



## **An Analysis on- Jalshakti Abhiyan as a 'Jan-Andolan' In India; Through the Lenses of Media (2018 to 2020)**

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### **Abstract:**

We all know that, water is the most essential element of life. All plants, animals and human society need water to survive. We have to give special attention and care to protect water sources for the sake of mankind. Government of India has launched a scheme, named SWAJAL to provide clean water to several Rural Districts in India. National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) is involved in that scheme. Central Government launched a conservation campaign, named Jal Shakti Abhiyan, to overcome the water shortage in various stressed blocks and Districts. Media plays a vital role in spreading the awareness of water crisis and water conservation process among the people of India.

### **Introduction:**

'Water is a boon, Water is life. /without any water, nothing will survive.'-We can see various social media posts like that, on the occasion of World Water Day, 22 March, every year. Water is the most precious gift of the nature. Because we all know, that water is the most essential element of life. All plants, animals and human society need water to survive. We have to give special attention and care to protect water sources for the sake of mankind.

More than 50% of the population has no access to safe beverage and about 200,000 people die per annum for lack of access to safe water. Over 75% of households do not have clean drinking water, while 40% of the population will have no access to drinking water by 2030. The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) described it as "the worst water crisis" in India's history. The 2018 Composite Water Management Index (CWMI) noted that 6% of economic GDP will be lost by 2050, while water demand will exceed the available supply by 2030.

UNICEF data said that, the estimated economic burden of waterborne diseases is approximately US\$600 million as chemicals contaminate the water in 1.96 million homes. In urban areas, 50 million people in 15 cities haven't any access to safe, affordable water. On March 22, 2017, The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) launched a water conservation campaign on the occasion of the World Water Day. The rural development bank plans to identify village volunteers or the 'Jal Doots', who will convince the people about the necessity for utilization of the water.

Nabard chief general manager K.C. Panigrahi said that "The conservation campaign focused on creating awareness about the methods of conservation, preservation and its efficient utilization at various levels using the fashionable technologies such as micro irrigation (more crops per drop), traditional water management practices and adopting improved package of agronomic practices among the rural community.

Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture's vulnerability assessment report stated that, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Kandhamal, Balangir, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Nabarangpur, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar have been identified for the intensive campaign, covering 5,500 villages.

The government has been developing ways to address this growing crisis. Over the past years, government has worked on groundwater recharging projects, micro-irrigation, and legislative changes to promote better water management. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Ministry of Water Resources and Ganga Rejuvenation have been merged into the Jal Shakti Ministry by Central Government on 1st July, 2019. Prime Minister announced a plan to provide piped potable water to every rural household by 2024. In the past year, the Jal Jeevan Mission has served 20 million families.

**Objective:**

**The study aims,**

- To analyze the status of water storage in India
- To understand the aims and goals of Jal Shakti Abhiyan in India
- To highlight various news coverage by selected English Newspapers, on water conservation in India
- To understand the role and responsibility of media in spreading the message to protect water resources in India

## **Jal Shakti Abhiyan**

Central Government launched a conservation campaign, named Jal Shakti Abhiyan, to overcome the water shortage in 1952 stressed blocks in 256 Districts. Jal shakti Abhiyan will highlight on five major issues –water conservation and rain water harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies, reuse of water and recharging of structures, watershed development and intensive afforestation. In urban areas plans will be developed for waste water reuse for industrial and agricultural purposes. Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA), an intensive conservation campaign built on citizen participation to stimulate water conservation across the country.

‘Har Ghar Nal Se Jal’ was one of the important schemes, announced by the Central Government. It is an upgraded version of the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). Prime Minister promised on Independence Day 2019, that the Jal Jeevan Mission will get Rs 3.6 lakh crore for the five years. Of this, 50 per cent will be the central government’s share while states will bear the remaining 50 per cent The ‘Har Ghar Nal Se Jal’ scheme, to provide a functional tap connection to all or any households by 2024, is a component of the Jal Jeevan Mission. The increase is in line with the Central government’s growing thrust on the water sector, which includes a scheme to take piped drinking water to 18 crore rural households by 2024. The allocation for the general Jal Jeevan Mission, which seeks to make sure water security across the country, is Rs 11,500 crore, up from Rs 10,000 crore in 2019-20. The increase is in line with the Central government’s growing thrust on the water sector, which includes a scheme to take piped drinking water to 18 crore rural households by 2024.

### **Previous schemes of water conservation, by Central Government:**

#### **SWAJAL:**

Government of India has launched a scheme, named SWAJAL to provide clean water to 115 Rural Districts in India. National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) is involved in that scheme. 700 crore flexi funds have to be used in that scheme. The selection criteria of these districts are depended on six socio-economic parameters; according to NitiAayog .These are health, nutrition, education, financial inclusion, skill development, agriculture and water resources and basic infrastructure. This Prakashya is managed by local villagers and several trained technicians.

#### **National Water Mission (NWM):**

The Central Government has established National Water Mission under the National Action Plan on climate change. The main objective of NWM is, conservation of water,

minimizing wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management.

**Five important missions of NWM are:**

1. Comprehensive water data base publicly domain and assessment of the impact of global climate change on water resource.
2. Promotion of citizen and State actions of water conservation, augmentation and preservation.
3. Focused attention to vulnerable areas including over-exploited areas.
4. Increasing water use efficiency by twenty percent.
5. Promotion of basin level integrated water resource management.

**Budgetary allocation for Water conservation in India:**

The Jal Shakti Ministry, which is executing the government's mission to supply clean and piped beverage to each household within the country, has been earmarked Rs. 28,261.59 crore in the budget 2019-20.

The Department of beverage and Sanitation has been earmarked Rs.20,016.34 crore in 2019-20 as compared to Rs.19,992.97 crore in 2018-19. Under this, the National Drinking Rural Mission has been allocated Rs. 7,750.36 crore in 2019-20 as against Rs. 5,391.32 crore in 2018-19.

The Department of Water Resources and Ganga Rejuvenation has been allocated Rs. 8,245.25 crore, compared to Rs.7,269.25 crore earmarked in 2018-19.

Finance Minister outlined an allocation of Rs 30,478 crore for the Jal Shakti Ministry in Union Budget 2020-21. The allocation marks an increase of 7.84 per cent over the sum of Rs 28,261 crore set aside in the 2019-20 budget, the first for the ministry that was formed last May by integrating two union ministries — water resources and drinking water & sanitation.

The allocation for the general Jal Jeevan Mission, which seeks to make sure water security across the country, is Rs 11,500 crore, up from Rs 10,000 crore in 2019-20.

Namami Gange, another flagship scheme of the Modi government aimed toward cleaning up the Ganga, has been allocated Rs 800 crore, up from Rs 700 crore in 2019-20. The outlay for 2019-2020 has been decreased by half to Rs 353 crore within the revised estimates because the entire allocation couldn't be spent.

If 2014 to 2019 was the phase to drive and upscale sanitation within the country, then 2019 to 2024 will drop the spotlight on water. Reason was, the rising water emergency that's

making India hear alarm bells and consequentially a robust political commitment coming into place.

Ministry of Jal Shakti, of the Central government launched in the short run, the campaign will focus on integrated demand and supply-side management of water at the local level, including creation of local infrastructure for source sustainability using rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and management of household wastewater for reuse. For the long run, the government launched the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) with an aim to make sure piped water system to all or any rural households by 2024.

**A Report by Central Water Mission (June 26, 2019):**

The report, Reassessment of water availability in India using space inputs, by the Central Water Commission (CWC) with technical support of the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad, was released on June 26, 2019, by the Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

The total catchment basin considered for the study was 32,71,953 square kilometres across 20 river basins in India. As per the study, there's a discount in water availability in Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra basins while within the remainder of the basins, there's a rise in water availability with the largest increase in Barak and WFR (West Flowing Rivers) from Tapi to Tadri. The average annual water resource of the 20 basins of the country has been assessed as 1999.20 billion cubic metres (BCM).

In the past few years, repeated drought in several parts of the country and water scarcity in several hill and metropolitan areas has brought tons of specialize in the water stress that India is facing.

According to government data, there has been an uninterrupted and steep decline in per capita water availability since India's independence in 1947. For instance, the water availability in 2025 is predicted to be 1,341 kiloliter per capita per annum compared to five, 177 kiloliter per capita per annum in 1951.

“It is, therefore, necessary to stop this crisis by making the simplest use of the available technologies and resources to conserve the prevailing water resources, convert them into utilizable form and make efficient use of them for agriculture, industrial production, and human consumption,” said the CWC report.

The Central Water Commission's (CWC) report observed that with India's population likely to extend to 1.66 billion by 2050, the annual food requirement within the country will exceed 250 million tons by 2050 which means additional demand for water.

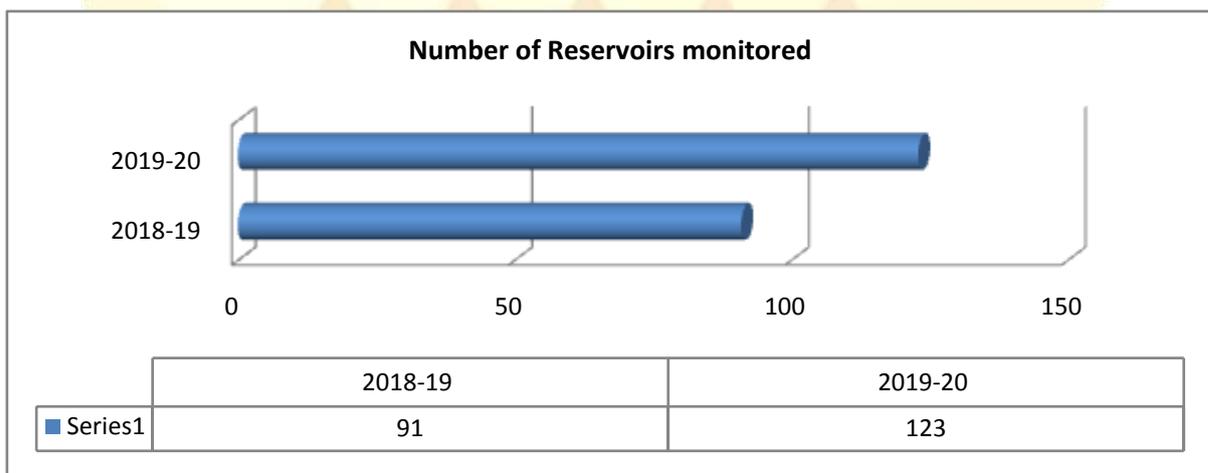
**Storage Status of water in India:**

(Source- Annual Report (2018-19, 2019-20), Central Water Commission, India)

Description		Water Year (1st June -31st May)		
		2018-19 (1st June - 31st May)		2019-20 (1st June -31st May)
Number of Reservoirs monitored (Nos.)		91		123
Total Designed live storage in BCM		161.993		171.090
ACTUAL STORAGE	On June, 1st (Start of Monsoon)	In BCM	27.384	31.65
		In % of Designed Live Storage	17	20
		In % of last 10 Years Avg. Live Storage	86	103
	On September, 30th (End of Monsoon)	In BCM	123.316	146.203
		In % of Designed live Storage	76	86.6
		In % of last 10 Years Avg. live Storage	106	121

**TABLE-1 Number of Reservoirs monitored (Nos.)**

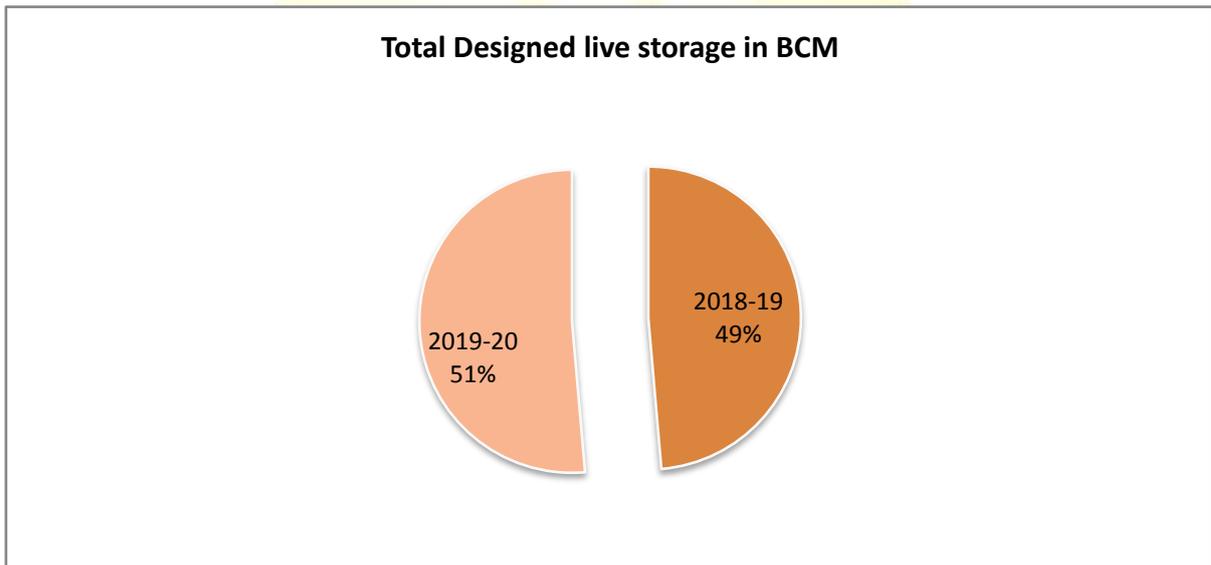
2018-19	2019-20
91	123

**FIGURE-1**

According to the, figure -1 we got the information that, Number of Reservoirs monitored is in increasing trend.

**TABLE-2 Total Designed live storage in BCM (Billion Cubic Meters)**

2018-19	2019-20
161.993	171.09

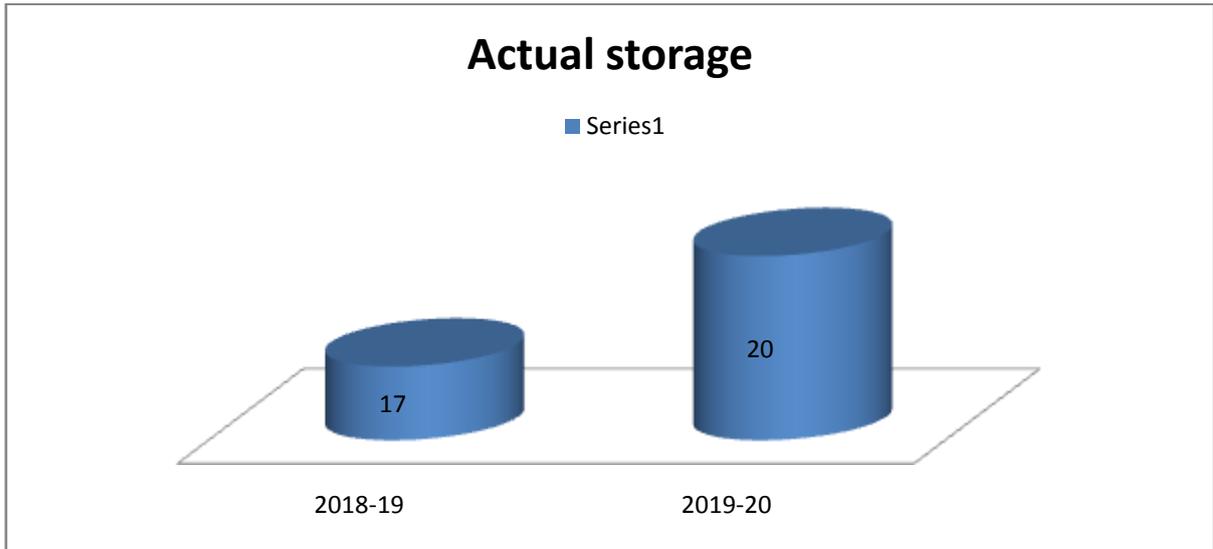
**FIGURE****-2**

According to the figure- 2 Total Designed live storage in BCM comparing 2018-19 and 2019-20 increased by 2 % ( that is also increasing trend)

**TABLE-3 ACTUAL STORAGE, (In % of Designed Live Storage)/On June, 1st (Start of Monsoon)**

2018-19	2019-20
17	20

**FIGURE-3**

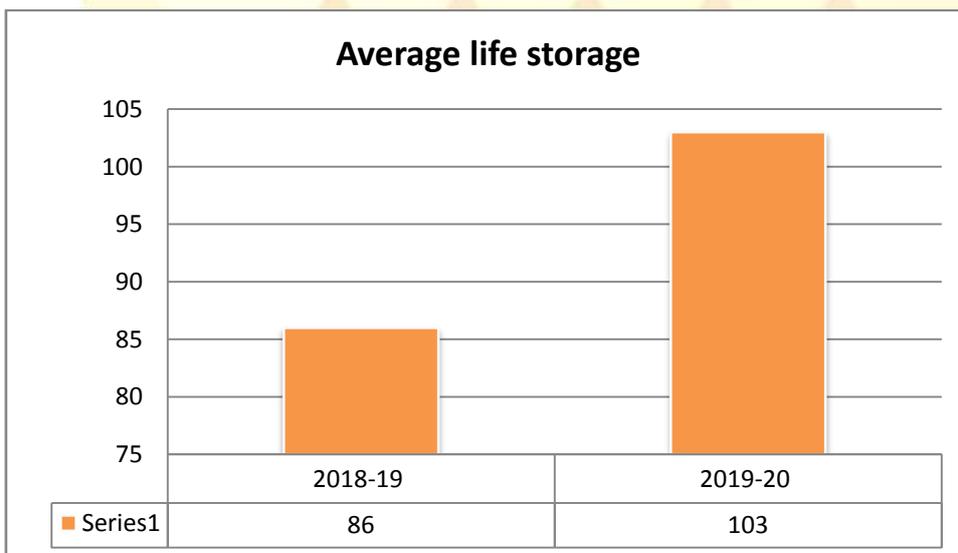


According to figure – 3 ACTUAL STORAGE, (In % of Designed Live Storage)/On June, 1st (Start of Monsoon) comparing 2018-19 with 2019-20 also in increasing trend.

**TABLE-4 in % of last 10 Years Avg. Live Storage/On June, 1st (Start of Monsoon)**

2018-19	2019-20
86	103

**FIGURE-4**

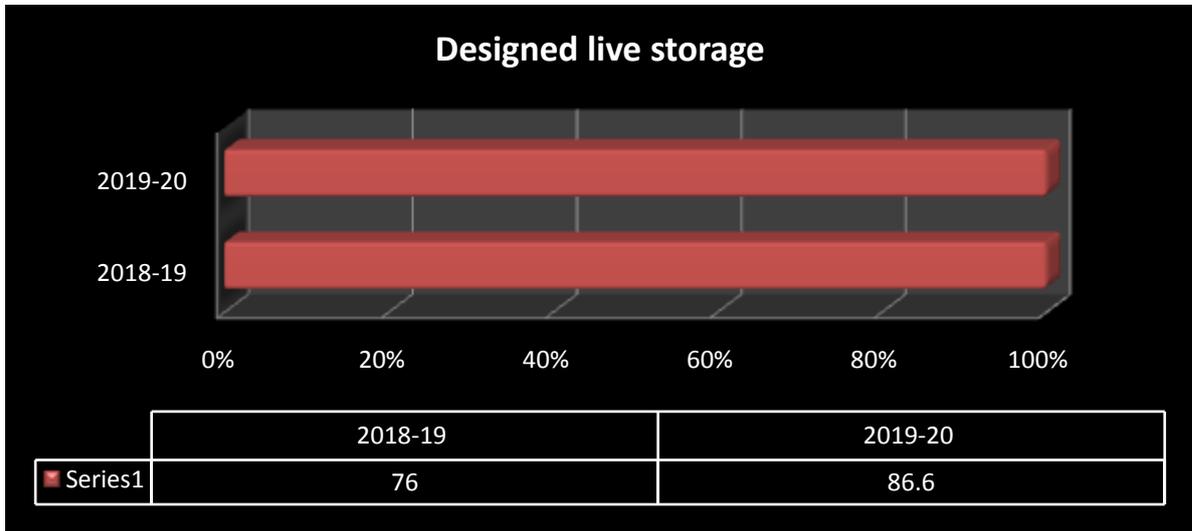


According to figure - 4 (% of last 10 Years) Avg. Live Storage/On June, 1st (Start of Monsoon) having inclining trend

**TABLE -5 On September, 30th (End of Monsoon)/in % of Designed live Storage**

2018-19	2019-20
76	86.6

**FIGURE-5**

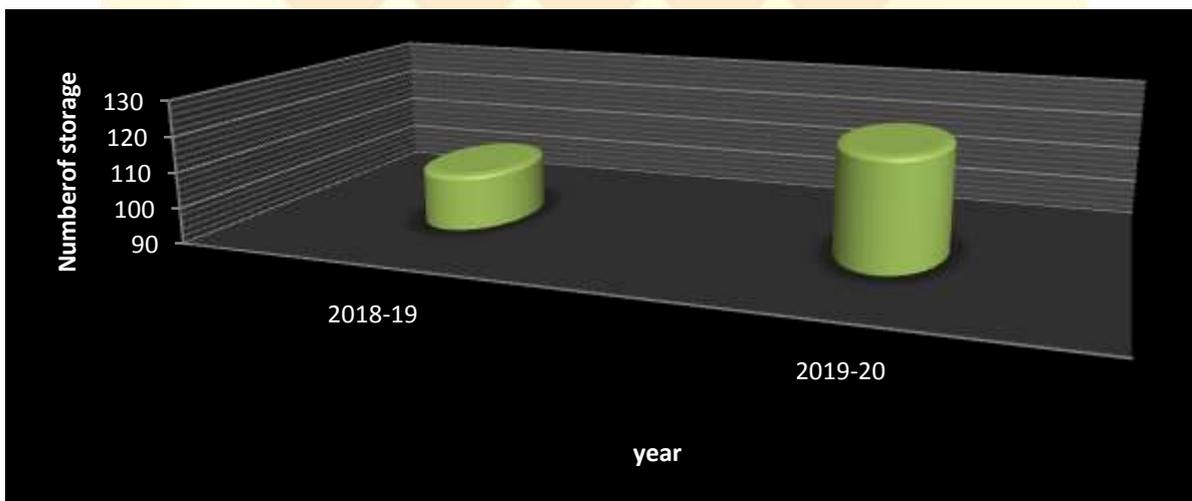


According to figure-5 (% of Designed live Storage) End of Monsoon also has increasing trend comparing 2018-19 and 2019-20

**TABLE- 6 ACTUAL STORAGE**

2018-19	2019-20
106	121

**FIGURE- 6**



According to figure- 6, we can say that actual storage capacity comparing 2018-19 and 2019-20 also have steady increasing trend.

**Print Media Coverage on Water Conservation in India:**

<b>Date Of Publication</b>	<b>Name Of The Newspaper</b>	<b>Headline Of The News</b>	<b>Intro Of The News</b>
June 12, 2018	The Telegraph	Jal Shakti Abhiyan: The story so far  The Niti Aayog and the IMD have released several warnings of drought in several cities	A NITI Aayog report called the Composite Water Management Index claimed that by 2020, 21 cities, among these Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad, are expected to reach zero groundwater levels.
September 13, 2018	The Telegraph	Peninsular India witnessed a deficit of rainfall	The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that peninsular India witnessed a deficit of 72 per cent rain last year. Later that month, the IMD declared that 256 districts recorded deficient (-59 to -20 per cent) or scanty (-99 to -60 per cent) rainfall.
December 12, 2018	The Telegraph	7 States declared drought	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Odisha declared drought. Except Odisha, all others sought financial assistance from the Centre.
January 16, 2019	The Telegraph	Retreating monsoon rainfall: IMD	A news release by the IMD pointed out that retreating monsoon rainfall between October and December had been “substantially below normal”. This was

			sixth lowest since 1901 and also the sixth warmest year since 1901. In Chennai, water supply had been cut by nearly half as three reservoirs went dry.
July 1,2019	The Telegraph	Jal Shakti Abhiyan	Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat announced Jal Shakti Abhiyan - a campaign for water conservation and water security. A day earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Mann Ki Baat address called for a jan-andolan. “I appeal to all Indians, including eminent people from all walks of life, to create awareness on water conservation. Share the knowledge of traditional methods of water conservation,” he said.
Aug 1,2019	The Telegraph	<u>Water: That precious, public resource</u>  Seven decades have passed since Independence but successive governments have paid scant attention to the lack of access to clean water	The water crisis is on everyone’s lips. Volumes are being written on how to tackle this calamity — rainwater harvesting, irrigation and farming practices, restoring water bodies, interlinking rivers, and so forth.

Nov 19, 2019	The Telegraph	<p><u>Call for water meter to curb wastage</u></p> <p>Water meters in 1,000 houses had shown that the average resident uses up 4 times the national consumption benchmark</p>	<p>Kolkata: The city should start saving water instead of wasting it while it is still available, said an environmental engineer at a discussion on water challenges here on Tuesday.</p> <p>There should be water meters across homes to curb water wastage because many in the city still do not care to turn the tap off or reuse water because it is abundantly available, Jadavpur University professor Amit Dutta said.</p>
Nov 20,2020	The Telegraph	<p><u>A song dedicated to Women Water Warriors of North India</u></p> <p>Eco-feminist Ditty's new album roots for water conservation</p>	<p>The band Faraway Friends took shape in 2019 when Goa-based folk singer Ditty met Keno (Germany) and David Raddish (Austria) by the river Ganges. The three were on a project trip organised by Viva con Agua, an NGO that promotes human right to water. Their conversations gave birth to Rain Is Coming, an album set to release on World Water Day — March 22, in 2021.</p>
Nov 20,2020	The Times Of India	<p>Times Water Summit 2020: It's still not late in</p>	<p>India is not really a water deficit country; situation is bad but</p>

		saving India from becoming a waterless country if we start acting on it now!	can be managed. India is witnessing an acute water crisis even though it receives enough rainfall to sustain itself. All it needs is an adequate water conservation infrastructure to store and channel this excess water to parched areas across the nation. To make this happen, India needs policy intervention and the support of its people.
Nov 20,2020	The Telegraph	<u>A song dedicated to Women Water Warriors of North India</u> Eco-feminist Ditty's new album roots for water conservation	The band Faraway Friends took shape in 2019 when Goa-based folk singer Ditty met Keno (Germany) and David Raddish (Austria) by the river Ganges. The three were on a project trip organised by Viva con Agua, an NGO that promotes human right to water. Their conversations gave birth to Rain Is Coming, an album set to release on World Water Day — March 22, in 2021.
Nov 21,2020	The Times of India	What is Water Positive	Water scarcity affects more than 40 percent of the people on the planet. It is said that by 2025, 1.8 billion people will be living in countries (or

			regions) with water scarcity and two-thirds of the population will face a stressful water situation. If these statistics are not alarming enough, an astounding 85% of the world population lives in the driest half of the planet, a figure that is increasing with each passing day. Closer home, the situation is grim too. Water supply in India is expected to fall 50% below demand by 2030.
Dec 19, 2020,	The Times Of India	Capacity of 'baby canal' to carry water to be studied	CHENNAI: State PWD authorities will soon take up a study on enhancing the water-carrying capacity. <a href="#">Water-carrying capacity of the 'baby canal'</a> that takes water from Poondi to Cholavaram reservoir.
Dec 20,2020	The Telegraph	<u>Water usage award for Malda school</u>  Centre recognises institution for rooftop farming	A state-aided school in Englishbazar has received an excellence award for utilisation and preservation of water in larger interest by the Union water resources ministry.  Using water conservation and harvesting techniques, the Sovanagar High School, located some

			15km from Malda district headquarters, farms vegetables and fish on its rooftop, the produce meant for students' midday meals.
Dec 20, 2020,	The Times Of India	Bulk water pipeline by '22	Rajkot: Chief minister Vijay Rupani laid the foundation stontone for the bulk pipeline to be constructed between Budhel to Borda at the cost of Rs 376 crore in a programme o at the cost of Rs 376 crore in a programme organized at Budhel village of Bhavnagar district on Saturday.

Media is playing a vital role in water conservation in India. The Indian media have thought several ways, through which water conservation would be possible.

- A stand against wastage and mismanagement of water, both by individual and industries and their coverage
- Throwing open a challenge, calling out companies to commit to reducing their water consumption and adopting the best water conservation practices
- Increasing awareness on the looming water crisis, not only in India but also across the world. To also promote the best water positive practices among readers
- Calling out for conscious choice of products that readers buy on a daily basis, thereby reducing their water footprint

**Times Water Summit highlighted the major points on Water Conservation in India:**

- India is the biggest user of groundwater in the world. It is our biggest source of drinking water supply and agriculture.
- 85 per cent of rural India's drinking water supply is derived from groundwater resources only.
- Food supply at risk, as areas for wheat cultivation and rice cultivation, face extreme water scarcity.
- India lacks a centralised policy around water as it's a state-run subject. For inter-state rivers and channels, the Centre holds the power to assist states with water infrastructure and management.
- India's new National Water Policy aims to conserve water resources through Public Private Partnership mode and work on modalities to implement ongoing programmes.
- India's Jal Shakti Ministry consolidates every government water-related ministry under it like surface water, groundwater, pollution control, river rejuvenation, and irrigation, among others. The aim of this Ministry is to ease the implementation of larger water-related programmes by bringing them under the purview of one framework.

The global summit was supported by Ministry of water resources, river development and ganga rejuvenation; Ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship, Government of India .The partner country was Australian Government.

The summit focused on Synergies between water security and economic prosperity, finance and technology to deliver water solutions for both industries and utilities. The summit will bring the collective intelligence of stakeholders, exchange knowledge, latest technologies and also the acumen of visionary speakers in an effort to catalyze collaboration between the public & private water, utilities, technology providers, financiers, industrial end-users, associations in addition to water, agriculture-food-beverage and sanitation agencies.

**Prevention of groundwater extraction:**

A major reason for increased dependence on groundwater for drinking purpose is the contamination of surface water bodies primarily due to the release of untreated wastewater discharge, both industrial and civil.

Though industries and municipalities are mandated to comply with environmental regulations, low priority is accorded to the enforcement and proper implementation of these laws. Ensuring stricter compliance for proper treatment and disposal of sewage and effluents before being discharged into water bodies, and properly implementing the punitive provisions can prevent surface water pollution considerably.

Watershed development is a long-term intervention and requires proper technical understanding for identification of sites and management along with intensive human efforts, time, and sufficient resources allocation. Therefore, the districts need to have a different implementation strategy from the ones planned for rainwater harvesting.

The Human right to water is an important public or citizen right. It is the State's primary duty to find ways, make laws, and provide water to every citizen. Since 2014, Central Government has given serious attention to clean drinking water for everyone and conservation of water. Through the various schemes for public welfare, the obstacles of water crisis will be abolished in very near future.

The conflict arises that, either water is a 'state subject' or the Central's hands; and then the question comes into front, that, who will be responsible for tackling the problem. Water is one of the most important public resources, directly affecting the Right to Life. The Supreme Court has consistently reiterated the critical importance of the fundamental right to water as a public resource.

**Case study:**

In a series of judgments, the apex court has affirmed that the public trust doctrine is the law of the land; that the doctrine is in consonance with Articles 21 and 39(b) of the Indian Constitution. Article 21 guarantees the Right to Life. Article 39(b) enjoins that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to sub serve the common good. In the landmark *M.C. Mehta vs Kamal Nath* case, the Supreme Court held that "[t]he State as a Trustee is under a legal duty to protect the natural

resources. These resources meant for public use cannot be converted into private ownership.”

“State-owned or public-owned property is not to be dealt with at the absolute discretion of the executive. Certain precepts and principles have to be observed. Public interest is the Paramount consideration.” (Centre for Public Interest Litigation and Ors)

“When a State holds a resource which is available for the free use of the general public, the Court will look with considerable scepticism upon any governmental conduct which is calculated either to relocate that resource to more restricted uses or to subject public uses to the self-interest of private parties.” (M.C. Mehta)

### **UNICEF explains;**

There is a fundamental difference between the ‘Right to Water’ and ‘Water Rights’. A report by the Unicef explains the point. “The Right to Water needs to be distinguished from Water Rights. The Right to Water relates to the basic water requirement for life (i.e. water for drinking, cooking, washing and personal hygiene, and the essential water needs of livestock). ‘Water Rights’ is a term that is generally used in the context of water for irrigation, industrial or commercial use, etc; that is, economic uses of water.

“The right to water as defined above is a fundamental right by judicial interpretation. The State has a responsibility to ensure that this right is not denied to any citizen or group of citizens.” The report goes on to affirm that there can be no two views on the magnitude of the fundamental right to water.

“Between a fundamental right (life-right) and a non-fundamental use-right, the former must always take precedence over the latter; and the exercise of economic rights by some must not be allowed to jeopardise the fundamental rights of others.”

### **Conclusion:**

While the government has put up broader plans to solve the ongoing water crisis, there is a critical need to spell out Jal Shakti Abhiyan’s (JSA) outcomes and targets in a tangible and achievable manner. Rainwater harvesting is a critical intervention and should be undertaken intensively in the identified 256 water-stressed districts where groundwater availability has reached critical and over exploited levels.

Wastewater management should be a prime concern, for water conservation policies. With the focus on renovating structures for rainwater and wastewater harvesting, there should be course of action for regulated water use and saving; water metering and pricing. With access to piped water supply in households, water use is expected to increase in rural areas, leading to more wastewater generation. There is a need to wastewater policy both for urban

and rural areas that promotes water use efficiency, recycling and reuse, while also ensuring financial viability and sustainability of water utilities.

JSA cannot claim much success until excessive extraction of groundwater is prevented. While groundwater recharge is a commendable action, the actual percolation of water down to the confined aquifer is a time taking process.

JSA indicates government's positive intent at water conservation through peoples' participation. Several measures can make it more impactful. Water being a means of basic survival; So, JSA will achieve its goal in near future, with proper action with high-quality results.

The media campaigns appeal to the readers in a very simple manner - if we don't act now, there will be no drop remaining to fight for! The campaign, through its hard-hitting message, aims to encourage people to recycle and harvest water for a good cause; and reduce their water footprints by making conscious choice of product categories and brands. Saving, restoring, and distributing water to every home and conservation of that precious public resource should be a moral duty for every State, Central Government; and as well as every citizen of Independent India. The experts and Government officials concerning the methodology of harnessing, always be alert and should give special notice on that specific matter. Government level campaigns, public service and National advertisements are very much useful for growing public awareness of the need to protect the water resource in India.

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