



# Water Feeder

A Monthly Dose of Odia Water News

An Initiative of **Odisha State Center, FPWCI, Baitarani Initiative, Shristi & Odisha Water Forum**

*Water Feeder is a compilation and analysis of water-related news published in Odia and local English dailies with an objective to help water professionals and enthusiasts to capture and comprehend issues and conflicts around water (through eyes of media). It also provides geographical, seasonal and media perspectives of water issues and conflicts with respect to Odisha.*

*This monthly feed of Water news is an attempt to stimulate interest, thoughts and actions on water issues in the state apart from feeding research and academic pursuits. We welcome your suggestions and feedbacks for its improvement and effectiveness!*

## Past Issues of Water Feeder

1. [May 2009](#)
2. [June 2009](#)
3. [July 2009](#)
4. [Aug 2009](#)
5. [Jan & Feb, 10](#)

*This Sixth issue presents water 'News Analysis' from 5 major Odia Dailies and one English daily for the month of March 2010. Each of these news items have been tagged and put in a searchable database, which will be shortly uploaded in the net along with scanned copy of each news item. We look forward your comments and Feedbacks (Pl send your response to [baitarani@gmail.com](mailto:baitarani@gmail.com)).*

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Water woes seem to be poised towards a breathtaking free-ride in Odisha this summer. Water crisis which was just coagulating in February has started crystallizing in March. With rise in temperature and flows and storages starting to dry up, issues and conflicts around scarcity and quality of water for drinking, irrigation, hydropower generation, industry and other competing uses have started drawing attention of media. The issues and conflicts around scarcity and quality of water have been reported from different parts of Odisha like Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Kendrapara, Jharsuguda, Talcher, Jatani, Daspalla, and Dhenkanal in different Newspapers.

## **1 Water Issues & Conflicts**

### **1.1 *Drinking water: Conflicts over inadequacy, irregularity and inefficiency***

With dependence on govt water supply increasing and alternate/own sources drying down, people's woes seem to be multiplying in the wake of summer months, whenever the govt system fails to deliver. Public outrage for drinking water was reported from many parts of Odisha, in this month. Among others, Adaba, Badasahi, Jharabandha, Nimapada, Balipatana, Joda blocks were reported to be badly affected in terms of water scarcity with people in these blocks having a tough time. The drinking water supply in Baliana block was reported to have been broken down with 150 odd tube wells of this area are not in working condition while no steps seem to have been taken by the Block Development Officer for their repair, reported *The Sambad*. The piped water supply of Nemala block was not working and for this people of this block were facing acute water shortage as all water bodies have also dried up in the intense heat. People in Bhanjanagar were also facing the same problem in this month. As reported in *The Khabara*, 300 tube wells of Khalikote were not working. In Dhenkanal, there was also drinking water crisis this summer as the piped water schemes found to either function inefficiently or were supplying very poor quality of water, published *The Khabara* (07.03.2010). The *Sambad* reported irregularity in water supply in the Kaniha area leading to scarcity of drinking water. There was failure of the supply of drinking water in the Kantapada block. The piped water supply of Bhusandhapur area was reported to be not working properly and it has affected the livelihood of the people. In the Laxminarayana sevagrama of Choudwar area there was only one tube well for 1700 villagers to meet their daily activities. Most of the panchayatas of Koraput district were reported to be suffering from water scarcity. Serious drinking water scarcity along with drinking of polluted and contaminated water has also resulted in increasing intensity of disease incidence. The residents of Keonjhar were facing an acute water crisis due to the intense heat wave and drought conditions, reported *The Dharitri*. The Swajaladhara project of Keonjhar district was not working properly but no steps taken for its repair, reported in *The Khabara* (27.03.2010).

The state government has failed to ensure supply of safe drinking water in the state. Even in the capital city of Bhubaneswar, getting safe drinking water is a dream reported *The*

*Pragatibadi* (10.03.2010). The irregularity in the supply of drinking water and also the poor quality of water was the major problem in Cuttack.

Public demonstrations in front of district administration for ensuring minimum supply of drinking water at Bolangir, reported in the *Sambad*.

To overcome (safe) drinking water crisis in many parts of Odisha in the coming summer the State Govt. has decided to implement 21 big projects with an investment of Rs. 271 crore. It was also decided to renovate all big ponds in the rural areas. A proposal has been finalized to dig 1000 tube wells in 103 Municipal areas and to engage tankers to carry drinking water to the water scarcity areas. This was reported in *The Sambad* as well as *The Dharitri* this month

## **1.2 *Water Pollution – Direct Discharges taking toll on Surface Water Bodies while Dwindling Quality of Ground Water is drawing attention***

Industrial pollution of state's water bodies is fast emerging as a conflict in many parts of the state. Direct discharge of polluted and contaminated water by different industries to common water distribution systems like canals and rivers described as the main cause of water pollution published by the most of the Odia dailies. Particularly the pollution of Taladanda canal due to the industrial and domestic effluents in Cuttack has created health hazards among the people due to its contamination, reported in *The Khabara*. Similarly the water pollution in the river Salandi due to the direct discharge from the local small-scale industries was reported to affect the health of the local population.

Bheden river has now been heavily polluted due to the effluents coming from the Bhushan steel plant, which is alleged to discharge waste water from its smelter without any treatment. Fluoride contamination has been reported in the drain where the waste water discharged, reported *The Samaja*. Rampant mining and mushrooming of brick kilns and discharge of effluent by the industries have taken heavy toll on this river.

The water of most tube wells in the Bhubaneswar were reported to be not potable and safe as the contaminants like iron, fluoride, salinity, chloride and nitrates were found at higher concentration, reported the Indian Express.

Ground water level of different parts of Odisha is being realized as a serious cause of water scarcity. Due to the depletion of ground water the drinking water quality is deteriorating day by day and this has become a major threat for drinking water provisioning. The government has decided to take action against the industrialists for the over-exploitation of ground water, was reported in *The Pragatibadi*. As per the news in *The Pragatibadi*, the occurrence of high concentration of Fluoride in ground water in the Bolangir district of Odisha has become a serious problem

### **1.3 Dams & Projects:**

The dangerously decreasing water level in most of the reservoirs and the resulting hydroelectricity power production crisis in the state have been covered by most of the Odia dailies. The people of the Baliana block demanded to build a dam in the Dhanua river.

### **1.4 Water to Industry: Controversies on rise**

Allotment of water to industries in Odisha is fast becoming a highly controversial issue. As per the news in *the Sambad*, most of the industries of Odisha using river water for industrial purposes. The water is provided to the industries without any consideration and no actions is being taken by the government for its proper monitoring, as a result of which the ground water level also going to be dry day by day. There was an allegation against the government to lay more stress on industry not to the agriculture, reported *The Sambad*.

### **1.5 Irrigation & Agriculture: Farmers' frustrations lead to protests**

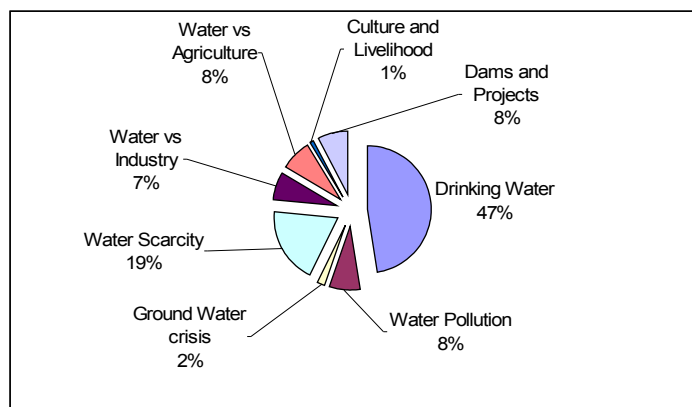
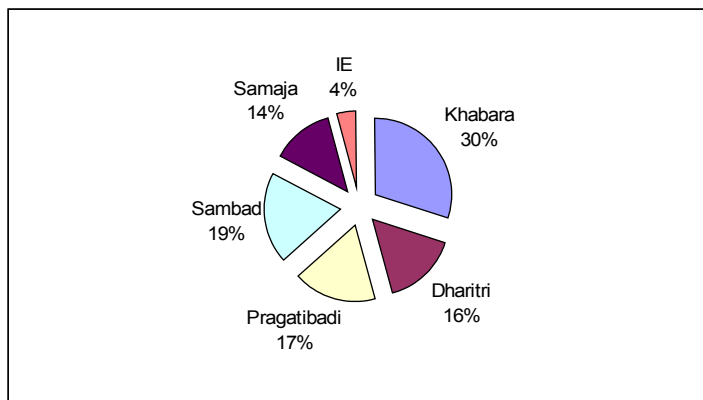
The irrigation facility of Bolagada block has been defunct for long time without any initiative by government to repair that, reported *the Pragatibadi*. The Government of Odisha decided to set up 19 big and 45 medium scale irrigation projects in different parts of Odisha to meet the agricultural needs. As per another news in *The Samaja*, State Govt has asked Center to declare Rengali irrigation project as the national project of the state.

### **1.6 Citizen's Initiatives**

World Water Day was celebrated on 22<sup>nd</sup> March in different parts of Odisha. People from different districts of Odisha gathered to discuss about the water issues in their districts and also about the strategies to ensure future water security. They also raised their concern about the growing scarcity of drinking water reported in *The Sambad* and *The Dharitri*. The riparian villagers of Bheden along with some civil society institutions made a pledge on World Water Day to protect the river from pollution.

There was a civil society workshop on water pollution held at old Bhubaneswar this month.

## 2 Coverage by News Papers & of Issues



News	Khabara	Dharitri	Pragatibadi	Sambad	Samaja	IE	Total
Drinking Water	20	6	11	5	7		49
Ground Water crisis		1	1				2
Water Scarcity	2	7	2	5	3	1	20
Water Pollution	2			1	3	2	8
Water vs Industry		1	1	4	1		7
Water vs Agriculture	2	1	1	3		1	8
Culture and Livelihood	1						1
Dams and Projects	4		2	2			8
Total	31	16	18	20	14	4	103

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