

In troubled waters



In Kurnool, the flood situation remains grim with the Krishna rising even more

By Mail Today Bureau
in Hyderabad

FLOOD fury continues unabated in Andhra Pradesh. On Saturday, the Krishna rose even more after water was released from Karnataka's Almatti and Narayanapur reservoirs.

Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yeddyurappa had earlier 'responded positively' to the request made by his Andhra Pradesh counterpart K. Rosaiah, not to release excess water from the Almatti dam. But the authorities later opened the floodgates to release nearly 3.5 lakh cusecs into the river.

As a result, water level in the Srisaillam reservoir in Andhra's Kurnool district crossed the

danger mark. By Saturday morning, the level had reached 896 feet. "The reservoir can hold water up to a maximum level of 903 feet," irrigation engineer-in-chief M.K. Rehman said.

Revenue minister Dharmana Prasada Rao said about 30 deaths had been confirmed so far. But the figure could rise as hundreds of people have been reported missing in several villages in the Kurnool and Mahabubnagar districts, he said. Unofficial estimates have put the death toll at 102.

About 105 relief camps have been set up in Kurnool, Mahabubnagar, Krishna, Guntur and Nalgonda districts.

In Karnataka, Yeddyurappa visited some of the state's worst-hit districts,

including Bijapur, Gulbarga, Raichur and Bellary, on Saturday as the toll here touched 150.

Officials at the chief minister's office said lakhs of hectares of cropland had been damaged and over 29,000 cattle had died. Sources said the CM would write to the Centre, urging it to declare the floods as a national calamity and release Rs 10,000 crore as relief.

Heavy rains have been wreaking havoc in Kerala as well. Landslips were reported from several places in Kozhikode and Malappuram districts. Though no one was injured, crops were destroyed. Several families in low-lying areas were shifted to safer places.

In Orissa, the state government on Saturday stepped up efforts to evacuate flood-affected people in Balasore, Mayurbhanj and Bhadrak districts.

Heavy rains also lashed several coastal and western parts of Maharashtra, bringing normal

**Kerala, Maharashtra
and Orissa also hit**

life to a grinding halt. The Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts are the worst affected. Kolhapur, Solapur and Sangli districts also witnessed severe waterlogging.

Ten villages in Sindhudurg, six villages in Sangli and one village in Kolhapur districts were cut off, officials said. The National Highway-17 to Goa was flooded and rail tracks along the coastal belt remained waterlogged.

The collapse of vehicular movement also affected election campaigning. Shiv Sena leader Uddhav Thackeray cancelled his Konkan tour while many others like NCP leader Sandesh Parkar were stranded all night.

(With inputs from Mail Today Bureaux in Bhubaneswar, Thiruvananthapuram, Mumbai and Bangalore)

Do Or Dry Situation

2009's drought should serve as a wake-up call

M S Swaminathan

The 2009 drought is a wake-up call about the uncertainty of monsoon behaviour in the emerging era of climate change. It brought home the point that weather prediction will be increasingly difficult. Our climate management strategy must be based on the premise that the frequency of drought, flood, unseasonal rains and high temperature will increase. This year, Assam, which normally only faces floods, was almost the first state to declare drought. Global warming will make the Indian monsoon more variable and less predictable. We must do everything possible to strengthen the Indian meteorological department and climate change research.

Another urgent need is a "weather information for all" programme that involves setting up mini agro-met stations in each block with basic instruments to measure temperature, rainfall, wind speed and relative humidity. We should train one woman and one male member of every panchayat as climate risk managers. Well versed in data collection and interpretation, they can assist farmers to take timely location-specific decisions. We should aim to train half a million climate risk managers over the next three years.

Proactive steps are needed to strengthen our coping capacity to meet the impact of drought, flood and sea level rise in coastal areas. We should prepare to deal with monsoon failure and acute water and energy shortage by building weather-resilient water, food and livelihood security systems. Drought, flood and good weather codes based on interdisciplinary analysis will be needed. The drought code can indicate how adverse impact can be minimised through crop life saving techniques, water conservation and efficient use. The flood code should indicate steps to revive farm and other livelihood activities when flood recedes. A good weather code would indicate methods of maximising the

benefits of a good monsoon, to build up substantial grain reserves.

We must meet the challenge of ensuring food and water security for not only 1.2 billion human beings, but also over 500 million cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, poultry etc. Usually, farmers sell their cattle at a low price during severe drought. During 1979's drought, I had proposed ground water sanctuaries, which can be opened up when essential to run cattle camps and raise fodder and food crops. All programmes should factor in that women suffer most because of their role in collecting water, fodder and fuel wood and in taking care of farm animals.

As essential is to promote community food



The weight of water

and water security systems involving establishment of local level gene, seed, grain and water banks by rural and tribal families. These can be operated by local self-help groups overseen by the gram sabha. This way, we can link conservation, cultivation, consumption and commerce as an integrated chain.

Whenever monsoon behaviour is likely to be irregular, it is essential to designate in every agro-climatic region areas that are 'most seriously affected' (MSA) and areas with adequate soil moisture to raise a crop, that is 'most favourable areas' (MFA) from the point of view of agriculture. In MSA areas, immediate relief will have to be provided and steps taken to revive agricultural operations as soon as there

is adequate rainfall. Contingency plans and alternative cropping supported by seed banks will be necessary. Like grain reserves for food security, seed reserves are essential for crop security. In MFA areas, steps should be taken to promote additional production through programmes like free supply of fertilisers.

We have been fortunate this year to have over 50 million tonnes of rice and wheat in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India and other government agencies. But we still do not have modern grain storage facilities to the necessary extent even in the Green Revolution heartland that feeds our public distribution system. This neglect of post-harvest technology

and safe grain storage is inexcusable. I have been pleading for at least 50 ultra-modern grain storage structures at 50 different locations, each capable of storing a million tonnes of foodgrain. A national grid of grain storage structures will help prevent both panic purchase and distress sales.

I hope 2009's wake-up call helps destroy complacency and indifference among policymakers. Our population is growing; per capita availability of arable land and irrigation water is shrinking. The frequent suggestion for food imports ignores the fact that agriculture is not just a food-producing machine but is the backbone of the livelihood security system for over 60 per cent of our population. Importing food under such circumstances will have the same effect as importing unemployment and misery for farm women and men.

Recall the Nobel committee's words while presenting the 1970 peace prize to Norman Borlaug: "He has helped provide bread for a hungry world. We have made this choice in the hope that providing bread will also give the world peace". The secret of Borlaug's success was reflected in his last words on the night of September 12, 2009. Earlier, a scientist had shown him a nitrogen tracer developed for measuring soil fertility. His last words were: "Take the tracer to the farmer". This lifelong dedication to taking scientific innovations to farmers set Borlaug apart from most farm scientists. Let us emulate his example.

The writer is chairman, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation.

Flood-hit villagers strive to stay afloat

Agencies

✉ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/ BANGALORE: Medical teams rushed to flood-devastated Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh where five days of torrential rain have left more than 205 people dead and 750,000 displaced, authorities said on Sunday.

The floods have submerged entire villages, snapped transport and communication links and raised fears of epidemic in relief camps crowded with people forced out of their homes.

Large parts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have been inundated. Air Force helicopters dropped food and drinking water packages to hundreds of villages that remained cut off after roads were submerged or washed away.

The central government on Sunday rushed more than 250 specially trained National Disaster Relief Force personnel with 80 inflatable boats to Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Home Minister P. Chidambaram will undertake an aerial survey of the two states on Monday to assess the damage. He is also expected to hold meetings with the chief ministers of both states — B.S. Yeddyurappa (Karnataka) and K. Rosaiah (Andhra Pradesh) — and top officials in Bangalore and Hyderabad.



of the two states, 168 people have died and more than 300,000 have been displaced, authorities said.

From the six districts affected till Friday, the floods spread to 12 of the state's 29 districts on Sunday.

Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa urged the Centre to declare the unprecedented rainfall and flood situation in Karnataka as a national disaster and sought Rs 10,000 crore (Rs 100 billion) for relief measures.

"There is death and destruction all around us," Basavaraj Bommai, a senior minister said in Bangalore.

Authorities said vast areas of agricultural land were under water in Karnataka.

Pradesh, 37 people have died and around 450,000 have been displaced and were being sheltered in 100 relief camps, said state chief minister K. Rosaiah.

"We are rushing medical teams and equipment to the camps to ward off outbreaks of disease in the camps," Rosaiah said.

Flooding worsened after authorities released water from rain-swollen reservoirs and dams in both states to prevent them from bursting their banks.

From the two districts affected till Friday, the floods spread to four on Sunday.

Army men used boats to ferry villagers stranded on rooftops to government schools or relief camps. Doctors were distributing water purifying tablets and medical services in the camps, but facilities were poor and crowded. (With inputs from HT, New Delhi)



■ (Top) People move belongings from their submerged houses at R Garlapadu village, about 180 km from Hyderabad, on Sunday. (above) A CISF official takes stock of Gujarat state Disaster Management Authority boats as they arrive for dispatch at Ahmedabad Airport. AP/ AFP PHOTOS

12 DISTRICTS HIT IN KARNATAKA

In Karnataka, the worse hit

450,000 PEOPLE DISPLACED IN ANDHRA

In neighbouring Andhra

दैनिक जागरण नई दिल्ली, 6 अक्टूबर, 2009

आंध्र प्रदेश में 50 गांव बाढ़ में डूबे



बाढ़ग्रस्त क्षेत्र आंध्र प्रदेश के मेहबूबनगर में सोमवार को नाव से जस्त लगाते राहत व बचाव कर्मी। प्रेट

विजयवाड़ा, एजेसियां : आंध्र प्रदेश और कर्नाटक में बारिश और बाढ़ से स्थिति अब भी गंभीर बनी हुई है। आंध्र प्रदेश में तो कृष्णा नदी के किनारों पर बसे 50 से अधिक गांवों में बाढ़ का पानी घुस गया है। कृष्णा नदी पर बने प्रकाशम बांध पर सोमवार को जलस्तर 11

लाख क्यूसेक पर पहुंच रहा था, जो अब तक का रिकार्ड है। गृह मंत्री पी. चिदंबरम और संग्राम अध्यक्ष सोनिया गांधी ने सोमवार को दोनों राज्यों के मुख्यमंत्रियों के साथ प्रभावित इलाकों का हवाई दौरा किया। आंध्र प्रदेश, कर्नाटक और महाराष्ट्र में बारिश और बाढ़ से अब तक 258 लोगों की मौत हो चुकी है। आंध्र प्रदेश के विजयवाड़ा शहर के कई मुहल्लों में चार फीट से ज्यादा पानी बह रहा है। रायचूर से 32 किलोमीटर दूर तुंगभद्रा नदी पर बना 500 मीटर लंबा पुल बाढ़ में बह गया। अकेले कर्नाटक में ही अब तक 194 लोग इस आपदा की भेंट चढ़ चुके हैं जबकि आंध्र प्रदेश में 39 लोगों की मौत हुई है। महाराष्ट्र में भी भारी बारिश से 25 लोगों की जान गई है। आंध्र प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री के. रेदेया के साथ कर्नूल और मेहबूबनगर जिलों का हवाई सर्वे करने के बाद चिदंबरम, सोनिया, और कानून मंत्री एम. वीरप्पा मोइली कर्नाटक पहुंचे। इसके बाद उन्होंने हेलीकाप्टर से बेल्लारी जिले में बारिश और बाढ़ द्वारा मचाई गई तबाही का जायजा लिया। इस दौर में केंद्रीय श्रम मंत्री मल्लिकार्जुन खर्गे और कर्नाटक के मुख्यमंत्री बी.एस. येहयुरप्पा भी उनके साथ थे। येहयुरप्पा ने इस दौरान केंद्र से इस तबाही को 'राष्ट्रीय आपदा' घोषित करने और राहत कार्यों के लिए 10 हजार करोड़ रुपये दिए जाने की मांग फिर दोहराई। आंध्र प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री ने भी केंद्र से राहत कार्यों के लिए तत्काल 6000 करोड़ रुपये जारी करने का आग्रह किया। आंध्र प्रदेश के प्रकाशम बांध के पानी को बंगाल की खाड़ी में छोड़ने के लिए सभी 72 फाटक खोल दिए गए हैं। कर्नाटक और आंध्र प्रदेश में दो लाख से ज्यादा मकान बाढ़ और बारिश में बह गए।

Flood kills 130 in Andhra, Karnataka

DELUGED
Karnataka govt releases Rs 100 cr for immediate relief

Indo-Asian News Service & Press Trust of India
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

BANGALORE/ HYDERABAD: At least 130 people have been killed in Karnataka and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh in heavy rains since Wednesday.

One hundred and four people have died in six North Karnataka districts and 26 in two districts of Andhra Pradesh in the torrential rain caused by a deep depression in the Bay of Bengal.

The floods that came as the monsoon season came to an end are a stark contrast to a worsening drought in many parts of northern and western India.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the two states were trapped by floodwaters and were on rooftops and safe places, waiting to be rescued.

Thousands have been rendered homeless.

Fifteen Army and Indian Air Force helicopters have been pressed into rescue and relief operations.

The districts affected in North Karnataka are Bijapur, Raichur, Gulbarga, Koppal, Bagalkote, Bellary, Belgaum and Gadag.

The districts flooded in Andhra Pradesh are Kurnool in the central part of the state and Mahabubnagar in the north.

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa met senior civil, military and police officials in Bangalore on Friday to plan the rescue and relief operations



■ (Above) People stand on a divider as roads get flooded in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh after heavy torrential rains. (Right) People look at an overflowing dam in Dindi the state. PTI PHOTOS

in the six affected districts.

The state government has released Rs 100 crore (Rs 1 billion) for immediate relief.

The services on Konkan railway route were severely affected by a landslide in the southern village of Canacona in Goa and water-logging on the tracks in North Karnataka.

In Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K. Rosaiah said, "This is perhaps the worst flood in the history of the state. Never in the past have such water levels been recorded."

Six helicopters have been pressed into service to rescue people. While four helicopters are being used to airlift the flood-hit in Kurnool district, 250 km south of Hyderabad, two choppers were deployed in Mahabubnagar district.

A helicopter rescued 15 people in the famous pilgrim town of Mantralayam but 500 people remained trapped in a temple complex after the shrine was surrounded by floodwaters.



Flood-hit villagers strive to stay afloat

Agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/ BANGALORE: Medical teams rushed to flood-devastated Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh where five days of torrential rain have left more than 205 people dead and 750,000 displaced, authorities said on Sunday.

The floods have submerged entire villages, snapped transport and communication links and raised fears of epidemic in relief camps crowded with people forced out of their homes.

Large parts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have been inundated. Air Force helicopters dropped food and drinking water packages to hundreds of villages that remained cut off after roads were submerged or washed away.

The central government on Sunday rushed more than 250 specially trained National Disaster Relief Force personnel with 80 inflatable boats to Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Home Minister P. Chidambaram will undertake an aerial survey of the two states on Monday to assess the damage. He is also expected to hold meetings with the chief ministers of both states — B.S. Yeddyurappa (Karnataka) and K. Rosaiah (Andhra Pradesh) — and top officials in Bangalore and Hyderabad.

12 DISTRICTS HIT IN KARNATAKA

In Karnataka, the worse hit



of the two states, 168 people have died and more than 300,000 have been displaced, authorities said.

From the six districts affected till Friday, the floods spread to 12 of the state's 29 districts on Sunday.

Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa urged the Centre to declare the unprecedented rainfall and flood situation in Karnataka as a national disaster and sought Rs 10,000 crore (Rs 100 billion) for relief measures.

"There is death and destruction all around us," Basavaraj Bommai, a senior minister said in Bangalore.

Authorities said vast areas of agricultural land were under water in Karnataka.

450,000 PEOPLE DISPLACED IN ANDHRA

In neighbouring Andhra

Pradesh, 37 people have died and around 450,000 have been displaced and were being sheltered in 100 relief camps, said state chief minister K. Rosaiah.

"We are rushing medical teams and equipment to the camps to ward off outbreaks of disease in the camps," Rosaiah said.

Flooding worsened after authorities released water from rain-swollen reservoirs and dams in both states to prevent them from bursting their banks.

From the two districts affected till Friday, the floods spread to four on Sunday.

Army men used boats to ferry villagers stranded on rooftops to government schools or relief camps. Doctors were distributing water purifying tablets and medical services in the camps, but facilities were poor and crowded. (With inputs from HTC, New Delhi)



■ (Top) People move belongings from their submerged houses at R Garlapadu village, about 180 km from Hyderabad, on Sunday. (above) A CISF official takes stock of Gujarat state Disaster Management Authority boats as they arrive for dispatch at Ahmedabad Airport. AP/ AFP PHOTOS