

# WATER IN NEWS

(A compilation of news and issues covered in media)

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Dear readers,

Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) is extremely happy to present you 'Water in News' bulletin for May 6, 2014. Today's media coverage of water issues have been captured in the following heads: (a) Policy/Programme Watch, (b) River Dispute (mostly Pollavaram), (c) Drinking Water, (d) Irrigation, (e) Water-borne illness, (f) Water pollution, (g) Water Disaster, (h) Sanitation, (i) Dam/Reservoir, and (j) What to Say.

I hope the bulletin will of use to you. Your inputs, comments, feedbacks and critics will help us improve the bulletin. Kindly write to [rcdcbsr@gmail.com](mailto:rcdcbsr@gmail.com), [bimal@rcdcindia.org](mailto:bimal@rcdcindia.org).

Bimal Prasad Pandia

*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 editions), (b) Dharitri (Bhubaneswar), (c) Prameya (all editions), (d) Pragativadi (Bhubaneswar), (e) 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

**Centre tells State to speed up drinking water schemes:** The Central government has asked state government to speed up drinking water schemes. The Indian Express has quoted from minutes of a review meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March at Delhi where both the governments reviewed performance of National Rural Drinking Water Programme. The report mentions of Central government's concern about expenditure of only 39 percent fund under national calamity head of NRDWP. The Central government has questioned state government's proposal of 18,000 new hand pumps in the year. The Central government has asked the state to provide 55 liters per capita per day of water to 8,151 quality affected habitations, and habitations which are not fully covered yet.

### River Dispute

**People movement can stop Pollavaram:** Sambad, Samaj, Pragativadi and other newspapers have covered a press release of Samata Kranti Dal. The Dal says that as national political parties have given their support to Pollavaram, people's movement only can stop Pollavaram. Braja Kishore Tripathy said that Pollavaram would cause huge loss to Odisha and change geography of Odisha. It said that, Pollavaram will submerge 6950 hectare land of Odisha, 4826 Tribal people will be displaced. Tripathy further said that it will affect more than 50 lakh people and resources of about one lakh crore will be submerged.

**Odisha losing to Andhra:** Sambad carries additional news under title 'Kendra O Andhra rajid aagare bali paduchhi Odisha'. It says that Odisha and Andhra Pradesh governments had entered into an agreement in 1977 where it was agreed to keep the height at 150 ft or below.

But Andhra government is planning to keep the dam height at 180 ft.

**Samajvadi Party says Pollavaram decision is violation of election code:** Samajvadi party has knocked doors of the election commission regarding central government decision about Pollavaram. It says such a decision is violation of election code of conduct. State unit of Samajvadi party has declared its opposition to Pollavaram.

**Utkala Sammilani opposes Pollavaram:** Utkala Sammilani has opposed Pollavaram decision by Central government.

**Poll stunt:** Pollavaram is a poll stunt, Times of India quotes Biju Janata Dal sources. It also informs about Biju Janata Dal's decision to oppose Pollavaram move by centre. Indian Express has a news under title 'Political blame game ensues'.

**State likely to file writ in the Supreme Court:** News portal Orissadiary.com reports that Odisha government is mulling to file a writ petition in the Supreme Court against Centre's Pollavaram decision. The report says that a draft cabinet note in this regards has already got nod from various ministries in the state. (<http://orissadiary.com/CurrentNews.asp?id=49708>)

**Test of Will:** Editorial in says that Pollavaram is a test of will power.

### Drinking Water

**Only one well at Bhushandapur Kantalabai colony:** Pragativadi, with photograph, says that about 100 families of Bhusandapur Kantalabai colony have only one well, which was dug 60 years ago, to meet all their drinking and domestic requirements. The habitation has no other source. The two tubewells are lying

defunct since long. The report says that neighboring villages like Sundarpur colony, Jatilagoth colony, Jhatinuagaon colony, Gobardhanpur colony and Balipatpur colony residents are facing similar hardship.

**Rural Water Supply in Gajam district in**

**disarray:** Sambad carries a report 'Gramya jalajogana batabana'. It features grim water situation of 12 villages in Badpalli Panchayat of Khalikote block. It says that most of 66 tubewells in the Panchayat are defunct. Many other tubewells are discharging contaminated water. Residents of the Panchayat are depending upon the forest streams. It also carries a photo of women carrying water from long distances. It says that women start as early as 3 AM in the morning to fetch water. A pipe water supply project at Badpalli is lying defunct.

**Women in Sambalpur threat bangle agitation if water and sanitation problem not solved by**

**May 16:** Sambalpur edition of Sambad and Prameya have covered bangle agitation of women from Sambalpur town. They have alleged that vast areas of town are not getting drinking water supply. Sanitation status is pathetic. Women agitators have threatened that unless the problems are resolved by May 16, they will force the District Collector to wear bangle.

**Water surplus Raygada turns arid:** Indian Express has reported that Raygada, which had abundant water sources with many perennial streams and rivers is facing water shortages these days. Spring water have dried or become polluted. Many tubewells are defunct due to receding groundwater level. The report alleges that RWSS department could spend only 13 Crore out of 22.22 Crore it had for rural water supply in the district. Gunupur urban area is facing serious water scarcity due to 'snags' in pipe water supply infrastructure.

**33 lakh rupees pipe water supply project lying defunct at Dhubalpada of Patnagarh in Balangir district:**

The 33 lakh rupees pipe water supply project of Dhubalpada village in Patnagarh block of Balangir district is lying incomplete since long. The village having more than 3,500 population is collecting drinking water from Suktel river, two kilometres away. Village has four tubewells. But two are defunct. The news in Pragativadi reports that, only a pump house has been built. Pipelines have not been laid. Concerned Executive Engineer says that his department has made three tender calls, but nobody is interested.

**Caste conflict during tanker water supply:**

Dharitri and Pragativadi have published an unfortunate report about conflict between upper and lower caste people on who to collect water first from tanker. This incidence happened at Kota village of Chhuriana Panchayat in Astaranga block of Puri district.

**Talcher mining affected people not getting**

**drinking water: This report in** Angul edition of Sambad says that the contractor who has been employed by Mahanadi Coal Fields Limited to supply drinking water to mining affected areas through tanker is not supplying adequate water. People of Brajanathpur Panchayat have submitted a memorandum to Angul District Collector in this regard.

**Brahmapur Municipal Corporation to increase**

**tanker supply:** The BMC has decided to increase number of tankers, to supply water, from the present 39 tankers. Times of India reports about serious challenge to supply water in Brahmapur city as water sources are depleting. Officials from PHED say that while the demand is 54 MLD, currently the department is supplying 46 MLD. Drying up of Rushikulya and Madhapur source is causing worry to the department.

**Drinking water scarcity in villages in the outskirts of Sambalpur:** Sambalpur edition of

Sambad has a report under title 'Paani pain ha ha kaara'. It says that areas in the outskirts of Sambalpur like Mathapali and Kudpali of Maneswar block are facing acute water scarcity. They have pleaded District Collector to provide them drinking water.

**Pipe water supply defunct in Jaraet village in Kishorenagar block of Angul, Villagers threat agitation:** Angul edition of Sambad reports that Jaraet villagers has threatened to launch agitation if drinking water problem in their village not solved within 7 days. The pipe water supply project which was completed in 2011 but is yet to operationalised.

**Tubewells in villages of Kaniha block defunct, villagers collecting water from stream:** Angul edition of Sambad has reported that the only tubewell of Laxmipur habitation of Nilapasi village is defunct. Similarly, the only tubewell of Gadanayak habitation of Suleipal village in Gandamala Panchayat is not working. People are collecting water from far off places. Villagers have threatened to go on agitation if the problem is not solved quickly.

**Highway blocked, people demand water:** Water scarcity has become acute in Tangisahi village of Bolagarh block. Hundreds of people of the village blocked NH 57. Villagers lifted blockade after Junior Engineer of RWSS and other government officials promised them to solve water problem soon. This incidences has been reported by Prameya and other newspapers.

**Pipe Water Supply project of Nalagohira Panchayat in Chandbali block defunct:** Balasore edition of Sambad reports that pipe water supply project of Nalagohira Panchayat in Chandbali block of Bhadrak district is not functioning as power connection is yet to be given. Water stress of Nalagohira village has worsened as four tubewells are giving saline water. Villagers are forced to depend on only one tubewell inside the school compound. The

report features a photo having long queue near the tubewell.

**Swajaldhara project defunct in Santoshpur village of Basta block in Balasore: Balasore edition of Sambad** reports that the pipe water supply project of the village is lying defunct since its completion five years ago. It alleges that 8 lakh rupees have gone waste. Villagers face problem in getting drinking water.

**Water not coming in Redhakhol stand-posts:** Sambalpur edition of Sambad has reported that water is not coming in any standpost in Ganesh Nagar area since 9 months. Local people blame illegal connection for the problem. The Executive Engineer has assured strict action against illegal connections. He has assured water supply to the affected areas.

**Villagers near Balimela reservoir not getting drinking water, pipe water supply project defunct:** Ucharukonda villagers are facing acute drinking water scarcity. The village, in Kalimela block of Malkangiri district is very close to reservoir. Pragativadi reports that the pipe water supply project of the village is lying defunct since 2010-11.

**Jalachhatras not opening in Dhenkanal town:** Angul edition of Sambad reports that only about 10 Jalachhatras have been opened in Dhenkanal town against about 50 and more Jalachhatras in other years. The report complains that people are not getting drinking water.

**BDO has taken step to curb water theft:** Samaj reports from Tangi in Cuttack about BDO's initiative to curb drinking water theft.

**Serious water scarcity in Kantapada block:** Samaya reports that water scarcity in Kantapada block has become acute. Many tubewells are lying defunct. *Jalachhatras* have not been opened in many villages.

**100 tubewells defunct in Papadahandi block of Nabarangpur:** Prameya has quoted government rural water supply department officials who say that out of a total 1511 tubewells in 22 Panchayats of the block, 1411 are in working condition. Many pipe water supply are not functioning properly due to power supply problem. Villagers from 250 are dependent solely on tubewell. Officials report that they are facing hardship as adequate repair tools have not been provided.

**Sundarapada-Kapileswar water supply project not supplying water:** Sambad carries a report of the above project under a very interesting title, 'Udghatana kale Mukshamantri, Pani deu nahanati muksha jantri'. The report says that in a hurry Chief Minister inaugurated the project just before the election. The paper alleges that the Chief Engineer is deliberately delaying supply.

**Pigeons not getting water:** Samay reports acute water scarcity for pigeons in the famed pigeon sanctuary at Pakidi in Aska forest range in Ganjam district.

## Irrigation

**Defunct and delict Kantiachira and Khandia barrage of Balasore district:** Sambad has carried a feature about the two barrages, which are part of a mega project, in Balasore district. It says that 6 Crore rupees have gone waste as the project are lying defunct since 14 years. The report says that the project requires 'Cuffer dam' is required. In absence of this river course has changed and an alternative channel has opened near the mouth. The report apprehends that revival of the projects is under threat from fishing lobby. A fishing jetty has been planned near Kantiachira mouth, which is barely 15 meters from the current barrage. This jetty should have been at Jamuka mouth but is being

planned at Kantichira which shows that there is no coordination between water resources and marine fishery departments.

**Demand to restore lift irrigation points:** Samaya covers a demand by farmer leader Bhubaneswar Das to restore lift irrigation sources before monsoon as meteorology department have predicted a less than normal rainfall year.

**245 LI points defunct in Koraput:** Jeypur edition of Sambad reports that 245 lift irrigation points of Koraput district are lying defunct. The report alleges that state government has not provided even one rupee for repair and maintenance of the projects.

## Water-borne illness

**Diarrhoea spreading in Kanas block:** Sambad and Samaj have reported spread of diarrhoea in Nankera, Nuadokanda, Gadasahi, Tigiria, Jodapadar village of Kanas block in Puri district. The villages which lie close to Chilika lake face water problems throughout the year which gets aggravated in the summer. Block administration inform that water is being supplied through 20 tankers but disruptions in power supply is hampering work.

## Water Pollution

**Polluted water of Daya-West canal contaminating water sources in Bhubaneswar:** Pragativadi carries a report under title, 'Daya West canal- Rajadhanira Duhkha'. The report says that serious pollution of Daya West canal water is polluting ground water sources in old town areas of Bhubaneswar. Water of open wells is not usable anymore as canal water has polluted groundwater sources. It says that the stretch from NH5 to Palasuni is severely polluted. The report alleges that BMC and Prachi

Division of Department of Water Resources are paying no heed to complaints.

magistrates and supply department to keep essential items ready before monsoon.

## Water Disaster

### **Bhubaneswar must avoid 4<sup>0</sup> Celsius**

**temperature rise:** An opinion piece by noted urban expert Piyush Rout in The Pioneer says that Bhubaneswar is inviting catastrophe and it must try hard to avoid 4<sup>0</sup> Celsius temperature rise. Along with other interventions Mr Rout suggests to restore city's water bodies and improve water harvesting.

### **Hailstorm damages crop in Jaipatna area of**

**Kalahandi:** Samaya reports, with photo, about crop damage due to hailstorm and unseasonal rain in Jaipatna area of Kalahandi district. The region faced hailstorms on April 29<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May. The report alleges crop damage in more than 8000 acres. Farmers have demanded compensation and insurance.

### **Ganjam farmers yet to get Phailin**

**compensation:** The Hindu has covered Odisha Krushak Sabha's allegation that Ganjam farmers are yet to get Phailin compensation. The OKS is planning to launch agitation.

(<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-otherstates/ganjam-farmers-yet-to-get-phailin-compensation/article5980979.ece>)

**Drowning Death:** Pragativadi reports death of two young boys to drowning in Patali river in Koraput district.

Samaj reports another drowning death from Sorada in Nuagaon block of Sundargarh district where an engineering student got drowned in a stream.

**Flood preparation, government circular to keep stocks ready before monsoon:** Samaj carries a report a government circular to district

## Sanitation

### **Irregularity alleged in school toilet construction**

**in Mahanga block:** Samaya says that the quality of construction of school toilets in Mahanaga block under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan is very poor. Many toilets are locked and not used.

### **Grim sanitation in 34 and 35 number wards of**

**Cuttack city:** Samaj report grim sanitation status of 34 and 35 number wards in Cuttack city. The report also fears infection of drinking water supply due to leakages.

**Odagaon sulabh souchalaya shut:** Samaj reports that due to non payment of electricity dues power supply has been disconnected to Odagaon sulabh souchalaya. It is lying locked since two months. There is a dispute between Sulabh international and government authorities on who will pay the electricity dues.

## Dam/Reservoirs

**Water levels fall in Indian reservoirs:** Times of India refers to a Central Water Commission report which points to grim situation in India's reservoirs. It says that as on May 1, 2014 India's reservoirs had only 33 percent of their live storage capacity. The CWS had studied 85 reservoirs of the country. However, one promising thing is that the level this year is higher than the previous level and about 142 percent of last 10 years average. But when seen on region basis, South India is staring very difficult times as South Indian reservoirs currently contain only 16 percent of their capacity.

### Innovation

**Solar power to lift water from tubewell:**

Balasore edition of Sambad welcomes Mayurbhanj district administration's effort to use solar power to lift water from tubewell in three villages in Similipal forest region of Jashipur block. As per the design water thus lifted will be stored in two plastic tanks which is facilitate continuous water supply to the users. The report also features a photo of the project.

### What to Say?

**No toilet at home prompts women to seek**

**divorce:** Pragativadi has reported a very interesting case from Sadisopur village of Patna district Bihar where a woman has sought divorce from her husband as her demand, since their marriage in 2009, for a toilet at home was not heeded.

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(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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Plot No: HIG-26, K-6  
Housing Scheme, Phase-II,  
Kalinga Vihar, Bhubaneswar - 751 019  
Odisha, India.