

Central Water Commission-
WSE Dte.,

West Block II, Wing No-4
R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 66.

Dated 15.4.2019.

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 will be uploaded on the CWC website.

S. J. Jadhav
15.4.2019
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

Deputy Director, WSE Dte. On Meeting (MOWR)

Director, WSE Dte. - on Meeting (MOWR)

For information to

Chairman CWC, New Delhi

Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned, uploaded at www.cwc.nic.in

News item/letter/article/editorial Published on 15.04.2019 in the

Hindustan Times

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Tribune

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Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)

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The Hindu (New Delhi)

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Deccan Chronicle

Deccan Herald

The Times of India (A)

Business standard

The Economic Times

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

Rain may bring relief from soaring temp

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The city may witness some relief from the rising mercury on Monday as Met predicts some rain on Tuesday.

"From Monday evening, it will get cloudy and a light drizzle is expected. Partly cloudy sky with possibility of thunder development has been predicted," a Met official said.

The maximum and minimum temperatures would be

around 39 and 23 degrees Celsius respectively on Monday.

The maximum temperature on Sunday was 38.1 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal, while the minimum was 21.8 degrees Celsius, one point above normal.

In terms of pollution, it was a "moderate" day as the air quality index was 137.

According to SAFAR, thunderstorms with gusty winds are keeping air quality in check in spite of localised dust-

storms at isolated locations in the region.

"The air quality is predicted to be in same moderate category for next two days. However, as per the new SAFAR ensemble dust forecast system, there is a possibility of large scale duststorm that may hit western and northern part of India, including Delhi, by April 16, and may deteriorate air quality significantly if upper wind pattern remains same," a SAFAR release on Sunday said.

Data according to CPCB's central control room, meanwhile, showed Delhi-NCR's average PM10 readings above the safe standard on Sunday.

While the average PM2.5 readings at 6pm were recorded at 50.4 micrograms per cubic metre, the average PM10 readings at the same time were 159.2 micrograms per cubic metre. The safe standard for both these ultra-fine particulates is 60 and 100 micrograms per cubic metres respectively.

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Dainik Bhaskar,

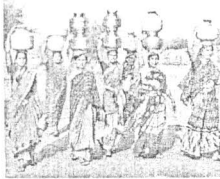
मराठवाड़ा: यहां पानी ही मुद्दा, पर सूखा वोटों का पड़ने वाला है



संजय आवटे, महाराष्ट्र

लातूर का ओसा। यही पर प्रगनमजी गांधी ने पहली बार वोट डालने वाले युवाओं से सभा के पराक्रम के नाम अपना वोट सम्मिलित करने की बात कही थी। वोट किस देश पर बात चली तो एक प्रामाणिक संतान उत्तार हाकर बोला- सभा में मरने वाले जवान भी हमारे और उपज न होने से आत्महत्या करने वाले किसान भी हमारे। ये कैसा जय जवान, जय किसान है। पानी यहाँ सबसे बड़ा मुद्दा है। मराठवाड़ा के हर गांव में आप सूखे कुरे, पानी के लिए कतार और मिर पर बड़े पटके रखकर कोसों दूर से पानी लानी महिलाओं को देख सकते हैं। यकीनन, यह पानी ही है जो इस चुनाव में सत्ताधारियों के चेहरे का पानी उतार सकता है।

आइए बात करते हैं मराठवाड़ा की गौरवशाली नाम। नामचान नेता... पर सबसे पिछड़ा हुआ क्षेत्र। मराठवाड़ा में देश को कई बड़े नेता मिले हैं। दो बार मुख्यमंत्री रह चुके विलासराव देशमुख भी लातूर से आते थे। पूर्व केंद्रीय गृह मंत्री शिवराज पाटिल चाकरकर भी। भाजपा



मराठवाड़ा की छह सीटों - हिंगोली, नांदेड, परभणी, बीड, उस्मानाबाद और लातूर में 18 अप्रैल को बीटिंग। अन्य दो सीटें-जालना और औरंगाबाद में 23 को मतदान।

के दिवंगत नेता गोपीनाथ मुंडे, प्रमोद महाजन, भाजपा के मौजूदा प्रदेश अध्यक्ष रावसाहेब दानवे महिंत कई दिग्गजों का घर है मराठवाड़ा। इसके बावजूद यह इलाका पिछड़े क्षेत्रों में गिना जाता है। मराठवाड़ा में लोकसभा की आठ सीटें हैं। यह इलाका कांग्रेस का गढ़ रहा है। 2014 में मोदी लहर के बावजूद कांग्रेस ने प्रदेश में जो दो सीटें जीतीं, वे मराठवाड़ा की ही थीं।

जानिए मराठवाड़ा किसे मिलने वाला है?

औरंगाबाद: यह शिवसेना की सीट, कांग्रेस को चिंता वोट के बंटवारे की

• ये 'मिलिटिंग सीट' है। यहां मुस्लिम, बौद्ध, मराठा, आंबेड्कर मतां में स्पष्ट विभाजन दिखाता है। यह शिवसेना का गढ़ है। यहां महानगर पालिका में भी शिवसेना ही है। मौजूदा सांसद चंद्रकांत खैरे का नाम शिवसेना की ओर से निश्चित ही था। कांग्रेस ने सुभाष झांबड को उतारा है, वॉचमन बहजन आघाड़ी और एमआरएम में मौजूदा विधायक इम्तिाज जलील को। मुस्लिम वोट बैंक को देखें तो इमियाज बड़ी चुनौती बनकर उभरेगा। भाजपा के प्रदेशाध्यक्ष रावसाहेब दानवे के दामाद हर्षवर्धन यहां निर्दलीय मैदान में हैं। चंद्रकांत खैरे और कांग्रेस को चिंता है मतां के विभाजन की। सबसे रोचक मुकाबला यहीं है।

जालना: यहां कांग्रेस और भाजपा का सीधा मुकाबला

• भाजपा के प्रदेशाध्यक्ष रावसाहेब दानवे और कांग्रेस प्रदेश सेवारत के प्रमुख विलास ओताड़े में मुकाबला। यहां ग्रामीण हिस्सों में दानवे का पकड़ है। पानी जैसे जरूरी मुद्दे पर नाराजगी के बावजूद वे ओताड़े पर भारी रह सकते हैं।

बीड: मुंडे परिवार का वर्चस्व, राकांपा को बग़ावत से नुकसान

• यहां राकांपा के बजरंग सोनवणे और भाजपा की डॉ. प्रीतम मुंडे के बीच मुकाबला है। गोपीनाथ मुंडे के निधन से रिक्त हुई सीट पर उनकी बेटी प्रीतम रिकॉर्ड 7 लाख मतां से जीती थी। राकांपा को बग़ावत से नुकसान होगा।

हिंगोली: कांग्रेस के लिए सीट बचाना बड़ी चुनौती: यहां से मौजूदा सांसद राजीव साठव की कांग्रेस ने गुजरात की जिम्मेदारी दी है। उनकी जगह सुभाष वानखेड मैदान में है, वहीं शिवसेना ने हेमंत पाटिल को उतारा है। वॉचमन बहजन आघाड़ी के मोहन राठोड़ कांग्रेस के वोटबैंक में सेंथे लगा सकते हैं। पिछले चुनावों में साठव की जीत बहुत कम अंतर की रही थी। ऐसे में कांग्रेस के लिए यह सीट बचाना एक बड़ी चुनौती होगी।

अभी इन आठ सीटों में छह पर भाजपा, दो पर कांग्रेस

लातूर: दोनों ही चेहरे बाहरी हैं, लोकल पार्टी कैडर में नाराजगी

• भाजपा और कांग्रेस दोनों के ही उम्मीदवार बाहरी हैं। भाजपा ने सुभाकर शृंगारे और कांग्रेस ने पंचिच्छंद कामत को मैदान में उतारा है। दोनों में सीधा मुकाबला है। दोनों मुहूर्त स हैं। ऐसे में लोकल पार्टी कैडर में नाराजगी है।

उस्मानाबाद: यहाँ भाई का मुकाबला भाई से ही है

• राकांपा के राणा जगजीत सिंह और उनके चचेरे भाई शिवसेना के ओपराजे निंबालकर आपन-सामने हैं। यहां टिकट बंटने से मौजूदा सांसद रवीन्द्र गायकवाड़ नाराज हैं। निंबालकर को कितना नुकसान होता है, यह समय बताएगा।

परभणी: शिवसेना के लिए चुनौती बनकर उभरी राकांपा

• यहां राष्ट्रवादी कांग्रेस के राजेश विठकर और शिवसेना के संजय जाधव में मुकाबला है। कांग्रेस और राष्ट्रवादी गठबंधन का संगठन मजबूत है। इस वजह से इस सीट को बचाने के लिए शिवसेना को अतिरिक्त प्रयास करने होंगे।

नांदेड: 2014 मोदी लहर में भी कांग्रेस यहां जीती थी

• यहां कांग्रेस के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष अशोक चव्हाण मैदान में हैं। उनके सामने भाजपा के प्रताप पाटिल-चिखलीकर हैं। बसपा-सपा गठबंधन और वॉचमन बहजन आघाड़ी के उम्मीदवार कांग्रेस के वोट बैंक को नुकसान पहुंचा सकते हैं।

Hindustan Times
Statesman
The Time of India (New Delhi)
Indian Express
Tribune

Hindustan (Hindi)
Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)
Punjab Keshari (Hindi)
The Hindu (New Delhi)
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)

Deccan Chronicle
Deccan Herald
The Times of India (A)
Business standard
The Economic Times

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

Drought is bachelors' bane as brides shun Maha village

Priyanka.Kakodkar
@timesgroup.com

Solapur: Mahesh Lahoo Garad, a 28-year-old onion farmer from Ranmasale village in drought-struck Solapur, has been waiting for a bride for three years. But each time a prospective bride's family visits his home, they don't return.

"They see how their daughters will have to struggle to fetch water. So they don't come back to take the talks further," says Mahesh. "It looks like I will have to migrate to find a bride."

This severe water crisis in Ranmasale is driving brides away from the arid village. And since most in the 5,000-strong village belong to the Garad clan from the Maratha community and are considered related, they cannot marry within the village. They seek brides and groom from other regions.

"There are at least 200 bachelors in the village in the 25-35 age-group who have not found brides," states deputy sarpanch Balaji Garad. This doesn't affect the girls in the village though, since they marry and settle into villages outside.

Locals say the problem of finding brides has worsened in the last decade owing to repeated droughts. As young men migrate in search of work, some are opting to get married in their new settlements. "Typically they leave farming behind and move to the neighbouring Mohol taluka, Pune and Pandharpur to work as daily wagers," says Satish Shinde.

Laxman Sopan Garad has been trying to get his two sons married over the last year. But Abhijit (23) and Ranjit (25) are yet to find brides. "In one year, seven families came to see my sons. After visiting our home, they saw the empty field and the well which had absolutely no water. Each family said



Ashish Shankar

they would return and send us a nirop (message). But the message never came," said Laxman Garad.

Solapur received only 38% of normal rain this year and faces a drastic rain deficit. It's also the third year of drought in the state in the last five years.

Although Ranmasale falls within a parched district, drought was not declared in this village, a cause of anger and heart-

“Since drought has not been declared here, we are not even eligible for drought aid. Many of us have not received crop insurance. Our demand for water tankers was also ignored for one month

BALAJI GARAD

Deputy sarpanch of the village

burn among locals. This is because it does not fit into the parameters of the Centre's drought manual. The 2016 manual sets out stringent conditions to be met before a drought can be declared, including extent of rainfall, crop sown, vegetation cover and soil moisture.

"Since drought has not been declared here, we are not eligible for drought aid. Many of us have not received crop insurance. Our demand

“In one year, seven families came to see my sons. After visiting our home, they saw the empty field and the well which had absolutely no water. Each family said they will return and send us a nirop (message). But the message never came

— Laxman Garad

for water tankers was also ignored for one month," alleges the deputy sarpanch.

Three villagers had threatened to commit suicide by jumping into an empty well on Republic Day if the village did not receive government tankers. "We had asked for tankers on December 15 last year. By January 5, we were fed up and sent a letter to the collector saying we will kill ourselves," said Prashant Patil, whose four-acre jowar field had dried up. The village received tanker water on January 24.

Solapur district collector Rajendra Bhosale said drought had not been declared in the village as two revenue circles in the North Solapur taluka received more than 75% rainfall. "However, the village is eligible for all the benefits, including water tankers, waiver in repayment of crop loans and agricultural electricity bills," he says.

Meanwhile, the women of Ranmasale are coping with the water supplied by a single tanker. "We manage with four pots of water a day," says Savita Garad. Her three children cannot afford to bathe every day or have their school uniforms washed. A section of the village is toying with the idea of boycotting the vote this election. But the women are not for it. "I will not let my vote go waste. If we don't vote, how will things change?" asks Siddabai Garad.

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Mining under way at a village in Yamunagar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

Yamuna may change course this monsoon

Mining ups chances of breach

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

YAMUNANAGAR, APRIL 13

The mining mafia has reportedly carried out excessive illegal mining in the bed of the Yamuna in Tajewala village, making the riverbed level lower in Haryana than in Uttar Pradesh.

Uncontrolled mining in the riverbed was done on left side of the right lower down-stream embankment (RLDSE), the right side of which was badly damaged with mining done up to 50 feet in depth.

"There are chances that the Yamuna may change course in the rainy season. It will flow with excessive water towards the Haryana side, enhancing chances of a breach," said a source.

The right bank of the Yamuna is in Haryana and the left bank in Uttar Pradesh. The 19,600-foot-long RLDSE, constructed close to the old Tajewala headworks, was repaired at a cost of Rs 3398.43 lakh between 2011 and 2013.

"There are agricultural fields on the right side of the RLDSE, but the mining mafia has damaged a large portion by carrying out illegal mining," said the source.

Bid to fool authorities

After reports in these columns, owners of eight illegal screening plants had closed operations. They had started removing conveyor belts and other machinery. "They want the inspection team to believe that their screening plants have been non-functional for long," said a source.

"The mining mafia has not spared the Yamuna riverbed on the left side and carried out excessive illegal mining in a large portion there," said the source.

The excessive illegal mining had led to the possibility of damage to the Hathnikund barrage, about 3.5 km upstream of the old Tajewala headworks, and wreaking havoc in the area.

Haridev Kamboj, Executive Engineer, Water Services Division, Dadupur, said he had written about the illegal mining to the higher authorities. Social activist and advocate Waryam Singh said the government should take strict action against the officials who were responsible for illegal mining on both sides of RLDSE.

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Dainik Jagran,

गंगा-यमुना जैसी नदियां हमारी धरोहर : डॉ. जोशी

जागरण संवाददाता, टिहरी: 'द ग्रेट ग्लोबल क्लीन अप मिशन' के तहत शनिवार को 'गंगा नदी बचाओ' अभियान की शुरुआत हुई। देवप्रयाग में अलकनंदा और भागीरथी नदी के संगम पर पद्मश्री डॉ. अनिल प्रकाश जोशी ने गंगा सागर तक चलने वाले इस अभियान की शुरुआत की। इस मौके पर उन्होंने कहा कि गंगा-यमुना जैसी नदियां हमारी धरोहर हैं। इन्हें लेकर अगर आज गंभीर नहीं हुए तो आने वाली पीढ़ी हमें कभी माफ नहीं करेगी।

डॉ. जोशी ने कहा कि प्लास्टिक कचरा नदियों को बर्बाद कर रहा है। इसका खामियाजा आने वाले समय में देशवासियों को भुगतना होगा। उन्होंने नगरपालिका देवप्रयाग से संगम और आसपास के क्षेत्रों में श्रद्धालुओं के छोड़े कपड़ों को एक स्थान पर एकत्रित करने की अपील भी की। अर्थ द नेटवर्क के अनिल अरोड़ा ने कहा कि प्लास्टिक कचरे को गंगा में बहाए जाने से जलीय जीवों, खासकर मछली प्रजातियों के जीवन पर खतरा मंडरा रहा है। इन्हें बचाने के लिए भी जल्द अभियान शुरू होगा। लोक पर्यावरण शिक्षा संस्थान के अध्यक्ष श्यामलाल भार्गव ने बताया कि नौ-दिनीय अभियान के प्रथम चरण का 21 अप्रैल को हर की पौड़ी में समापन होगा।

News item/letter/article/editorial Published on 13.04.2019 in the

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BJP Manifesto Gets It Right on Water

It is notable that the BJP election manifesto has called for the setting up of a unified ministry of water, for focused policy attention and follow-through action. At present, seven or eight central ministries have varying roles when it comes to water and such fragmentation of responsibility has diluted policy action. Given falling water tables and rising unsustainable groundwater usage, in the backdrop of growing variability in monsoon rains, we clearly need policy focus.

The Mihir Shah committee report did call for the setting up of a National Water Commission, subsuming the Central Water Commission and the Central Ground Water Board, for a new institutional mechanism and knowledge management in India's stressed water sector. There is need to build national consensus on policy design.



The Shah committee noted that our cities produce some 40,000 million litres of sewage on a daily basis, of which barely 20% is treated. We need to shore up water recycling and reuse. What's glaring is that only 2% of urban areas nationwide have both sewerage systems and sewage treatment plants. Swachh Bharat will remain incomplete without such public health engineering. The BJP manifesto promises piped water supply for all households by 2024. In parallel, we surely need a national campaign for water conservation including of local water bodies, systematic groundwater recharge and heightened efficiency in water usage.

The way forward is to bring about better economy in water usage for agriculture, with better seed varieties, gainful diffusion of drip irrigation systems and participatory water management. There is no reason why water usage for major crops here need remain 2-4 times the global norm. An annual Water Report, on the lines of the Economic Survey, would be timely, too.

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Hindustan Times
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The Time of India (New Delhi)
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Tribune

Hindustan (Hindi)
Nav Bharat Times (Hindi)
Punjab Keshari (Hindi)
The Hindu (New Delhi) ✓
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)

Deccan Chronicle
Deccan Herald
The Times of India (A)
Business standard
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Storm water drains: reply sought from UP authorities

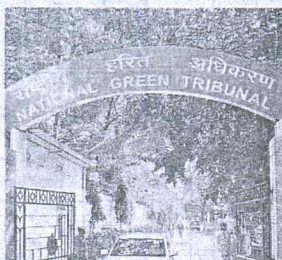
'File point-wise reply on recommendations made by NGT-appointed committee'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Ghaziabad Development Authority, Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam and other State government authorities to respond to recommendations made by an NGT-appointed committee pertaining to storm water drains in industrial areas.

A Bench headed by NGT judicial member Justice Raghuvendra S. Rathore directed the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation, Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam and the District Forest Officer to file a "point-wise reply," with respect to the recommendations made by the committee.

The committee, in its report dated October 2017, had noted: "The natural storm water channel of Sahibabad



The UPPCB has been asked to submit the lab analysis report of samples taken by an NGT-appointed body.

has been turned into a sewage drain carrying the waste from the entire area... Only a small fraction of the wastewater from the drain is diverted to the STP in Indirapuram. Thus, the drain is a major cause of pollution in Hindon river and downstream Yamuna."

Noting that the Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam has "turned a blind eye" by not covering

6 After considering affidavits filed by the respective respondents, the deterrent order which is to be passed as against defaulting respondents will be decided

NGT BENCH

drains, the committee said, "As a first step to restoration, all concrete covers over the drain and other constructions, if any should be removed or demolished. Then the entire stretch of the drain should be thoroughly desilted... The banks of the drains should be protected by developing green cover."

The committee further recommended the segregation of sewage and industrial effluents to ensure that they are

not permitted to flow into the natural drains.

"As far as the industrial effluents are concerned, the industrial area should be provided a separate common effluent treatment plant as per norms of the Central Pollution Control Board," the report said.

Noting that despite final orders passed in 2016, the authorities had failed to execute the directions, the Bench, also comprising Justice Satyawan Singh Garbyal, said, "After considering affidavits filed by the respective respondents, the deterrent order which is to be passed as against defaulting respondents [will be decided]."

The Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board has also been directed to submit the lab analysis report of samples taken by the NGT-appointed committee.

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Toiling to be heard

Nothing but lip service for nearly half the country facing severe drought



DEVINDER SHARMA

FOOD & AGRICULTURE SPECIALIST

WHEN The Tribune reported on March 1 that nearly 47% of the country was in the grip of a severe drought, with at least 16% falling in the category of 'extreme' or 'exceptional', and knowing that drought could further worsen farm distress, lead to increased migration from rural to urban areas, I thought the misery being encountered by roughly 500 million people or 40% of the population would shift the focus, even in an election year, to provide immediate relief measures.

My belief that the dominant narrative would change, with each party trying to outdo what the other promised, and perhaps move its cadre to the rural hinterland, providing a helping hand to the drought-affected, too, remained wishful thinking. To make it still worse, Skymet Weather Services, a private agency, has forecast a deficient monsoon ahead, and the Indian Meteorological Department has shown that the country has received 36% less rainfall between March 1 and March 28 compared with the long-term average. Another report by IndiaSpend points to Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Bihar, Jharkhand, parts of Northeast, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan being the worst hit. 'In 31 reservoirs in the southern states, water availability stands at 25% of total capacity, which has gone down by 36 percentage points over five months from 61% of the capacity in November 2018.' There is more trouble ahead.

In another report, IndiaSpend speaks of the plight of the drought-hit Rayalaseema region of Andhra, com-



SPARE A THOUGHT: Unless we, irrespective of political ideology, think of the farmer when discussing elections, farming will never swing political decision-making.

Each party should have tried to outdo what the other promised to mitigate farm distress, but that was not to be.

prising four districts of Anantapur, Kurnool, Chittoor and YSR Kadapa. The region has faced 15 droughts between 2000 and 2018. Quoting the district administration, the report says the region has faced nine consecutive years of drought. This year again, the drought continues. An estimated 7 lakh people moved out in 2018, looking for menial labour. Village after village is empty, with only the elders and children left behind by couples who have migrated. This year, there is hardly a field which doesn't look barren and abandoned.

Even in the drought-affected areas in Maharashtra, where the continuing agrarian crisis is expected to cast its shadow on the ensuing elections, news reports point to how the ruling party is trying to instead build up a campaign based on muscular nationalism, quietly bypassing the central issue of farm distress in the region. Opposition parties are, however, focusing on the neglect of the farm sector over the years. So much so, seeing that the real issues are being swept under the carpet, a farm widow, Vaishali Yede, has decided to take the

battle to the ballot. She is contesting from Yavatmal-Washim constituency in eastern Maharashtra, a farm suicide-prone region. Her simple message is: 'Mahyavar laksh asudya ji' (keep me in your prayers and thoughts), ostensibly telling voters to remember the distressed farmers.

In Telangana, too, there are 170 farmers contesting against K Kavitha, daughter of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, a candidate from the Nizamabad Lok Sabha constituency. Reports also say that 111 Tamil Nadu farmers, who had earlier campaigned in New Delhi, will be contesting against PM Modi from Varanasi. While the intent in both cases seems to be rather symbolic, it does, however, signify the anger sweeping the countryside.

At a time when farm incomes have plummeted to its lowest in the past 15 years and rural wage growth has seen a steep fall — from 11.8% in 2013-15 to 0.45% in 2016-18, the National Sample Survey Office estimates say 3.2 crore casual rural workers lost their jobs between 2011-12 and 2017-18. Of these, 3 crore were farm labourers.

Despite the news and a few analyses, the dominant narrative has again shifted back. Agricultural crisis that took so long to emerge at the centre stage of the political debate has once again been relegated to the back-ground. 'The effort to bring emotions (nationalism) in the elections will lead to all other issues going under the carpet. The farmers will continue to die,' says farmer leader Vijay Jawandhia from Maharashtra.

One reason why people in cities do not feel concerned, and that is why the prominent discourse remains impervious to the suffering in rural areas, is because of unequal development woven through the process of economic growth. To illustrate, why only water shortage, the problems that a crippling drought would normally bring are rarely felt in the cities. Simply because all efforts have been to build the cities and make them drought-proof over the years. Rivers flowing in rural areas can go dry, the soil become parched and crops wither, but the development design ensures regular tap water supply in cities, or for at least a few hours during the day. While cities have a 24-hour power supply, ask a farmer how many hours does he get electricity?

A few hours away from Mumbai, life comes to a standstill. Go to Bangalore, it is rare that you can even get a distant feeling of a severe drought that prevails just a few kilometres outside of it. It is this kind of insinuation that keeps the urban population disconnected with its rural hinterland.

Why only blame the urban-centric media, which hardly has any roots in mofussil towns, even the academia and bureaucracy remain oblivious. When the urban elite and the middle class is least interested, it is futile to expect politicians to fill the gap. Unless each one of us, irrespective of political ideology, thinks of the farmer when talking of elections or when voting, farming will never swing political decision-making.

As the Prime Minister said in an interview, thinking of the farmer is nationalism too.