



WATER IN NEWS

A daily compilation of media coverage of water issues

Date: 07.05.2014, Wednesday

Dear readers,

Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) is extremely happy to present you 'Water in News' bulletin for May 7, 2014. Today's media coverage of water issues have been captured in the following heads: (a) Policy/Programme Watch, (b) Industrial Use, (c) Dispute, (d) Rural Drinking Water, (e) Urban Drinking Water, (f) Irrigation, (g) Water Management, (h) Water Pollution, (i) Water Disaster, (j) Sanitation, and (k) Dam/River/ Reservoir infrastructures.

RCDC hopes that the bulletin will be found useful. Your inputs, comments, feedbacks and critics will help us improve the bulletin. Kindly write to rcdcbbsr@gmail.com, bimal@rcdcindia.org.

Regional Centre for Development Cooperation

Today's bulletin covers water news and issues featured in newspapers and web portals published on 06.05.2014. We have covered print or e-paper editions of the following newspapers: (a) Sambad (all Samaj (Bhubaneswar), (f) Samay (Bhubaneswar), (g) Times of India (Bhubaneswar), (h) Pioneer (Bhubaneswar), (i) Indian Express (Bhubaneswar). Besides we have covered web portals of (a) The Hindu, (b) The Telegraph, (c) Orissadiary, and (d) Odisha Sun Times.

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Policy/Programme Watch

Ensure drinking water and toilet facilities in all schools and AWs, Secretary tells District Collectors:

Rural Development Secretary has advised District Collectors to ensure drinking water and toilet facilities in all school and Anwanwadis. While drinking water provisions will be made under NRDWP, toilets will be funded through *Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan*.

Industrial use

Posco to take water from Mahanadi: All news channels and newspapers have given widespread coverage to Odisha government's approval to Posco, on May 3, to draw water from both Mahanadi and Hansua river. The newspapers inform that Water Allocation Committee has put 33 conditions while giving the approval. As per the approval Posco will draw 125 Cusec water from Mahanadi.

Prameya covers Mahanadi Bancha Andolana and Water Initiative Odisha's objection to state's POSCO approval. Among others these organisations have raised issue of election code of conduct and question how the government can such a decision when the conduct is in force.

420 villages in Jajpur district face acute water scarcity as industries draw water with impunity:

A report in Samay quotes a survey which says that 420 villages of Jajpur district are facing acute water scarcity. The report primarily blames rampant withdrawal of water by industries. The report says that except Jindal no other industries have taken permission to draw water. But the administration is not taking any step against the industries. The report also gives statistics about water use by different industries and water tax pending over those industries.

Dispute

Pollavaram Tribunal issue continues to hog media:

All news papers of the state have covered Pollavaram. Opposition to the formation of tribunal and the project by different political parties and organisation have been covered.

Samaj carries an editorial page article under title '**Pollavaram – Odishara Bipatti**'. The article says that if the dam height is kept at 150 foot then 12 vilalge and 5000 hecrare land of Odisha in Motu Tahsil area will submerge. The article says that Odisha is likely to lose Mogi point the southernmost point of the state which borders both Andhra and Chattisgarh.

All newspapers carry CPI's demand to have all party meeting over Pollavaram. CPI has also demanded a 'white paper' on the subject.

Odisha mulling options to knock Supreme Court over Pollavaram:

Dharitri says that Odisha government is taking legal opinion on its plan to approach Supreme Court over central government's notification on Pollavaram.

Political slugfest over Pollavarm: The Pioneer has an elaborate report under title 'Political slugfest over Pollavaram'. The report says that as both major national parties have supported Pollavaram project BJD edges ahead again.

BJP asks Odisha government to use

Brahmaputra tributary water: The BJP has termed Odisha government's and BJD's opposition to opposition to Pollavaram as 'crocodile tear'. It said that Odisha has government has done nothing to use water of Godavari river distributaries in Odisha. The party has asked government to immediately take up projects to use water of South Odisha rivers for drinking water and irrigation.

Kolkata port trust issue to be mutually solved, case withdrawn from Supreme Court: All papers from Odisha have covered closure of Kolkata

Port Trust (KPT) jurisdiction case. KPT had proclaimed notification showing parts of sea in Odisha area as its jurisdiction. Odisha government had taken this to High Court. Odisha was alleging that Kolkata port trust's decision to expand its area would have badly affected operations of Dhamra as well as 7 proposed ports. High Court had quashed the said notification of Kolkata port trust. Aggrieved by decision of the High Court, both KPT and West Bengal government had approached the Supreme Court. Now West Bengal government and KPT have withdrawn the case from Supreme Court. Samaj reports that Odisha and West Bengal have decided to solve this issue with mutual understanding. Dharitri informs that Central government has agreed to withdraw notification on the port. Prameya says that an agreement has been reached. As per the agreement KPT will pay royalty to concerned ports in Odisha for transport in Odisha water.

Rural Drinking Water

15 PWS projects are lying defunct in Gopa block of Puri district: Samaj reports that PWS of Badatara, Birtung, Nagpur, Payara, Shorbha, bedapur, Bairipur, banakhandi, Achyutpur, Ganeshwarpur, Andra Icchapur are not working. Murkundi villagers of Banakhandi Panchayat are collecting water from a 'chua' one kilometre away from their village. It shows a photo of women collecting water from chua. The report also alleges large-scale corruption in the name of repair and maintenance.

Bhubaneswar outskirts stays out of water supply coverage as recently inaugurated infrastructures lie unutilised: Pragativadi reports that in spite of inauguration of a project by Chief Minister a project, residents of Kapilprasad, Sundarpada, Kapileswar and old town area continue to remain thirsty as supply of drinking from that project has not started. The report also complains that PHED

department is not accepting application for connection citing a requirement of minimum of 100 applications at a time. People of the region are bemused on why it was inaugurated in haste. The report says it was poll gimmick. This case was also reported in other papers on earlier edition covered by WIN.

Acute water scarcity: Samaj reports that Takara, Gopalpu and Rathipur villagers in Tumandi Panchayat area of Nayagarh district are facing acute water scarcity. The official of RWSS department had to face wrath of villagers. Department has assured solution.

Tubewells in Singhpur block discharging saline water, demand for new tubewells: Samaj reports that tubewells of 7,8, and 9 number ward are discharging saline water. People are in acute distress. Locals have demanded new tubewells.

Komna BDO embroiled in Rs 15 lakh scam allegation over tubewell spare purchase: A report in Pioneer says that Nuapada district administration has found serious irregularity in purchase of tubewell spares. A hardly worded letter from PD DRDA to Komna BDO says, "from your present official behaviour, the DRDA, Nuapada is now strongly apprehensive about possible financial misappropriation in the block".

No Jalachhatra in Nischintakoili block: Cuttack edition of Sambad reports that the administration has been very lax in opening opening *Jalachhatra* in public areas of Nischintakoili block.

15 PWS project lying defunct in Kanas block: Samaj reports that more than 15 pipe water supply projects are lying defunct in Kanas block of Puri district. The block, with 29 Panchayat, has a population of 2.50 lakh.

Jhili village in Kankadahada block facing acute water scarcity as PWS project is defunct: Angul edition of Sambad reports that more than 2000

inhabitants of Jhilli village of Kankadahad block are facing drinking water scarcity. After one month of supplying water, the newly built Water Supply Project under Swajaldhara, has become defunct because of the non-functioning of the electric transformer. Nine out of 14 hand pumps are defunct.

Tanker water not reaching mining hit water scarce area: Angul edition of Sambad informs that mining affected people are not getting drinking water as the contractor in charge of supplying them water through tanker is distributing the water in other villages on the way or not supplying at all. The reporter noticed one tanker draining out water on the way. When asked, the driver replied that there is no demand.

Paralysed pipe water supply projects in Agarpada, Banta block of Balasore: Balasore edition of Sambad reports that Pipe Water Supply Projects of Purushandha, Mohanty Pada and Bada Mahisigoth Panchayats are not working because of defunct standposts, damaged pipeline. Water woes have increased. People demand repair on a war footing.

PWS project in Bhutasarsing village of Purushottampur block defunct, irate villagers lay siege to the Panchayat office: Brahmapur edition of Prameya reports that the pipe water supply project of Bhutasarsing village is lying defunct due to lack of repair. Irate villagers demonstrated before the Panchayat office demanding repair within two days. Report alleges that RWSS department has shed its responsibility by citing that maintenance has been handed over to the Panchayat.

Urban Drinking Water

Cold water points in Cuttack medical college and hospital are defunct: A news in Pragativadi informs that out of 15 cold water points established in Cuttack medical college and

hospital with MP and MLA LAD funds are lying defunct due to neglect in repair and maintenance.

Cuttack creates water facilities for city's animals: Prameya carries a report about effort of District *Prani Sampada Bikas Samiti* to provide drinking water points for city's animals.

Tubewell at Khandagiri defunct, tourist and local shopkeepers facing hardship: Sambad informs that the two tubewells at Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar are not working.

Photo feature of defunct water points in Bhubaneswar: Sambad has carried a photo feature of various drinking water points in different parts of Bhubaneswar. The photos show dilapidated drinking water points and defunct tubewells.

Water stressed villagers in the outskirts of Brajanagar residents block main road for 9 hours demanding water: Sambalpur edition of Sambad reports that about five thousand people of Sanajob, Madhubannagar and Chuakani village in the coal mining area blocked main road for 9 long hours to demand water supply to their villages. Because of mining all ponds, wells and tubewells have gone dry in the villages. The Mahanadi Coalfields Limited was supplying water in previous years. But it had not started supplying water this year. The MCL has assured water supply through tankers from the next day.

Cuttack Nuabazaar division tops with Rs 90 Lakhs water tax collection: Prameya reports that Cuttack Nuabazaar division of PHED has collected highest water tax in year 2013-14. It has improved from last year's Rs 88 lakhs to 90 lakh this year. PHED officials say that there about 1000 illegal connection in the division area.

Irrigation

Rampant encroachment of Palasuni-Jatani

canal: A Pragatibadi news says that Palasuni-Jatani canal has become an encroacher's paradise. Water supply for irrigation had stopped since long. But the canal was being used for bathing and washing etc. Now the canal is full of polluted stinking water.

Sudden water release in canal cause damage to crops in Nischintakoili:

Indian Express has carried a report, with photo, that sudden release of water in canal from Kendrapada main canal in spite of an existing breach in canal embankment number 9(E) near Patasura, has damaged pulses crop in hundreds of acres. The concerned Assistant Engineer has admitted it as a mistake.

Water Management

Large buildings in Bhubaneswar illegally drawing groundwater, regulations are not being enforced, city's groundwater down by 2 meters in 10 years:

Prayema has an investigative report in its metro page. The report says that only 47 apartments and just one private hospital have taken approval from Central Ground Water Board (CGWB). The report quotes Groundwater Board official P K Mahapatra who says that getting approval from CGWB is mandatory. BDA officials have said that there is stringent in place for Bhubaneswar which include no objection for concerned departments and compulsory rainwater harvesting. But the official admitted that enforcing regulation has been a weak area. CREDAI, which a confederation of builders and developers, official say that a lot of permission and approval is required from a various departments like BDA, BMC, PHED, SESU, CGWB etc. That takes a lot of time and effort. He suggested a single window system. The report by concluding that if illegal use of groundwater by the apartments and large buildings are not

regulated that Bhubaneswar will be in the grip of acute water scarcity.

Water Pollution

Kantilo pond polluted: The Samaj reports that water of 'Nadia Pokhari' has become polluted as the pond has become full of garbage and weed. The pond was once popular for its sweet water. Even it was hosting Lord Nilamadhab's *chapa* festival. Locals allege that it was last renovated about 10-15 years back, but even that renovation was incomplete.

Water Disaster

Hailstorm damage in Mukhiguda-Jayapatna of

Kalahandi: Samaj says that paddy crop in about 2000 acre has been damaged due to hailstorm. The area had multiple hailstorms in the last one week. Revenue department is assessing damage. Farmers are depressed.

Confusion over Phailin damage as OUAT and Government differ over crop loss figures

Samabad has an interesting report on affect of Phailin on agriculture. OUAT says Phailin caused 25 percent reduction in crop output in 2013-14. Interestingly state government says that Phailin has not hampered crop output. Earlier the state government had estimated that Phailin and floods caused crop damage in 6.51 and 1.31 lakh hectares. The report quotes experts who say if crop in as large as 8 lakh hectares was damaged how can the state say that crop production was not affected. The experts say that it is absolutely unbelievable that the state produced 85 lakh tons of kharif paddy in 2012-13, when nearly one-fourth of agricultural land was affected by Phailin and flood.

Sanitation

Puri citizen group gets assurance of toll free number for sanitation services in 15 days: After satyagraha by activists of Puri Bikash Parishad, the Chairman of Puri Municipality has assured to introduce toll free number within 15 days.

Bhubaneswar natural drains will be cleared of encroachment: Indian Express reports about BMC's decision to undertake a survey to gauge the extent of encroachment of natural drainages in the city. The survey, expected to be completed by June first week, will be joint effort of BMC, BDA, Water Resource Department, and General Administration department. This decision has come after the High Court lifted status quo on eviction. The report says that this effort is expected to solve serious water logging problem in few areas, like Acharya Vihar, substantially.

m/Reservoirs/river infrastructure

Damaged river banks of Badanadi river bank not repaired yet, flood fear looms large: A report in Samaj informs that repair of river bank breaches of Badanadi river, which were damaged during Phailin and subsequent flood, have stopped as the Contractor is not able to get stone. The report blames the revenue department officials for causing blockades in collection of boulders.

9.37 Cr sanctioned for river embankments in Nayagarh district: Samaj informs that government has sanctioned 9.37 cr for strengthening of embankments of Padmabati and Mahanadi river. Department of Water Resources has requested funding support from NABARD.

Saline ingress to agriculture land increasing in Bhadrak district: Balasore edition of Sambad reports that due to saline ingress thousands of fertile agriculture land close to Baitarani river in Chandbali, Bhandaripokhari and Dhamnagar blocks have degraded. Locals demand construction and repair of saline wall.

(RCDC seeks your inputs and ideas to make it more comprehensive and user friendly. All inputs will be appropriately credited to the contributor/author.



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