

4th INDIA WATER WEEK 2016

WATER FOR ALL : STRIVING TOGETHER

APRIL 4-8, 2016



Union Minister of State for Water Resources Sanwar Lal Jat cutting the ceremonial ribbon while inaugurating the exhibition at India Water Week 2016 along with visiting Israeli Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel in New Delhi on April 5, 2016.

'ISRAEL TO BE RELIABLE PARTNER TO INDIA IN WATER, AGRICULTURE SECTORS'

Israel is a world leader in water management and treatment technologies and is keen to offer assistance to Israeli and Indian companies to collaborate and work together across several areas in India, Israel's Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel has said.

Inaugurating the Israeli pavilion, the largest at over 300 meters at the exhibition area of the ongoing India Water Week 2016, Ariel said there were as many as 20 different water-related technologies

being showcased at the pavilion and indicated that Israeli companies were keen to expand their presence in India.

Ariel, who is leading a high-level delegation from Israel, said he was looking forward to extending the already excellent relations between the two countries. "The cooperation between India and Israel can set an example for the world", he added.

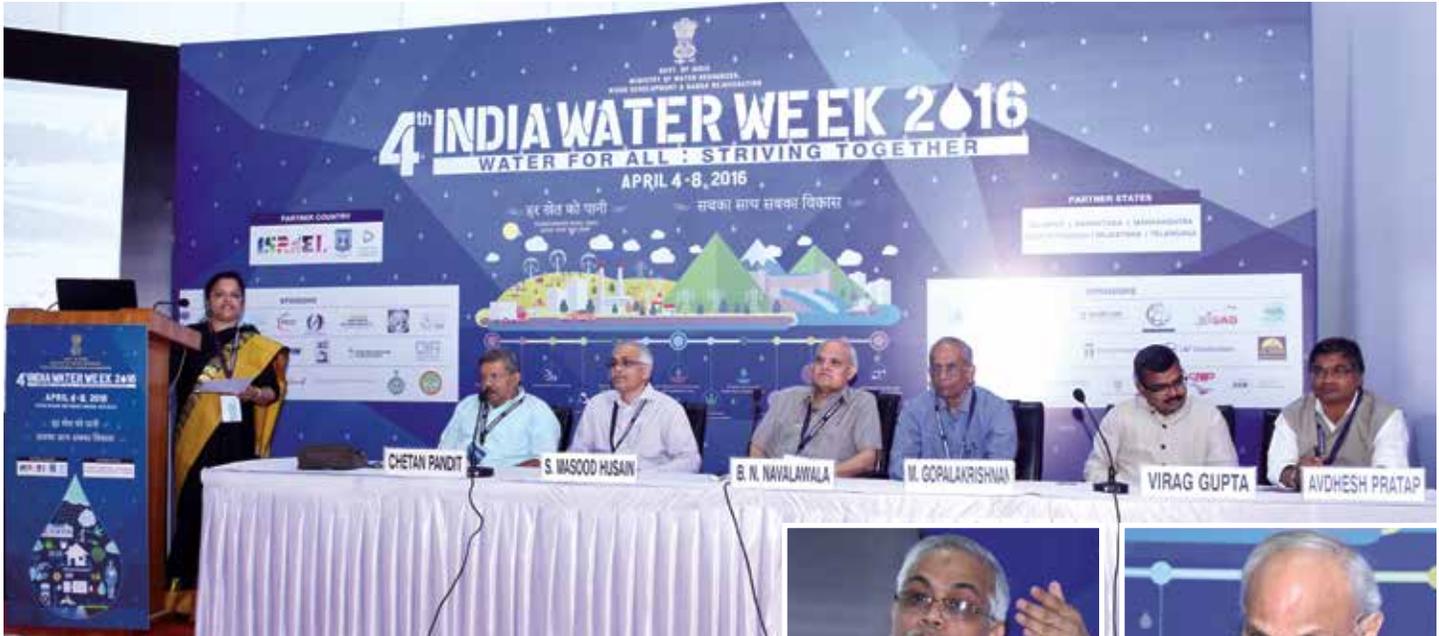
Israel is the partner country in the fourth edition of India Water Week this year. Union Minister of State for Water

Resources Sanwar Lal Jat inaugurated the exhibition and along with the visiting Israeli minister launched the exhibitors profile, after lighting the ceremonial lamp in the exhibition area.

Ariel said there had been discussions with Union Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti over expanding the existing collaboration between India and Israel on water management in several areas. He also indicated that Israel was waiting for the first ever visit by Prime Minister

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RIVER INTERLINKING PROGRAMME: LACK OF CONSENSUS AMONG STATES A CHALLENGE, FEEL EXPERTS



Against the backdrop of India's first inter-state river interlinking project, involving the Ken and the Betwa flowing through Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, getting delayed due to environmental concerns, experts at a panel discussion on 'Interlinking of Rivers Projects – Achievements and Way Forward' on April 5 asked for a relook at the existing environment laws that at times prohibit large infrastructure projects.

Some experts have also underlined the need for enabling legal provisions to allow the Centre to follow up with the states on the interlinking of rivers.

India is undertaking 16 peninsular water transfer links and 14 Himalayan inter-river basin transfer links, but vested interests have been taking up the issue of environment degradation and damage to forests & wildlife to stall these projects that are seen bringing in benefits to several states in terms of additional irrigation potential, hydro-power generation, domestic & industrial water supply, drought mitigation and flood management, said experts.

Official pointed out that inter-basin

water transfer (IBWT) or interlinking of rivers (ILR) projects are not something new being attempted in India, but have remained a prime tool in the hands of policy planners and developers for ensuring water scarcity of large geographical areas across the world.

It is reported that there are existing transfers of about 640 BCM of water annually realized from about 230 ILR schemes located in 35 countries of the world. It is also noticed that the roles played by the riparian states/countries of both the donor and recipient river basins/sub-basins in realizing the necessity of ILR Projects and their joint actions for planning, development and implementation followed by management and monitoring of the ILRs are well recognized worldwide.

In India too, there are several concerns among stakeholders, or states.

"There is a lack of consensus amongst concerned states in India regarding ILR", said National Water Development Agency



NWDA Director General S Masood Husain



Chief Adviser to Water Resources Ministry B N Navalawala

(NWDA) Director General, S Masood Husain.

Firstly, the States surplus in water resources do not agree that there exist such surpluses and it is equally difficult to have an agreement between donor and donee states as the latter, in general, demand more water. The States are also apprehensive about disturbing the existing allocation of water as per awards, said Masood.

"Some States have apprehension that link proposals may have an adverse effect on their existing irrigation and power requirements and some are even challenging the very definition of 'Surplus Basin' agreed earlier. Efforts are being made continuously for obtaining consensus amongst the concerned States", Masood added.

The NWDA Director General said

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'MORE STORAGE THROUGH GROUNDWATER, LARGE-SMALL SURFACE WATER COMBINATION NEEDED IN INDIA'

The storage of monsoon water has become an urgent necessity to meet the growing water demand in India, a developing economy that has highly skewed water resources both in time and space.

With occurrence of about 75 per cent rainfall in July-September period, the country has mainly monsoon-based water availability. But, it is widely felt that the storage capacity in the country is far inadequate. Even implementation strategies for storage creation have come under intense scrutiny and dialogue due to associated problems of land and population displacement and provisioning of environmental flows.

Experts at a brainstorming session - Role of Water Storage in River Rejuvenation and Sustaining E-Flows - on April 5 felt that storages were the best man-made rainwater harvesting structures, that which regulated water and discharge the same during the lean period, when there is almost no flow or minimal e-flows in the river.

The stress on lean season flows have crossed sustainability limit and transfer of monsoon surpluses to lean season usages by way of storages and e-flows is becoming more and more relevant. This rejuvenates the river and streams during all seasons and specially peak non-monsoon, felt experts.

Increasing storage through a combination of groundwater and large and small surface water facilities is critical to meeting the water requirements in the country, felt experts, who suggested a combination of small and large storage and surface water and groundwater recharge as the best systems.

According to MNRE Chair Professor at the Alternate Hydro Energy Centre of Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee Arun Kumar, with a very few or no storage dam(s) and diversion structures for different water use, together with the absence of regulations on minimum flows, the rivers are subject to high flow



variability and almost dry stretch during lean periods.

Steep slopes have high hydropower potential and at the same time unregulated flow in the diverted stretch combined with, poor governance and absence of monitoring of construction activities, often being considered are in conflict, said Kumar.

“Water use and environment appears to be in conflict even though both are made for each other”, said Kumar.

There were several issues influencing river rejuvenation plans including scientific and technological, human resources, economic and financial and management including regulatory, among others.

So, there were several measures required including availability of financial and physical resources coupled with a strict doable regulatory regime, awareness generation and regulatory framework. For instance, there needs to be strict enforcement of the regulatory provisions, particularly relating to industrial pollution and urban wastewater.

There is also a need for an integrated approach for conservation and watershed development in the basin that should be assigned high priority to reduce flow

of sediment and other nutrients, added Kumar.

NHPC Ltd General Manager (D&E) Keshav Deshmukh said because of the sporadic spatial and temporal distribution of precipitation, the only way water supply can be controlled to match demand is through storage. “Seasonal variations and climatic irregularities in flow impede the efficient use of river runoff, with flooding and drought causing problems of catastrophic proportions”.

“Dams clearly make a significant contribution to the efficient management of finite water resources that are unevenly distributed and subject to large seasonal fluctuations”, he added.

Deshmukh felt that creating water storage would go a long way in leading to river rejuvenation by augmentation of e-flows especially during lean season by considered dam operation strategies.

Giving an elaborate case study of the Dibang multipurpose project in Arunachal Pradesh, Deshmukh said it can be seen from the project that velocity/flow fluctuation in the downstream of dam is insignificant due to peaking operation. “This could be achieved by proper planning of dam operation strategies”.

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Narendra Modi, a step towards bringing the two countries even closer.

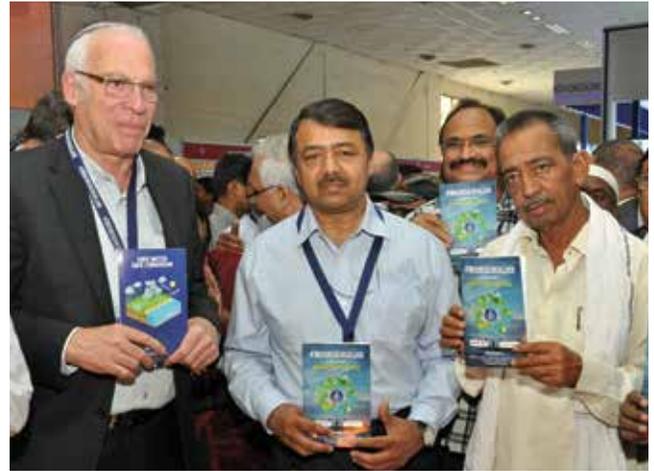
“We are expecting Prime Minister Modi to visit Israel. We are preparing for this visit”, he said, without giving any time frame on the proposed visit.

During the inauguration ceremony, Ariel said Israel attributed the utmost importance and consideration to the widening cooperation with India.

“I carry this message on behalf of Israel and its people to the Government and people of India, a message of friendship and partnership, a message of commitment to furthering our continued cooperation for the wellbeing of both nations. Be rest assured that Israeli Government and its business sector of water and agro-technologies alike will be reliable partners to India in its struggle for sufficient water supply and food security”, Ariel said.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Israeli pavilion, Ambassador of Israel to India Daniel Carmon said after defence and agriculture, water would be the next big collaboration between the two countries.

“Israel is a development laboratory and we’ll make every effort to justify the trust Indian Government and people have entrusted upon Israel, its capabilities and experience. We’re here to share our knowledge and experience with India. The four dominant elements of our water partnership: close friendship,



Union Minister of State for Water Resources Sanwar Lal Jat, Israel's Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel and Water Resources Secretary Shashi Shekhar releasing the exhibitors profile at the inauguration of the exhibition at India Water Week 2016 in New Delhi on April 5, 2016.

mutual challenges, common interests and shared values are fully represented here in India Water Week”, Carmon added.

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reaching consensus among states was only possible “through persuasions and mutual agreements”.

Presently, no legal provision is available through which Government of India can intervene in this regard. “Most of the river basins being interstate, an appropriate legislation under Entry 56 of the Constitution is an option”, he said, adding that there was an urgent need for detailed deliberation in the matter.

Massod felt that in view of the Supreme Court Judgment declaring ILR in national interest and directing its implementation, the Apex court could be approached for some legal intervention in achieving the desired consensus.

Water law and management expert Dr Avdhesh Pratap was of the opinion that the biggest challenge before governance in inter-basin water transfer was successful installation of inter-linking

of rivers projects in India, whereas many inter-state water disputes remained unresolved till date.

Regarding challenges and issues in water governance, Pratap said in spite of large number of laws enacted and policies enunciated by the central and state Governments, the gap between expectation and performance has widened in regulatory policy.

“The increasing demand for water due to urbanisation, population growth, industrialisation, food security challenges and modern life style, the Government of India has initiated number of steps and drafted legislations, but despite policy initiatives, Constitutional, legal and administrative enactments, the problem of implementation and enforcement persists”, said Pratap in his presentation.

The implementation of the law requires a totally different set of

policy contexts. Water law in India is an assemblage of various formal and informal components from the colonial to the present status, and it lacks uniformity and formal, integrated framework. Therefore, it represents a great challenge to implement policy for a vast country like India, Pratap added.

Former Member, Water Planning and Projects, Central Water Commission Chetan Pandit asked for a review of environmental legislation in the country. He was of the view that care should be taken not to rush into projects without having a detailed project and feasibility study conducted as there have been numerous instances when environmental concerns, which were already well recognised, had stalled projects at an advanced stage even as hefty amounts of money on DPRs and feasibility studies had been spent.