

A step towards sustainable water management

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IN MADHYA Pradesh's Tikamgarh, a city in the parched Bundelkhand region, men with guns guard precious water of the Jamuniya river at the Bari Ghat Dam. The armed security guards have been hired by the city's municipal body to stop farmers from neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, from "stealing" the river's waters. In the deep drought that has hit the region, the Jamuniya is the only source of drinking water for the over one lakh people of Tikamgarh. "Farmers from Uttar Pradesh come in the night and try to open the gates of the dam to get water. We stop them. They have tried attacking us but have not been successful. They are scared of guns," says Bahadur Singh Yadav, who guards the dam armed with a 12 bore rifle. 13 districts — seven in UP and six in Madhya Pradesh — make up the Bundelkhand region. The Jamuniya River which flows from Uttar Pradesh and merges in the Kain River in Madhya Pradesh separates the two states. The drought has turned the tussle over water into a battle of sorts.

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Let us have look at a few incidents from the past few days.

CASE 1 - Few days back water was transported to Latur and distributed. The state government is taking measures to mitigate drought. A short term solution to current water crisis by state government.

CASE 2 - An old woman was severely beaten up in Nasik because of fight which happened at public water collection point. She succumbed to injuries.

CASE 3 - Cities, states and even countries are fighting for equal water distribution for years on years.

This depicts water as one of the most

Soil Conservation -

1. Crop management
2. Rotation of crops
3. Selection of right variety of crops
4. Providing right quantity and quality of fertilizers
5. Avoiding chemical fertilizers
6. Using organic fertilizers

Water Conservation

1. Continuous contour trenching
2. Gully Plugging
3. Nalla Bunding
4. Cement Nalla Bunds
5. Recharging of shallow wells
6. Recharging of bore wells
7. De-silting and maintenance of existing old water storage structures, minor and irrigation tank
8. Deepening and widening of existing rivers and streams

complex subjects on ecological, engineering, cultural, agricultural and ultimately on economic front. As an active and responsible citizen, it is high time to understand this complex chemical: H₂O.

WATER AUDIT AT MICRO & MACRO LEVEL

In simple language, audit is balancing of inputs and outputs. In water auditing; the sources of water, the quantity and quality, various uses of water, distribution of water for various applications and the leakages in the system are mapped. This can be implemented at individual house level, society,

complex, industries, schools, recreational spaces, institutions etc. The water auditing can definitely benefit individuals and minimise the water losses by 15%-20%.

RAINWATER HARVESTING

Collection, transportation, and implementation of various harvesting techniques which includes storage and recharging and optimum combination of both techniques for maximum results as per various local and geological conditions can be defined as Rainwater harvesting.

India receives more than average rainfall every year. But, this water is not conserved and runs down the drain as early as possible. In order to help institutions self sustainable; rainwater harvesting can play an important role. Rainwater harvesting can be achieved through

- Ground Water recharging through bore wells and dug wells
- Water storage
- Combination of recharging and storage

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The soil and water conservation are inseparable aspects. Hence, the soil and water conservation solution should go hand in hand. With current drought background and many farmers suicide cases followed; it is necessary to re-think of our current farming with onset of current global warming impacts in rainfall pattern, changes in weather, humidity etc.

Let us try to simplify the thinking with following methods of soil and water conservation especially in rural areas.

—Chitralekha Vaidya

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