Enviro Monitor
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Water stress

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- Bengaluru has lost 79% of its water bodies
- Maharashtra adds 11,962 villages to drought list in Vidarbha region
- Infosys Foundation pitches in to tackle water scarcity in Gadag/Dharwad

Water pollution

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- 35 of Bengaluru's lakes are highly polluted, finds KSPCB study
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CSR

- 30% of CSR spend to be made mandatory for Swachh Bharat.
- Most corporates see higher CSR spending next fiscal, says survey
- Almost 76% of CSR amount spent by corporates: Finance Minister

Water stress

Odisha lost 21% of live storage capacity of reservoirs in 10 years. Odisha's live storage capacity has dropped alarmingly by about 21 per cent during the past 10 years. The aggregate live storage capacity of seven major and 38 medium reservoirs has shrunk from 1.43 million hectare metre (m ha. m) in 2006 to 1.12 m ha.m in 2015. Seven major reservoirs — Hirakud, Rengali, Indravati, Upper Kolab, Balimela, Jalaput and Salandi — had suffered a loss of 19.69 per cent from 1.33 m. ha.m to 1.07 m ha.m between 2006 and 2015. The loss of live storage capacity of Rengali, Indravati and Salandi is real cause of concern. Rengali's live storage capacity has come down from 90.10 per cent to 59 per cent in 10 years. During the same time, Indravati's capacity shrank from 90.51 per cent to 51.86 per cent.

At a time when uncertain monsoonal rain is upsetting farmers' annual crop plan, significant drop in live storage capacity of Odisha's major and medium reservoirs seems to have made the matters worse.

Bengaluru has lost 79% of its water bodies. The lakes in Bengaluru have shrunk drastically. Over the years, the city has lost 79% of its water bodies. Chhattisgarh capital Raipur fares the worst in the country (80%) and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh occupies the third spot (75%), a study by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has revealed. Scientists blame rapid urbanization and lake encroachment for the loss. Researchers from CSE shared the findings at a two-day workshop for journalists on the state of lakes and water bodies of southern India. The rate of urbanization has increased from 2.1% between 1991 and 2001 to 3.3% between 2001 and 2011; it is expected to grow to 18% from 2011 to 2031. To prevent floods, cities need more water bodies, which act like sponges and absorb rain. If they are neglected, extreme rain can cause floods.

The worst performers				
Raipur	Bengaluru	Ghaziabad	Kolhapur	Guwahati
80%	79%	75%	75%	60%

The best performers				
Hyderabad	Mumbai	Bhopal	Kolkata	Ahmedabad
10%	25%	29%	45%	47%

Source. The Times of India, 3 March 2016

BBMP takes the first step to revive Bengaluru's dying lakes. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) plans to develop and restore more than 100 lakes it maintains in the City, by using the funds allocated for the purpose in the State budget for the financial year 2016-17. It has invited tenders for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for development of 10 lakes, including Panathur, Bhattarahalli, Garudacharpalya/Achchanakere, Siddapura, Horamavu Agara and Iblur lakes. The civic body maintains a total of 108 lakes, including 22 earlier managed by the Bangalore Development Authority.

Maharashtra adds 11,962 villages to drought list in Vidarbha region. The Maharashtra government has declared drought in 11,962 villages in Vidarbha region, taking the total number of villages to be declared drought-hit to 27,723, nearly half of the 43,000 villages in the state. Of the 11,962 villages, 5,810 are in the cotton-growing Amravati division, which has also reported the bulk of farm suicides in Vidarbha. The remaining 6052 villages are in Nagpur division where the major crops are cotton, soybean and paddy.

Infosys Foundation pitches in to tackle water scarcity in Gadag/Dharwad. Infosys Foundation has started distribution of water through tankers in Dharwad and Gadag districts under the name Jaladhare. Water will be supplied to these villages until the commencement of monsoon, which should be in June first week.

The Times of India, 3 March 2016 | The Hindu, 28 March 2016 | Deccan Herald, 28 March 2016 | Mint, 28 March 2016 | The Times of India, 30 March 2016

Water pollution

7.6 crore people in India have no access to safe water. India has the highest number of people—7.6 crore—in the world without access to safe water supply, followed by China and Nigeria. The people end up incurring high costs for access, which is primarily due to poor management of water resources, says the report Water: At what cost? The State of the World's Water—released by Water Aid to mark the World Water Day 2016.

35 of Bengaluru's lakes are highly polluted, finds KSPCB study. According to a report released by Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) of the 75 lakes, studied in Bengaluru, 35 fall under E-Category, which means, the water is not fit for consumption, bathing and for animals. The lakes are filled with sewage, industrial effluents and all types of pollutants. The stakeholders have been directed to take immediate measures since groundwater, especially in a one-kilometre radius of the lakes, is also highly polluted.

WORST PERFORMERS IN SAFE WATER ACCESS

WHERE THE MAXIMUM NO. OF PEOPLE LIVE WITHOUT SAFE WATER	MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE LIVING WITHOUT SAFE WATER	
75,777,997 India	Papua New Guinea	60
63,166,533 China	Equatorial Guinea	58
57,757,141 Nigeria	Angola	52
42,251,031 Ethiopia	Chad	49
33,906,771 Congo	Mozambique	4

SOURCE: WATERAID GLOBAL REPORT

Source The Times of India, 23 March

Plans afoot to monitor quality of drinking water in Delhi. The State Government is in the process of initiating a series of measures to monitor and improve the quality of drinking water supply in various parts of the national Capital. It is planning to open 14 more water testing facilities at its Sewage Treatment Plants

and induct GPS-enabled 13 mobile laboratories to carry out on-the-spot tests of drinking water in different areas.

Currently, there are water testing laboratories available at only seven STPs. The laboratories carry out water tests once or twice every week. Now the Government plans to equip its remaining 14 STPs with laboratories to examine water on an hourly basis. It plans to induct mobile labs which will carry out on-the-spot tests.

The Delhi Government intends to set up a 'Water Disaster Management Centre' to impart training and provide research facilities not only to its own employees but also to the ones from other States as well.

IIT-Kharagpur develops arsenic filter for the common people. The Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur has developed an ultra-low cost eco-friendly laterite based arsenic filter for providing safe drinking water. The innovation has won Sirshendu De, the head of chemical engineering department, the Innovation Award 2016 from the Indian Desalination Association (South Zone). The indigenous material is capable of adsorbing arsenic to the extent of 32mg per gram. "It is made from naturally occurring red laterite soil. This material has undergone chemical treatment to enhance its capabilities to adsorb arsenic.

Salient features

- Capacity of the filter is 80-100 litres per day
- No maintenance cost of the filter
- No requirement of regeneration or backwashing
- Life of around 5 years
- Apart from arsenic, the filter will also remove iron and other impurities
- After use, the filter can be safely dumped without the risk of further contamination
- Cost of treated eater in less than 3 paise/litre

The Times of India, 4 March 2016 | The Times of India, 23 March 2016 | Deccan Herald, 23 March 2016 | The Pioneer, 28 March 2016 | Deccan Herald, 28 March 2016

Waste management

Centre notifies stringent rules to manage e-waste. Considering the explosive growth of e-waste in the country, the Centre has notified the revised E-waste Management Rules 2016 under which improper management of such refuse leading to environment damage will invite financial penalty. While CFL and other mercury lamps have been brought within the ambit of the e-waste management rules 2016, a "Deposit Refund Scheme" has been introduced under which the producer of any computer, mobile phone or other electronic product will have to persuade consumers to return the products after usage for a small sum.

The 2016 rules are in supersession of the E-waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011. As per the rules, manufacturers of electrical and electronic items will have to set up "collection centres" to take back

the e-waste generated through their products. Manufacturers will also have to ensure that the e-waste, including hazardous electronic parts, thus collected is properly recycled.

Government notifies new rules to manage biomedical waste. The Union government has notified new rules for the management of bio-medical wastes in the country that prescribe more stringent standards for incinerators to reduce emissions and envisage the creation of a bar code system for bags containing such refuse.

The Bio-medical Waste Management Rules, 2016 also brings vaccination, blood donation and surgical camps under its ambit while providing for pre-treatment of laboratory and microbiological waste, and blood samples and bags on-site as prescribed by the World Health Organization and the National Aids Control Organization.

Under the new rules, biomedical waste has been classified into four categories instead of the earlier 10 to improve the segregation of waste at source

E-waste management spreads across Maharashtra. After successful implementation in Mumbai and enthused with the response from the public to the e-waste collection drive, 'Ecoreco', India's first professional E-waste Management Company, is now geared to take this movement across Maharashtra besides the other major cities of the country. The company has recently opened dedicated e-waste collection centres in the cities of Pune, Aurangabad, Bhiwandi, Ahmednagar, Sangli besides various major cities of the country.

Government frames rules to manage construction, demolition waste. The Government has today notified Construction & Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2016 mandating that all those who generate any kind of construction waste will have to actively manage and contribute to its management and disposal in an environmentally sustainable manner. Construction waste and dust has been identified as a key factor in rising air pollution levels- specifically teh hazardous PM 10 and 2.5 levels- in the country.

The Tribune, 23 March 2016 | Business Standard, 24 March 2016 | Mint, 27 March 2016 | The Times of India, 28 March 2016 | The Economic Times, 29 March 2016

Forestry

Maharashtra government takes back control of forest trade. The Maharashtra government has finalized regulations to allow it to wrest from tribals the control of the forest trade in goods such as bamboo and tendu leaves, worth thousands of crore annually. This means the government will also manage potentially 80 per cent of community forestlands in the state. The regulations came after the Union tribal affairs ministry's volte-face on interpreting the Forest Rights Act. The rules, Indian Forests (Maharashtra) (Regulation of assignment, management, and cancellation of village forests) Rules 2014, will not be applicable in Schedule V areas, where rights of tribals have already been settled under the Act and in places where claims of tribals are pending.

Under the rules, Maharashtra state forest department would have the powers to decide if and how tribals get access to their community forests by defining them as 'village forests'. It would get to decide how the

tribals sell forest produce and what revenues they can get from it. The forest department would also have the powers to withdraw these rights of tribals if it believes that the tribals and other forest-dwellers are not meeting the standards state government has set. This puts in place a route that other states also could follow to bypass handing over rights to tribals over their community forests.

Tamil Nadu registers highest increase in forest cover in country. The forest cover in Tamil Nadu has increased by 2501 sq km, the maximum for any state in the country. Out of a total geographical area of 1,30,058 sq km in Tamil Nadu, 26,345 sq km was the total forest cover in 2015, an increase from 23,844 sq km in 2013, which represents a 9.49 per cent increase. Tamil Nadu has been allocated Rs 1.42 crore in 2015-16 under the National Afforestation Programme. In Kerala, the forest cover increased by 1317 sq km or 6.85 per cent and was allocated Rs 1.02 crore. Compared to this, the forest cover in certain states has actually decreased as in the case of Arunachal Pradesh (- 73 sq km) and Madhya Pradesh (- 60 sq km). This announcement was made in the Parliament based on the survey on forest cover was carried out by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, and the findings that have been published in the India State of Forest Report.

Odisha: Tribals present forest management plan. Forest dwellers inside Odisha's Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) have put forward their own Community Forest Resource Management and Conservation (CFRMC) plan for vast forest stretches. Campaigners advocating implementation of the Forest Rights Act say villagers' plan submitted to the Mayurbhanj district administration last week will now be the basis of any management and conservation plan for STR. The district administration has also come forward to support the same.

Plantation drive across 5 states to revive Ganga. Seeking to rejuvenate the Ganga through a massive plantation exercise in its riverscape, the Centre has released a detailed project report on the sort of intervention it plans for the river which will see five states plant trees on 83,946 sq km of identified diverse forest areas over the next five years. The project is to be implemented during 2016-21 in its first phase with an

The identified patches in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal had seen large scale deforestation in the past, leading to damage to the water retention capacity of the catchment area.

estimated cost of over Rs 2293 crore will be funded by the Centre under its 'Namami Gange' programme and will help in absorbing water and dealing with soil erosion. 40 types of plants with high water retention capacity, including several shrubs of medicinal value, have been identified for this purpose.

Business Standard, 12 March 2016 | The New Indian Express, 15 March 2016 | The Hindu, 22 March 2015 | The Times of India, 23 March 2016 |

CSR

30% of CSR spend to be made mandatory for Swachh Bharat. The government expects to garner close to Rs 2 lakh crore of funds over the next three years from India Inc by making 30 per cent of their spend on corporate social responsibility (CSR) mandatory in projects such as 'Swachh Bharat'.

Most corporates see higher CSR spending next fiscal, says survey. Majority of corporates expect to spend more on social welfare activities in the next financial year as CSR increasingly becomes part of strategic decision making process, says a survey. However, the survey by industry body FICCI also revealed that companies find lack of clarity on laws and tax related regulations along with some other factors as obstacles in implementing CSR projects.

Almost 76% of CSR amount spent by corporates: Finance Minister. CSR activities have turned out to be a successful experiment as over 75 per cent amount has been spent in 2014-15, Finance Minister Mr Arun Jaitley said, telling corporates that they could also contribute to Prime Minister's Relief Fund for use during natural calamities.

The Economic Times, 15 March 2016 | The Hindu Business Line, 27 March 2016 | The Economic Times, 27 March 2016