ग्रामीणों में कोई विरोध नहीं है। जनता बांध के साथ ही विकास योजनाओं को पक्षधर है। उन्होंने कहा कि यह प्रधानमंत्री का ड्रीम प्रोजेक्ट है।

जनता की भावनाओं का ध्यान रखा जाएगा। ग्रामीणों का विस्थापन सही ढंग से होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि कुछ तथाकथित पर्यावरणविद, बांध का विरोध कर रहे हैं। कुछ लोग निहित स्वार्थ की खातिर और अपनी दुकान चलाने के लिए विरोध कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि जनता के सुझावों को वह प्रधानमंत्री के सामने रखेंगे। उन्होंने कहा कि ग्रामीणों की मांगों को डीपीआर में शामिल किया जाएगा। उन्होंने कहा कि बांध बनने से प्रदेश में खुशहाली आएगी एवं क्षेत्र का तेजी से विकास होगा। क्षेत्र में पर्यटन को बढ़ावा मिलेगा एवं युवाओं को रोजगार भी मिलेगा।

पंजाब-29-10-17