

4th INDIA WATER WEEK 2016

WATER FOR ALL : STRIVING TOGETHER

APRIL 4-8, 2016

PRIME MINISTER CALLS FOR COUNTRY-WIDE MOVEMENT TO CONSERVE WATER



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a clarion call for water conservation and rainwater harvesting even as a water crisis looms over several parts of the country just ahead of the summer months.

The Prime Minister called for wider participation from people, particularly the farming community, in reviving ponds

and lakes and said the Centre was committed to construct five lakh farming ponds to collect rain water.

In the 18th edition of his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' addressed to the country recently, the PM asked for water conservation to become a people's movement.

Noting that farmers in the country faced hardship when faced with drought like situation, the PM said the Government was launching several schemes for the benefit of the farming community and a 'Kisan Suvidha App' had also been launched.

"A farmer waits for the rains. Before that, he puts in his life and soul to get his field ready so that not even a single drop of rain water goes waste. For farmers, the season just before onset of farming is of utmost importance. We will have to give a thought to what will happen if there's no water. Can we utilise this time to visit ponds, check the routes through which water flows into these ponds and spot the places where garbage or something else blocks the water from flowing, because of which reservoirs get depleted", asked the PM.

"Can we not remove the blockage and clean the inlets so that more water gets collected? If we manage to save and collect more water during the first rainfall and fill up our ponds, rivers and streams, then even if the rains fail later, our losses will be reduced. But this can be possible only when we conserve each and every drop of water", he added.

The Prime Minister's comments come just a week before India holds its annual policy and technology showcase event - India Water Week 2016.

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INDIA WATER WEEK TO BE A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE: UMA BHARTI

The Centre's flagship programmes like Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY), Jal Kranti Abhiyan, More Crop Per Drop and the Rivers Interlinking Scheme will be taken up for a multi-disciplinary dialogue at the India Water Week-2016, said Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Uma Bharti.



The fourth edition of India Water Week, to be held in New Delhi from April 4 till April 8, will see several other important topics discussed through a participatory dialogue among the various stakeholders - policy makers, technologists, researchers, industry officials & entrepreneurs, water conservation and management experts, non-government organisations.

Particularly, current important topics like 'Water and Health - managing water quality'; Agriculture and Irrigation; Water and Power - hydro and thermal; Industrial water efficiency; Water supply and sanitation for rural and urban areas and Environment, climate change and water resources sector, would be taken up for deliberation through seminars, panel discussions and brain-storming sessions, said the Water Resources Minister while making the announcement of the event in New Delhi on April 2.

The theme for this year's India Water Week is "Water for all: Striving together".

The inaugural function of the event will be held at Vigyan Bhawan on April 4, 2016, with Union Minister for Finance, Information & Broadcasting and Corporate Affairs Arun Jaitley as the Chief Guest and the Union Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Professor Sanwar Lal Jat gracing the occasion. Uma Bharti will inaugurate the event.

The rest of the sessions will be held at Pragati Maidan.

About 1500 delegates from India and 20 other countries will be attending the conclave and Israel will be associated as

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“Under MNREGA also a stress has been given to create assets for water conservation. Every village should save water. How can we save every drop of water during the coming rains? How do we begin an exercise to ensure that every drop of water in the village stays within the village?” the Prime Minister said.

“You should devise a plan and get connected with Government schemes so

that we can start a people’s movement which will help us understand the importance of water. Then everyone can join in the campaign for water conservation. There must be many such villages in the country, many progressive farmers and many conscientious citizens who have already done this kind of work. But we still need to do much more in this direction”, the PM added.

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the partner country for this mega event, said the Water Resources Minister.

The Minister recalled that in Jal Manthan-2 programme held at New Delhi in February this year, important issues like bridging gap between irrigation potential created and irrigation potential utilised, fast-tracking of 89 Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) projects under PMKSY, groundwater protection and augmentation, National Hydrology Project, among others, were discussed in detail. Such issues are also proposed to be discussed further during the mega event.

The Water Resources Minister has decided to champion the cause of water conservation and pollution control in India’s rivers and has been urging for a wider participation from among all stakeholders to come up with action plans. The Minister has asked school children too to lead the cause and form habits of water conservation right from an early age.

The Minister is of the view that school students can play a major role in spreading the message of water conservation and pollution control of rivers.

“Conservation of water, which is important to all of us, needs to become a way of life for children so that they grow up as water literate and water conscious citizens”, Uma Bharti said at the sixth National Painting Competition on Water Conservation and Pollution held in New Delhi recently.

The Minister expressed hope the students taking part in the competition will be instrumental in spreading the message of conservation and judicious



Union Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti at a press conference on India Water Week 2016 in New Delhi on April 2, 2016. Also seen are Secretary Water Resources Shashi Shekhar (L), PIB Director General (M&C) AP Frank Noronha (2nd from R) and Israeli Ambassador to India David Carmon (R). (Image: PIB)

management of water in their schools, communities and society at large.

The Water Minister called upon students, their parents and teachers to join hands in creating public awareness on water conservation and protection of water resources.

At the same time, the Minister feels that the Central Government needs to play a much bigger role and assume greater responsibilities in the field of water resources in the wake of serious water scarcity situations in large parts of the country, a move she believes would be for the common good of all citizens. Both the Centre and the States should make joint efforts in this regard for the benefit of the nation as a whole.

Uma Bharti is of the view that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership, water should and is being formed as the backbone of development in the country, just like it did in the Gujarat model of development,

“Water was the basis of the much talked about development model of

Gujarat when Narendra Modi was the Chief Minister there and water is the basis of national development now that Modi has become India’s Prime Minister,” Uma Bharti said recently.

This year’s India Water Week, Uma Bharti said, will be a multi-disciplinary conference enriching the theme with dialogue by national and international community along with the exhibition.

She hailed Israel for its “pioneering work” in the field of water technology and effective management of the resources and underlined the need for India to adopt similar practices in its water conservation and management mission.

Partner country Israel will exclusively organise two sessions - (a) Role of micro-irrigation in existing command; and (b) Israel makes in India – COEs and commercial success stories, water management.

Most important stakeholders of water -- farmers -- will also participate as a part of INPIM Programme on Participatory Irrigation Management and share their experiences, the Minister informed.

INDIA-ISRAEL SET TO WIDEN COOPERATION IN WATER CONSERVATION, MANAGEMENT

India and Israel are set for wider cooperation in the areas of water conservation and management, with Israel's Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel leading a high-level delegation of experts and Government officials for the India Water Week.

Israel has offered its technical expertise and experience in managing water resources and is keen to expand bilateral relations with India beyond agriculture and defence.

Through a number of dedicated seminars, lectures by leading Israeli experts in the field of water and agriculture and close interaction with leading industrial names, Israel is looking to offer India assistance and guidance in the areas of water management, recycling & reuse, industrial water treatment & management and river rejuvenation.

Israeli companies are also looking to expand their presence in India in the areas of desalination and irrigation, two technologies in which the country has worldwide competence.

The Israeli Government is keen to expand on the scope of bilateral cooperation and is looking forward to having more Israeli companies offer solutions and products in India, said Israel's Ambassador to India David Carmon.

Israel is the partner country this year for the fourth edition of India Water Week. Israel's Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel will also inaugurate a 300 sq mt Israeli pavilion showcasing the most advanced water technologies.

The delegation, led by Uri Ariel, will look to collaborate with the Central and state Governments and provide an umbrella under which Israeli companies would look to forge alliances and offer their solutions to the private sector and Indian states, said Carmon.

Some of the Israeli experts that will visit India during the India Water Week 2016 are Ambassador Gil Haskel,

Head, MASHAV (Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation); Uri Schor, Spokesman of Israel Water Authority; Dr Hadas Mamane, Head of Environmental Studies at the Porter School of Environmental Studies and Dr Yafit Cohen from Volcani Center (Agriculture Research Organization).

During the event, Israeli Water Authority Spokesperson Uri Schor will present and share the Israeli experience, guidelines and concept of the public awareness and participation campaign. Israel had undertaken a country-wide campaign for creating awareness for water conservation in the younger generation.

A comprehensive public campaign to encourage water saving within the public, along with education in schools from early ages, helped to save about 18 per cent of Israel's water consumption during the hardest drought period it ever faced. Israel's Water Authority had acknowledged that information is the most significant element that is needed for achieving water saving. The Authority realized that in order to achieve a significant amount of saved water, they must explain, publish, convince and motivate to action.

"Israel is looking to offer its technologies in several other areas in water - management of urban infrastructure, recycling, desalination, agriculture & irrigation, metering, industrial and domestic wastewater and large scale water projects. We can be there through the Government umbrella that promotes industry participation", said Carmon.

The Israeli Ambassador recalled that Benjamin Netanyahu had suggested water conservation and management as possible areas of cooperation between the two countries during President Pranab Mukherjee's visit to the country late last year. The proposal was again floated during External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's visit earlier this year.



Israel's Ambassador to India David Carmon

Israel, which was chosen by India as a strategic partner in the field of agriculture, will also be looking to expand on this cooperation.

This partnership evolved into the Indo-Israel Agricultural Project (IIAP), aimed at benefiting the local farmer by increasing crop diversity, productivity & resources use efficiency.

IIAP is implemented via establishment of Centres of Excellence (CoE), in which Israeli technologies and know-how are disseminated. IIAP has been initiated in 2009 after signing a bilateral agreement between Indian and Israeli ministers of Agriculture (2006). Currently there are 26 CoEs across nine states, including Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Karnataka. An additional Dairy CoE has also been defined and is due to be established.

Israel is also willing to collaborate with India on several of its flagship schemes like the mega irrigation scheme, Swacch Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission, AMRUT programme and the Clean Ganga project, the Israeli Ambassador added.

Officials said there have been several water achievements for Israel, which had always faced an acute water

shortage. These challenges and many others forced Israel to develop relevant capabilities through technological breakthrough.

Israel has now become a research & development laboratory, said Carmon.

Israel has the most advanced

national water management system and with a 85 per cent water recycling rate, is the world's number one water recycler. The second largest water recycler is Spain, with a rate of 12 per cent. Also, Israeli-invented drip irrigation helps achieve 70-80 per

cent of water efficiency in agriculture - the highest rate in the world and the country achieved the highest ratio in the world of crop yield per water unit, an achievement that Indian officials feel would help in the country's 'More crop per drop' programme.

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