

Central Water Commission  
Water Systems Engineering Directorate  
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West Block II, wing No- 5  
R K Puram, New Delhi-66  
Dated 22.11.2018

***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.

Encl: As above.

S. J. Ahluwalia  
22/11/2018  
SPA ( Publicity )

Deputy Director, WSE Dte.

m/2018

O/C

Director, WSE Dte.

1/2018  
22/11/18

For information to:

Chairman, CWC, New Delhi

Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned, uploaded at [www.cwc.gov.in](http://www.cwc.gov.in)

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 B

## We have to save India's natural commons

The government's decision to protect 20 wetlands is critical, but not enough

<sup>#1</sup>  
<sup>22</sup>  
At a time when the battle between development and environment is being fought every day across India, the Union environment ministry has given us something to cheer about. It has identified 20 wetlands and nine wetland clusters for conservation as they are congregation sites for migratory water bird species. These wetlands, which will be protected as part of the Centre's Central Asian Flyway Action Plan launched on Monday, include Keoladeo in Rajasthan, Coringa in Andhra Pradesh, Bhitarkanika in Odisha, Point Calimere in Tamil Nadu, Sunderbans in West Bengal, Harike in Punjab, Gulf of Mannar, and Nal Soravar in Gujarat. This is a crucial development since wetlands — mangroves, marshes, paddy fields, swamps etc — are important stopovers for birds, and also work as a sponge that stores extra rainfall.

Like in other parts of the world, in India, too, wetlands are under threat, thanks to expanding agriculture, deforestation, climate change, land encroachment and urban development. A recent study by the Global Wetland Convention found that nearly 35% of the world's wetlands were lost between 1970 and 2015. While we must celebrate the Centre's decision to save the 20 wetlands, it is important to remember that while earmarking and protecting particular ecologically-sensitive areas is critical, it is not enough. There are thousands of unprotected wetlands, forests, sacred groves, grasslands, community forests, urban forests etc — our natural commons — which are vulnerable to land use change, and every time we lose a bit of them, we lose a substantial amount of ecological heritage.

Take, for example, tiger and elephant reserves. We have several national parks where both are (hopefully) safe, but then they often get killed once they step out, either by humans, or by speeding trains and exposed electric lines. This happens because animals don't care for man-made boundaries; they need secure corridors to move around, and, therefore, it is critical to save not just a portion of land/water for them but also what lies beyond them: the natural commons.

Hindustan Times  
Statesman  
The Time of India (New Delhi)  
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## Farmers, activists oppose Karnataka Cauvery tower project

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 21

A PROPOSED project of the Congress-JDS government to build a 125-ft tower at the site of the Krishna Raja Sagar dam on the river Cauvery in honour of "Mother Cauvery" has been opposed by river activists and farmer leaders from Mandya region.

The construction of the 124-ft tower has been jointly proposed by Water Resources minister, Congress's D K Shivakumar, and tourism minister, JDS's S R Mahesh.

Veteran activists like 87-year-old G Madegowda of the Cauvery Protection Committee — who has campaigned for decades for Karnataka's share of the Cauvery water — have opposed the project and warned of an agitation in Mandya region.

At a recent meeting of activists and farmers in Mysuru to discuss the proposed tower and an amusement park near the dam, G Madegowda, a former Congress MP, said the proposed project could endanger the dam at a time when it is in need of repair.

"Plans for construction activity near the dam will only weaken it. There is a lot of illegal sand mining in the riverbed which the state must stop to protect the dam. The state is propos-

ing construction instead of planning to strengthen the dam," Madegowda said. "Farmers must come together to oppose the move since these activities will have a bearing on them," he said.

"To build a 125-ft tower, they will have to drill into the earth around the dam and this can damage the structure of the dam," said B Nagendra, a local leader of farmers' outfit Raittha Sangha.

Some farmer leaders have said the proposal is an attempt by people with vested interests to grab land.

A week ago, Water Resources Minister Shivakumar stated that the state is proposing construction of a 125-ft tower on government land near the Krishna Raja Sagar dam as a tourist attraction. A museum, glass viewing structures and an indoor stadium would be part of the proposed project, he said.

Shivakumar claimed that funds would be collected from private investors for building the tower and no government funds would be spent on the project.

The minister claimed that a new lake would be created near the dam where the tower would be constructed. "The land belongs to the government. We will ask investors to invest in the project and no government money will be spent," Shivakumar said.

News item/letter/article/editorial Published on 22.11.2018..... in the

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Business standard

The Economic Times

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

## DJB battles more ammonia in Yamuna

Paras.Singh@timesgroup.com

**New Delhi:** After severe air pollution, the capital is now witnessing water pollution with a rise in ammonia levels in the Yamuna water coming from Haryana. Unlike previous years, the spike has been registered very early in the winter this time.

Delhi Jal Board said the ammonia levels have gone above safe levels and that may impact the supply to many parts of the city in the next few days. A DJB spokesperson said that the situation was relatively better from last night when 25% of the operational capacity of the three main water treatment plants was impacted. "We have noticed that ammonia levels have come down since last night. Right now, operational capacity is down by 15% and the situation is under control. Haryana has assured to release additional water. There will be more clarity in the next 24 hours when the

released water reaches Delhi," the spokesperson said.

The three water treatment plants that were affected were Wazirabad, Chandrawal and Okhla plants. "The areas that will get low pressure water are north Delhi, central Delhi, parts of west Delhi, parts of south Delhi, Delhi Cantt areas and NDMC areas," the DJB advisory read. Other four plants will be affected if adverse conditions persist.

DJB has a capacity to treat up to 0.9 parts per million (ppm) of ammonia in raw water, but neutralisation of ammonia with chlorine gas on a regular basis at such high levels leads to creation of toxic chlorine-based by-products, which should be avoided for human consumption. "Bureau of India Standards limit is 0.5 ppm," said an official.

DJB has advised residents to use water judiciously and to call its central control room (1800117118) for any assistance.



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# Gaja several times more devastating than Thane

Cyclone leaves infrastructure in Nagapattinam in tatters; villagers up in arms

B. KOLAPPAN  
NAGAPATTINAM

Five days after Cyclone Gaja made its midnight landfall between Vedaranyam and Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu, almost every road, street and habitat in Nagapattinam is littered with electrical posts, cables, cellphone towers, tree trunks and branches. Steel roofs of petrol bunks and building have been blown off and small bus stands collapsed as pillars got twisted and boats flung to distant places. There is hardly any structure that has escaped the fury of cyclone.

"The scale of devastation indicates that the impact of this cyclone is at least 10 times severe than Cyclone Thane (that hit Cuddalore in 2011). It would take at least a month to restore a sem-



**Wind power:** A BSNL tower that came crashing down on houses at Thalaigayiru in Nagapattinam district. ■ M. MOORTHY

blance of normalcy in Nagapattinam," a senior government official overseeing the relief works told *The Hindu*.

Though the government was fully prepared to face the situation, the damage on the ground shows its resources may not be enough and civil society has to pitch in urgently. The government

pressed into work 15 teams in Nagapattinam and each team is headed by a Deputy Collector. While the damage is unprecedented, what makes relief work difficult is the continuous rain.

## CM cancels survey

People are up in arms against the government in

many places and staging road blockades. The fact that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami had to cancel his aerial survey of Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam on Tuesday says plenty about the weather condition and the prevailing situation. "Give us tarpaulin to cover the roof of our houses," is the demand of the people in many places.

Power supply has not been restored fully. Substations are in doldrums. Workers of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) are the most ubiquitous of the government workers who are involved in the restoration efforts. One could see them in every corner of the district erecting new posts and connecting power lines.

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# Odisha CM urges PM to halt Polavaram project construction

Seeks resolution of all pending issues; third letter to Centre in three years

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

**BHUBANESWAR**

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to cancel an order given the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for Polavaram project in July this year and stop construction of the project until all the pending issues are resolved.

## **'Injury to Odisha interest'**

"If the project is allowed to be completed before the resolution of all the pending issues, it will cause permanent injury to the interest of the State of Odisha and its people," Mr. Patnaik wrote in a two-page letter sent to Mr. Modi on Wednesday.

"I am constrained to write



Naveen Patnaik has suggested that the Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh be reformulated without causing large-scale submergence in other States. ■ FILE PHOTO

this letter to draw your personal attention and intervention on the magnitude of the consequences that the people of Odisha will have to face viz. the submergence of tribal villages resulting in mass displacement of tribals, the flooding of fertile

agricultural lands and submergence of large forest area, all of which can be avoided if only an opportunity is given for a final resolution of the disputes pending before the Supreme Court," Mr. Patnaik said in his letter.

The Chief Minister has

suggested that the Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh can be reformulated as per Godavari Water Dispute Tribunal, without causing large-scale submergence in the States of Odisha, Telangana and Chhattisgarh.

Mentioning that public hearing in Odisha has not been carried out till date, Mr. Patnaik said that a detailed study of design, flood and the studies related to back-water extent during floods will allow to make an assessment about the exact submergence in Odisha.

In his letter, Mr. Patnaik also mentioned that he has written three letters to the Prime Minister on the issue in the past – September 16, 2015, November 28, 2017, and July 12, 2018.

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## DROUGHT WARNING

For governments both at the Centre and in the concerned states, the most sensible option is to act fast

**A**FTER TWO YEARS of relatively good rains, large parts of Maharashtra (especially the Marathwada region and the adjoining districts of Jalgaon, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Sholapur, Amravati and Yavatmal), North Gujarat, Saurashtra, Kutch and North Karnataka are reeling under drought. What is different this time is that it has been induced by the southwest monsoon's failure in the second half of the season. The rains were, in fact, quite good in most of these areas during June-July. The monsoon's timely arrival led to the area sown under kharif crops being more or less normal. Farmers were, however, caught unaware by the extended dry spell from August, when their already planted crops were in the late vegetative growth stage. The ones with some irrigation facilities would well have saved their crop. In the event, the yield losses from late-season moisture stress may have been minimal. But even these farmers are in no position to plant a rabi crop; there's hardly any soil and subsoil moisture left to allow that.

The Union Agriculture Ministry's latest sowing data for the current rabi season shows a 16 per cent drop in crop area so far. While rabi plantings will continue for the next one month, the trend is unlikely to reverse — particularly in the above states/regions, where the drought situation is most serious. But the problem isn't simply that of farmers being unable to grow wheat, mustard, chana (chickpea), jeera (cumin), dhaniya (coriander) or saunf (fennel). What would worry them more is providing water and fodder to their cattle and buffaloes. As a report in this newspaper has pointed out, distress migration by farmers with animals in tow has already begun in central Maharashtra. This could present a serious challenge, when the next monsoon is nearly seven months away. And with national elections scheduled before that, it isn't the best prospect for the ruling party to face farmers already burdened by successive years of low crop realisations and the more recent spike in the cost of diesel, fertiliser and pesticides.

For the governments at the Centre and in the concerned states, the most sensible option is to act fast. Maharashtra has claimed that more than half of its talukas are already facing "drought-like" conditions. There is no reason to delay sending Central teams to ascertain the ground situation and officially declare drought. Rabi season drought may be a somewhat rare phenomenon, but its impact on crop production and supply of water and fodder is no less, extending to the following summer. Preparation for starting fodder camps, taking up MGNREGA works or making direct benefit transfers to the most vulnerable families should start sooner than later.



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# CPCB mulls cloud seeding to trigger rain, experts sceptical

**EXPERIMENTAL** Scientists say cumulus clouds needed for rain usually do not form in winter season

HT Correspondent

■ [reporters@hindustantimes.com](mailto:reporters@hindustantimes.com)

**NEW DELHI:** The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), with the help of scientists from IIT Kanpur, is mulling artificial rain with cloud-seeding technique this winter to bring some respite from pollution.

But a section of experts say the method may not be fruitful during winter, when pollution reaches abysmal levels.

However, if the pilot project is successful then it would be a rare feat because across the world, cloud seeding is usually done during summers or the rainy season, when there is ample cloud cover.

"Barring a few instances in other countries, cloud seeding is usually done during the summer months. We would conduct the experiment during winter and that too with fully indigenous technology. A few other states in India had conducted such experiments but with foreign technology," said SN Tripathi, head of the civil engineering department at IIT Kanpur and one of the brains behind this project.

This is where a section of scientists and weather forecasters have expressed their doubts.

They said that while on one the hand, there is hardly any cloud cover over northwest India during winter, on the other hand, not all clouds can be seeded.

"The primary requirement for cloud seeding is the availability of cloud itself. In northwest India, there is hardly any cloud cover during the winter season. Secondly, not all clouds can be seeded to trigger rain. These include low-altitude stratified clouds and high-altitude cirrus clouds. Matured cumulus clouds, which have good dimension and water content, can be considered for triggering rain with seeding," said LS Rathore,



former director general of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

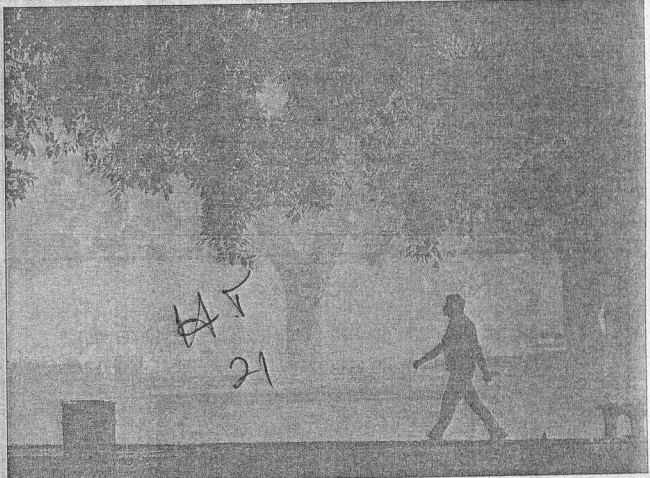
But matured cumulus clouds usually do not form during winter in northwest India and Delhi.

A senior IMD official said that on November 22, there is some possibility of cloud formation. But those would be not suitable for seeding as they are high clouds.

"Chances of formation of large cumulus clouds are very rare in the next one week at least. Such clouds usually form during the summer seasons when there is high temperature and moisture content is also high," said GP Sharma, president (meteorology and climate change) of Skymet, an Indian private weather forecasting agency.

Cloud seeding is the process of injecting chemicals such as silver iodide, dry ice and liquid propane. These chemicals not just reduce the temperature of the water vapour molecules, thus helping in precipitation, but even provide a platform on which the water droplets can coalesce. When they become heavy, they come down as rain.

"Cloud seeding has experimented only with matured clouds that are laden with water particles. But whether rain can be triggered from other types of clouds, which sometimes come



■ A man walks at Humayun's Tomb amid heavy smog early Tuesday. According to officials, adverse weather conditions are also aggravating the city's pollution levels.

BIPLOU BHUYAN/HT PHOTO

during the winter, still remains a question. Many experiments are being carried out to bring down pollution levels in Delhi. This is another step in that direction which we want to give a try," Tripathi said.

In 2016, the Delhi government had floated the same idea of triggering artificial rain, which didn't materialise. According to the World Meteorological Organisation, at least 56 countries had engaged in some sort of cloud seeding till 2016.

The list included the United Arab Emirates, which was trying to meet the water demand, and China, which used cloud seeding in an effort to stop the 2008 Summer Olympics opening ceremony from getting drenched with rain.

"We can do cloud seeding only if there is a cloud. I think IMD has to see if it is feasible and when can it be done if at all," said CK Mishra, secretary, environment ministry, on the sidelines of a press conference on the meeting of BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) nations.

Environment minister Harsh Vardhan declined to comment on anything to do with cloud seeding.

HT Correspondent

■ [reporters@hindustantimes.com](mailto:reporters@hindustantimes.com)

**NEW DELHI:** The city's air quality worsened further on Tuesday with pollution levels shooting up primarily because of local emissions such as vehicular fumes.

According to officials, adverse weather conditions are also aggravating the city's pollution levels.

While the Air Quality Index (AQI) value was 330 on Monday, it deteriorated to 373 on Tuesday. This is the fourth consecutive day that the air quality has continued to get fouler. The AQI on November 17 was 267.

"While on one hand the wind velocity is not as strong as to favour faster dispersal of pollutants, high moisture levels in the air are trapping pollutants that are being emitted locally. The contribution from stubble burning is negligible," a Central Pollution Control Board scientist said. Safar, one of the pollution fore-

casting agencies of the union government, has forecasted that AQI levels would continue to remain in the very poor category at least over the next two or three days.

"The concentration of PM2.5 (the primary pollutant) could drop on Wednesday. This is because wind speed is likely to increase. But the pollution levels will rise again on Thursday," a scientist from Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) said. IITM runs the air quality early warning system of Delhi.

The India Meteorological Department has forecasted that there will be light fog or mist on most days over the course of the next week.

The night temperature will hover between 12 degrees Celsius and 14 degrees Celsius.

On Tuesday, the night temperature was recorded as 13.5 degrees Celsius, while the day temperature stood at 28.8 degrees Celsius, both of which were one degree above normal.

▶ The primary requirement for cloud seeding is the availability of cloud itself. In northwest India, there is hardly any cloud cover during the winter season. Secondly, not all clouds can be seeded to trigger rain.

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former director general of the India Meteorological Department

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# Parched villages begin to empty out in drought-hit Maharashtra

## Rabi crop severely hit; villagers migrate for jobs, animals in tow

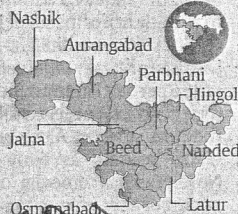
KAVITHAIYER & PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS

NASHIK/OSMANABAD, NOV 20

IN NAYDONGRI village in Nashik's Nandgaon taluka, water scarcity in the summer months is an annual worry, but in the over five decades that the Gawliwada or community of buffalo herders has been here,

distress migration has never been a concern. After all, with 1,800 to 2,000 water buffaloes to care for, the Gawli clan of Naydongri cannot very well relocate at will. This year, however, with summer still four months away and acute water scarcity settling in already, Shankar Umaji Namde, 60, is in talks with landowners in Niphad, nearly 100 km away, to locate an alter-

### AMONG WORST-HIT AREAS



DRY WAVE  
PART 1

native site for their animals. They plan to leave the children behind in the care of the elderly to make sure a school year is not lost. Some younger women will stay back too. The men will look to quickly establish the market linkages crucial to their business.

"Families will be split, all manner of other problems will arise, not to mention that it will be a year of deep losses," says Namde, a sunburnt man who greets visitors to his home with piping hot cups of fresh, creamy

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# Agrarian distress: Parched villages empty out, drought grips Maharashtra

milk. "But there's already no water, how will we manage when March-April comes around?"

For now, the Naydongri sarpanch and gram panchayat have asked them to stay back, but arranging the 50,000 litres of water that the animals need every day seems implausible.

Overall this year rainfall in Maharashtra is about 30 per cent lower than the 1210.8 mm average annual precipitation. On October 24, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis admitted that nearly half of the state (180 of 350 talukas) was drought-hit. Districts in Marathwada (deficit of 36.6 per cent) and Nashik district (deficit of 39.4 per cent) are the worst affected. Along with water scarcity as early as November has come the foreboding of a scorching summer ahead. And with rabi crop (sown in October-December) set to hit all-time low in the drought-hit districts, communities that do not traditionally migrate for work have begun to do so.

For many of these 180 talukas, cyclical drought is a complex reality. While 2017 saw above average rains almost across the state, many talukas are currently facing their third drought in the last six years.

Samba Aushikar and his father Sathva are wary of the cost of transportation — a truck for

their 30 water buffaloes will cost Rs 50,000 for the one-way trip. Additionally, there's no clarity if their average daily sale of 200 litres of milk will fetch decent prices in the new location. "We'll have to sell at whatever rate offered. It's not like we can store our produce," says Samba, who will leave his children behind with mother Avadabai. The 65-year-old Avadabai, who has never lived alone, adds, "It's going to be a terrible summer, and we'll have to manage without our animals or our sons around."

Next door, the three sons of Devkibai Nistani, 66, are planning to make the shift. Like most others in the Gawliwada community, they have been spending Rs 600 a day for a 3,000-litre water tanker, much lesser than the 5,000 litres their 35 buffaloes need. By January the tankers will

be tougher to get, and more expensive. "We are left with no choice but to move, we just need to keep the animals alive, get by somehow in the hope of a better year later," Nistani says, adding that she will stay back to look after the children.

"Our animals' dung will have to be given for free to the landowner as fertiliser, and I expect I'll have to work on somebody's farm to earn fodder. But what option do we have?" asks Shidu Nistani, 30, her son.

Over 300 km away in the heart of Marathwada, after the failure of his 2.5 acres of cotton crop, Balasaheb Anuse, 58, has taken up work as a sugarcane harvester. The villager from Rewali in Parli taluka of Beed district made the journey to Latur's Natural Sugar and Allied Industries in Kalamb taluka,

Osmanabad. "The severe water scarcity in Beed ruled out a rabi crop. This was the only way to earn a living," says the farmer whose wife, son and daughter-in-law have also travelled with him. Anuse has joined the band of cane harvesters after almost 20 years.

Across Marathwada, many small land holders like Anuse have swelled the ranks of migratory cane harvesters. Usually, around seven-eight lakh migrant workers, mainly from Beed, Ahmednagar and parts of Nashik, go to mills in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Pre-booked by mills, they are paid through labour contractors on a fixed rate per tonne of cane harvested.

FULL REPORT ON  
[www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## THE RAIN DEFICIT

Division	Normal Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall in 2018 (mm) June onwards	Rainfall in 2017 (mm)	Rainfall in 2016 (mm)
KONKAN	3140.9	2914.7	3405.5	3562.1
NASHIK	819.2	472.1	739.8	766.8
PUNE	1071.7	744.3	916.8	896.0
AURANGABAD	847.6	507.1	677.2	903.5
AMRAVATI	918.5	635.9	564.1	833.7
NAGPUR	1309.5	948.1	806	1118.5



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# Climate change poses bigger threat than thought: Study 81-21

PTI

WASHINGTON, 20 NOVEMBER

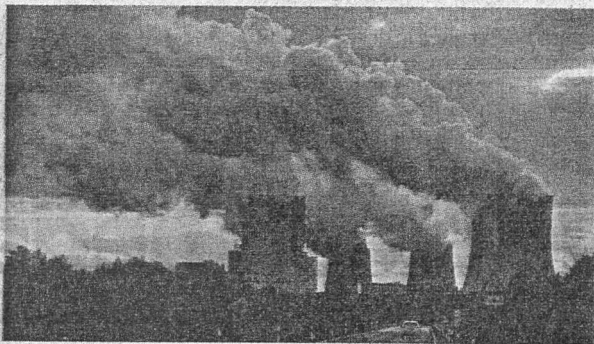
Humanity faces a much larger threat from climate change than previously thought, according to a study unveiled Monday.

The study, published in the journal Nature Climate Change, provides one of the most comprehensive assessments yet of how humanity is being impacted by the simultaneous occurrence of multiple climate hazards strengthened by increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

An analysis of thousands of peer-reviewed scientific papers reveals 467 ways in which human health, food, water, economy, infrastructure, and security have been impacted by multiple climatic changes.

These changes include warming, drought, heatwaves, wildfires, precipitation, floods, storms, sea level rise and changes in land cover and ocean chemistry, said researchers from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in the US.

Until now, with few exceptions, climate hazards due to



greenhouse gas emissions have been studied individually.

However, focusing on one or few hazards may mask the impacts of other hazards resulting in incomplete assessments of the consequences of climate change on humanity.

"Greenhouse gas emissions pose a broad threat to humanity by simultaneously intensifying many hazards that have proven harmful in the past," said Camilo Mora, an associate professor at the University of Hawaii.

"Further, we predict that by 2100 the number of hazards occurring concurrently will increase, making it even more difficult for people to cope,"

Mora said.

The study, co-authored by 23 scientists, analysed vast amounts of big data, with the longtime expertise of veteran climate scientists, including several lead authors on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports.

In the year 2100, for instance, New York is projected to face up to four climate hazards, if greenhouse gas emissions are not mitigated, including sea-level rise and extreme precipitation, researchers said.

That same year, Sydney and Los Angeles will face three concurrent climate hazards, Mexico City will face four, and the Atlantic coast of Brazil will face five, they said.

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

## J&K exchequer owes Dal Lake expert committee Rs 35 lakh

NAVEEDIQBAL

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WITH SRINAGAR'S Dal Lake struggling for survival due to its biological load from within threatening its longevity, the J&K High Court has constituted a "committee of experts" to ascertain the status of the iconic water body and to provide solutions necessary for its restoration, maintenance and preservation.

However, the committee has held four meetings since October 16 — all in the national capital — and the state exchequer, as per sources, owes the experts Rs 35 lakh so far.

The Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, the overseeing body concerning the lake, has no budgetary allocations for third party evaluations or external committees.

The High Court order, which was passed on September 18, noted that the Central government had spent close to Rs 400 crore on the lake over the past 15 years without any tangible results.

Former Delhi Metro Rail Corporation chairperson E Sreedharan, former Kerala additional chief secretary Nivedita Haran, and environmentalist M C Mehta were appointed as members to this committee. However, in October, Sreedharan recused himself from the committee, citing health reasons. In his place, DMRC managing di-



"The lake has about 30 to 50 years to survive." Express file

rector Mangu Singh was appointed.

The members of the committee, as per the court order, "shall be paid an initial amount of Rs 5 lakh each towards reading and preparation charges". Additionally, for each "physical" meeting conducted by them, members of the committee will be paid Rs 1 lakh, and for "deliberations conducted using electronic mode", the committee members will receive Rs 50,000.

The members of the committee are also entitled to airfare and conveyance charges equivalent to the amount which is accorded to a secretary, of the Government of India.

"The Chief Secretary shall direct availability of proper meeting place for the members of the committee in Srinagar, Delhi, Kerala, or any other place desired by the committee," the order di-

rects.

Nivedita Haran said, "We tried visiting the lake (on two occasions) but on both days, there was a strike and thus movement in Srinagar was restricted." Quoting reports, she added that the lake has "about 30 to 50 years to survive" and the committee "will study gamut of issues relating to pollution, waste management, cleanliness and conservation of the lake, along with the rehabilitation of relocated families".

While ordering the constitution of the committee, J&K High Court Chief Justice Geeta Mittal had stated that immediate measures are necessary before the critical condition of the lake is "rendered hopeless". She said the record of the case suggests that local experts "are unable to contain the malaise that besets the lake. It is therefore, necessary to have an expert committee."