

Flood Update VIII from *Water Initiatives Odisha*



23rd September 2011

Dear Friends/Co-sailors,

Fresh Floods lash Odisha

At the time when the govt. of Odisha was submitting its Memorandum to the central govt. detailing the damaged caused by the floods in the state, depression caused another spell of heavy pours flooding the Baitarani and its tributaries for the third time this monsoon. ***This spectre has been the worst, already affecting nearly 3 lakh people in 6 districts of the state.*** As per the latest update from govt. sources, the River Baitarani was flowing about 3 metres above the danger level at Akhuapada. River Brahmani is flowing close to its danger level at Jenapur. The Districts of Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapada and Keonjhar have been seriously affected due to very high flood in river Brahmani and Baitarani. District of Mayurbhanj and Balasore have also been affected due to flood in Budhabalanga and other rivers. The govt. informs that flood in Mahanadi river system and major rivers in southern part of the State is well within control.

The report that can be downloaded from http://www.osdma.org/Download/Flood_2011Update_Status_230911.pdf puts the ***number of affected villages at 829 belonging to 252 Gram Panchayats of 25 Blocks of the 6 districts. 711 villages have been marooned and 1 person has reportedly died.*** The Revenue Minister has informed that Relief Operations have been ordered for seven days. The Government have also decided to immediately start airdropping of food packets in the marooned villages in Bhadrak, Jajpur and Kendrapada Districts which will start from tomorrow. Three senior officers have been deputed from State level to three most affected Districts namely Jajpur, Bhadrak and Kendrapada to assist the Collectors in relief operation.

Earlier, before this current spell of the floods, the Govt. of Odisha had submitted this year's Memorandum on Floods to the Govt. of India and informed that ***4897 villages of 102 Blocks and 21 ULBs in 19 Districts have been affected by the current flood. 41 persons have lost their lives in the calamity due to drowning, snake bite, etc. besides 10 persons missing being swept away/ drowned in flood water but their dead bodies have not been found so far. The livestock casualty including poultry stands at 1667. It reported damage of 116706 dwelling houses. The state govt. submitted a property damage estimate of 2120.92 crore of rupees.*** The details of it have been covered in the second news shared in this Update.

The state government has just informed that a four member sub-team (Inter Ministerial Central Team) will be visiting the state from 26th of this month for assessment of the damages/losses.

As already informed, we are deliberately keeping the format of this update very simple and user friendly. In this update we only have the NEWS, STATS and MET SPEAKS sections and have skipped all other sections.

Once again, we would like to inform you that, at the moment, it's occasional and we may come up with these updates as and when we can, given our limited manpower and resources. However, with your inputs and support, we are sure; we shall be able to ensure regular flow of this update.

We request you to send in your reports of activities, your views; and any other interesting and relevant article, books, photographs, and anything that you feel we should cover in this Update. It's YOU who is the most important FUEL of this effort.

Look forward to listen from you and your continued support.

Thanks and regards,

Ranjan Panda

Convenor, Water Initiatives Odisha

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NEWS

North Orissa relives flood havoc again

BHUBANESWAR: The well-marked low pressure turned into a depression and crossed Orissa coast on Thursday evening triggering heavy rains in northern districts and prompting the State Government to issue fresh flood alert for six districts. As most of the rivers in the northern region are swelling following persistent downpour, the depression-induced showers left them in spate. The Revenue Department said Baitarani, Brahmani, Subarnarekha and Budhabalanga rivers were continuously rising. Baitarani, in particular, was a cause of concern as it was flowing above danger mark at Anandpur.

Anticipating floods, the Special Relief Commissioner's (SRC) Office has asked the six districts to evacuate people from low-lying areas. "We have put Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Dhenkanal districts on high alert and asked them to remain in readiness with relief materials," SRC Pradipta Mohapatra said.

Districts such as Jajpur, Kendrapara, Balasore, Mayurbhanj and Bhadrak have already been affected by the floods earlier this month and over 10 lakh people are still struggling to pick up the pieces. The Government also mobilised Orissa Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) to the districts as per their requirements. Balasore wanted two additional units while Bhadrak sought four more. "We are keeping a close watch on the situation. The river embankments are also being monitoring round-the-clock in view of the heavy downpour," the SRC said.

The IMD Orissa said the depression crossed the north Orissa and adjoining West Bengal coast between Balasore and Digha at about 5.30 pm. On the way, it triggered heavy rainfall. Keonjhar received at least 11 cm rain during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the IMD has advised hoisting local cautionary signal number three at all ports in the State. Besides, gusty surface wind, reaching up to a speed of 65 km per hour, would blow across Orissa coast. Sea condition will be rough and fishermen have been advised not to venture into sea.

Heavy rains have been forecast at several parts of the State over the next 48 hours. Some pockets in northern districts will witness heavy to very heavy rainfall during this period.

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/north-orissa-relives-flood-havoc-again/186787-60-117.html>

Govt pegs flood loss at over Rs 2k crore

BHUBANESWAR: The current flood in Orissa, widely perceived as manmade because of alleged mismanagement of water in Hirakud reservoir, has caused a loss of property worth Rs 2121 crore. The damage included roads, houses, educational institutions, drinking water sources etc.

The damage estimate compiled by the special relief commissioner (SRC) office from inputs received from the 19 affected districts was submitted to the chief minister on Wednesday. A special messenger would carry the report to New Delhi on Thursday and submit to the Union government ahead of the 11-member Central team's visit to the state. "The team is expected to arrive here later this week or early next week. I am in regular touch with the team leader," said the SRC, P K Mohapatra.

The severity of the flood was mostly felt in areas falling under the Mahanadi river system. As many as 41 persons died and 10 others are still missing in the flood, the impact of which even after two weeks has still left around 40,000 people stranded in 69 free kitchen centres kept running in Subarnapur, Mahakalapada and Marshaghai areas. The report said 116706 houses in 4897 villages under 102 blocks and 21 urban bodies had been affected by the flood.

The water resources department, as per the report, suffered the maximum loss of embankment roads, canals, minor and lift irrigation projects worth Rs 728.58 crore. While the panchayatiraj department estimated its loss at Rs 442.27 crore, the rural development and works departments put the figure at Rs 372.64 crore and Rs 226.07 crore respectively. The cost of damage to school buildings was calculated to be Rs 86.50 crore. Other departments that figured in the damage list included energy, health and family welfare, housing and urban development. It said relief measures, house building assistance, input subsidy etc. cost the government about Rs 162.77 crore.

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-09-22/bhubaneswar/30188544_1_rs-2k-crore-flood-water-resources-department

Orissa government forgets to follow embankment strengthening plan

By Prabhukalyan Mohapatra

Bhubaneswar: The politics surrounding the mismanagement of Hirakud dam that caused severe flooding in Mahanadi this year is heating up once again. While the debate still focuses on whether the dam has caused this damage or this could have been avoided if there was no dam, several experts have been talking about the strengthening of existing embankments and also looking into flood management below Naraj afresh.

At its delta head "Naraj," Mahanadi branches off to several courses. Each year the entire deltaic region is affected by floods that bring in immense miseries. However, the miseries go beyond our management levels when the floods in Mahanadi exceed the limit of 17000 cumecs.

In fact, after the devastating flood of 1855, a spur was constructed at Naraj, which was later modified to a weir. After functioning for about a century, a gated barrage was constructed at downstream of the old and dying weir with intention to control flood as well as provide irrigation to its command area. However, this has not helped much in controlling floods and each time we face a super and mega flood, the effectiveness of this comes into question yet again. What also comes into debate is the height and strength of the embankments below delta.

It is learnt from sources that the water resources department of the Orissa government has given a proposal to the Central Water Commission in the year 2004-05 for financial support to strengthen and heighten the embankments along Mahanadi below Naraj so that these could keep the delta areas safe even when there 1500000 cusec water is flowing.

However, this proposal has not been seriously pushed through so far. Experts however believe that embankments not only require huge infrastructural investments but also they cannot provide the safety that is required against flood.

“Embankments won’t bring the solution that we are looking for. In the name of protection against floods we have been pushing for dams and embankments which are costly and effective things. We need to live with floods and give more importance to flood plain management,” envisages Ranjan Panda, Convenor of Water Initiatives Odisha, a leading civil society coalition working on water in the state.

A World Bank report of 2008, that also discusses floods of the state, confirms this. The report says, “It is estimated that about 12 per cent of India’s geographic area (40 million hectares) is affected by floods. This is almost double the estimated 19 million hectares affected by floods in India about five decades ago. This has occurred despite rising government spending on flood protection, which has increased dramatically from Rs.0.13 million in the First Five Year Plan (1951-1956) to Rs. 106 billion in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007), while 39% (15.8 million hectares) of flood-prone land is protected with embankments, drainage channels, bunds, and similar structures. Yet frequent breaches of embankments and other protective structures are a common occurrence.”

<http://www.indusvalleytimes.com/Top-Storiesd.php?id=683>

Demolish fear haunts builders

BIBHUTI BARIK

Bhubaneswar, Sept. 21: The initiative taken by the Bhubaneswar Development Authority and the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation to demolish illegal structures in flood zones and those blocking flow of the natural drainage channels has left the city builders worried.

Many real estate dealers apprehend a drop in prices in areas such as Sundarpada, where the rate of land per sqft is Rs 1,500 to Rs 1,800. Some are adopting a wait-and-watch policy following the development.

“Even before the government’s stricture, the prospective buyers of properties along the Sundarpada-Jatni corridor were having a second thought.

“The real estate development in other areas such as Gothapatana, Chhatabara and Kantabada are coming up in highland areas. It will definitely have an effect on the real estate price,” said Manoranjan Ray, a property developer.

Gourav Das, who has already brought a plot at Panchhagaon, said: “Starting from Sundarpada, Birabandha, Botanda, Kuha and Pradhansahi all areas were submerged in the high flood. I stay in Rourkela and have bought the land through a real estate developer. They never hinted at the fact that the area is flood prone. I am even thinking about selling it off when the water recedes. I have now decided to have a complete survey before buying anything on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.”

Though two residential apartment complexes were partly submerged at Sundarpada and the Orissa Fire Services personnel had to deploy a motorised boat to rescue the residents, many under-construction structures faced the flood fury in the second week of this month. Real estate sources said that 25 such structures were coming up at Sundarpada and nearby areas alone. Even construction of illegal structures along the bank of Kuakhai, Gangua nullah and areas near Palasuni has become a cause of concern.

With focus on the designated flood zones along Jatni-Sundatrpada Road, the state government has banned construction of housing complexes till an alternative arrangement is made.

The state government has categorically asked both the development authority and the corporation to take “exemplary” steps in dealing with the illegal structures either creating flood-like situation or existing in the flood zones. However, a senior official admitted that at present, the development authority was running without a proper demolition squad with trained personnel to demolish multi-storeyed buildings. Even the body has got no machinery to carry out such processes.

On September 17, housing and urban development secretary Sourabh Garg declared that the process had already started to equip the development authority with an effective demolition squad, so that illegal structures coming up in the high-flood zones on the city outskirts would be taken up for demolition on priority.

“With equipment available with the civic body, we can start the process now. But, one has to analyse the legality as after the 74th Constitutional Amendment planning the power was delegated to the local self-governments. If there was no provision for the block development officers (BDOs) to issue no-objection certificates (NOCs) to the builders concerned, there is no problem in demolishing the structures as the areas are now coming under the development authority’s zone,” said an official.

As the flood-hit Sundarpada is now coming under the development authority’s planning limits, a senior member of the Real Estate Developers Association said: “Not only exemplary action, but penal provisions should be there for any violation and illegal construction within the area of the development body. Even in the past, the panchayati raj department issued circulars to all the BDOs not to issue NOCs for multi-storeyed structures. But, the state government never published a public notice in educating the public on this aspect.”

Sources said many NOCs, issued by the BDOs, were given on back dates (between 2000 and 2004) and on the city outskirts 75 per cent multi-storeyed structures were given NOCs by the BDOs only, who are now retired. A probe can be ordered into the episode as many structures came up much later whereas an NOC is valid only for two years only.

“If NOC validity is limited, how these builders are using them for a limitless period and why authorities are silent,” said Trinath Ojha, a resident of a flood-affected apartment block at Sundarpada.

Planning member of the development body Prashant Kumar Patnaik said the process had already started to have a full-fledged squad with adequate police personnel.

“In the newly inducted area, the interim development plan will be developed on priority basis and the flood zones and drainage channels will be marked and notified. As the zonal development plan has already started in the 419sqkm old plan area, the flood mapping should be better organised in the comprehensive development plan,” he said.

Snake Menace in Flood Affected Areas of Orissa

Report by Akshya Rout; Jajpur: Prakash Sahoo (45) of flood affected Mirzapur village in Jajpur district is a worried man as his wife and three children are scared to sleep under a makeshift tarpaulin tent pitched on an embankment with poisonous snakes slithering around.

"I was awake the whole night to guard against snakes which were seen in large numbers in the area," said Prakash a farmer whose three roomed thatched house collapsed in the gushing flood water on Sunday.

Thousands of flood affected persons were taking shelter in highlands and embankments after the surging floodwaters inundated a large area of the district.

"On one hand we are facing the wrath of the floods and on the other we are constantly worried about possible snake bites. It is a real big problem with snakes taking shelter inside homes and even in certain relief camps set up on raised platforms" said Sabita Jena (45) of village Nalipur .

"The fear of snakebites is so serious that people are now terrified to sleep at night with snakes of all sizes moving around," said Suren Das, another villager of Balichandrapur.

Overflowing rivers have sent thousands of snakes slithering into flooded towns and homes and even boats as they take refuge from the water.

They pose a real threat to rescue and clean-up crews working in the flood affected Kendrapada district. The floodwaters have forced thousands of snakes to swim through flooded towns in search of higher ground.

A rescue crew manning a flood relief boat in Bari , reported snakes swimming up to their vessel and trying to get on board.

A plague of snakes has hit flood-ravaged areas and is sending scared locals on shooting sprees. In some flood affected areas residents have begun killing on the reptiles from their verandas as rising waters send them slithering to higher ground. In flood affected Dasarathpur on Sunday marooned villagers killed about 24 snakes.

"There's a massive snake situation happening up there and people standing on their verandahs killing snakes," Ramakanta Jena of Dasarathpur.

Many snakes are climbing trees and hiding in people's houses as they search for dry refuge.

"The snakes are a massive problem, I have shut all the doors and windows because reptiles are coming in," said Madan Mohan Sahoo (54) of village Bari who resides in his two storied house in village . "Water touched the ground floor on Sunday for which I along with some villagers shifted to first floor, adding that her mother was "almost killed" by a snake on Saturday.

"My mother used a stick to flick the snake into the water", added Madan Mohan Sahoo.

"Snakes are naturally good swimmers and would not attack anyone who got in their way unless they were provoked.. The problem is they like to go somewhere warm and where it's moist and it ends up being people's houses," said Sudhanshu Parida an environmentalist and the secretary of Peoples for Animal.

The reptiles are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, which states snakes must not be killed unless they threaten life, added Parida.

Health authorities have asked people to be vigilant about snakes, with the reptiles taking shelter inside homes and in makeshift camps as the land gets submerged by floodwaters.

"Anti-snake venom injection capsules and injections are being supplied to all the health centers and medical teams" said the Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO).

"Officially we have ten reported cases of snake bites so far. We treated both persons by giving anti-venom injections. But in many cases simply go unreported with the people taking recourse to indigenous methods of treating such things through quacks" said the CDMO.

<http://www.orissadiary.com/CurrentNews.asp?id=29306>

Orissa Government estimated flood damages at Rs 2,121 crore

Report by Pravuprasad Routray; Bhubaneswar: Orissa Government estimated flood damages at Rs 2,121 crore. This was said by Special Relief Commissioner Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra.

He said this after submitting the damage report to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at the State secretariat. He said the department-wise assessment of damages caused by the floods was estimated at `2120.92 crore.

The State Government has prepared a preliminary memorandum relating to the damages in the floods basing on the assessment details on the losses and the requirement of funds from the concerned district Collectors. The memorandum would be submitted by the State Government to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs on Thursday through a special messenger.

He said an estimated 34.44 lakh people have been affected by the floods and 1,16,706 dwelling houses have been damaged. He said 4,897 villages of 102 Blocks and 21 ULBs in 19 districts have been affected by the current floods which has taken a toll of 41 human lives with 10 persons still missing.

The livestock casualty including poultry stands at 1,667. An estimated 3.24 lakh hectares of crop land have also been damaged.

<http://www.orissadiary.com/CurrentNews.asp?id=29304>

Orissa: Jaraka Irrigation Division Suffers 21 Crores loss in flood

Report by Akashya Rout; Jajpur: In the recent devastated flood , river has breached at eight places and seven bridges were also washed away in Jaraka areas of Jajpur district as a result , the rural irrigation department in Jaraka suffered a loss of about 21 crores , said Engineer Purna Chandra Sahoo , K.B. N . Patra the executive engineer and assistant engineer Narayan Ojha of Jaraka irrigation division.

"To mend the damaged river breaches, the authority will spend Rs2.85 crores. 15 crores will be spent to repair the river embankments. 203 meter long breaches occurred in the river embankment in the recent flood. All the damaged river embankments and road will be repaired within two months. In many places, marooned villagers have also cut the river embankments to release the flood waters into the low line areas. All the breach sites will be stone-packed perfectly to prevent the onslaught of the gushing flood water in future, said the engineers.

“The authority will invite tenders through e-tender processes from the contractors to repair the river embankments and breach sites. 33 kilometer long roads have been damaged in Jaraka areas . all the roads will be built with concrete forms for long lasting “, said the enginners.

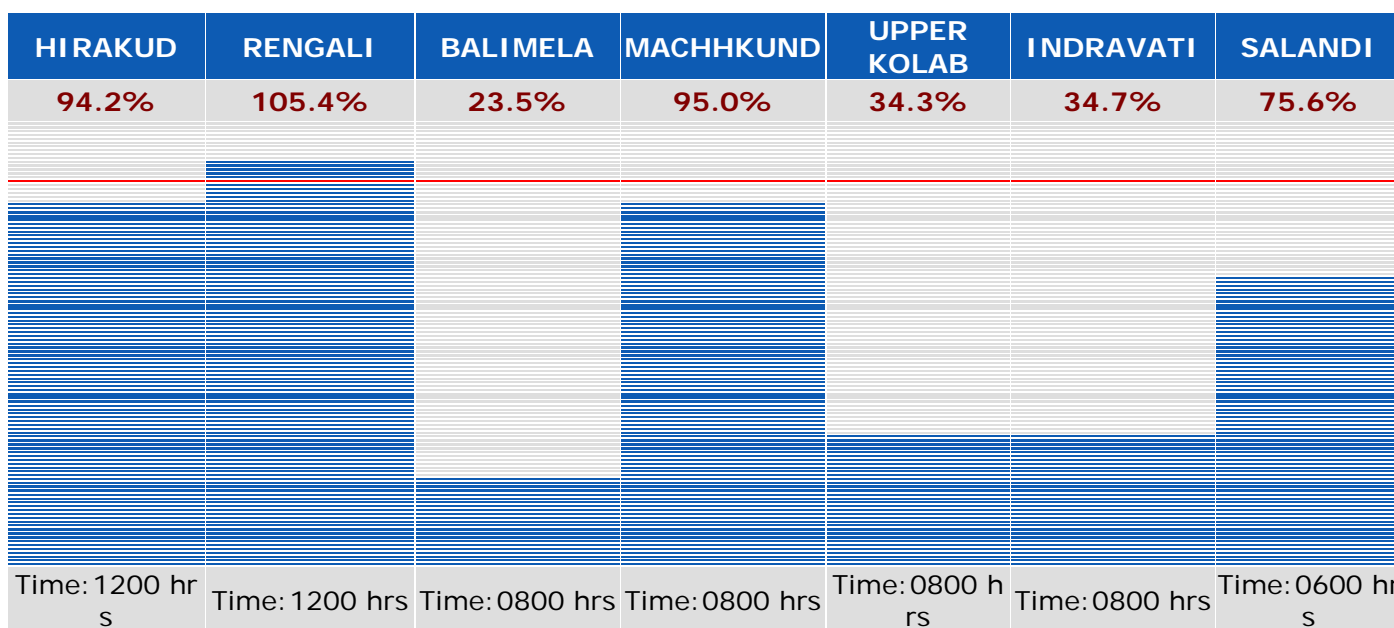
After the complete receding of the flood water, the officials will start the reconstruction works to mitigate the plight of the flood affected people of the areas.

<http://orissadiary.com/CurrentNews.asp?id=29305>

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STATS

Live Storage Filling of Major Reservoirs as on 23-Sep-2011



Reservoir Level & position wrt. Full Reservoir Level

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| RL: 628.54ft | RL: 124.15m | RL: 1466.1ft | RL: 2748ft | RL: 850.59m | RL: 632.2m | RL: 78.18m |
| (-) 1.46ft | (+) 0.65m | (-) 49.90ft | (-) 2.00ft | (-) 7.41m | (-) 9.80m | (-) 4.12m |

Reservoir Inflow & Outflow

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| I: 177069Cusecs | I: 9745.85Cumecs | I: 217.34Cume cs | I: 55.63Cume cs | I: 93.84Cume cs | I: 124.91Cume cs | I: 581.05Cumecs |
| O: 202483Cusecs | O: 6745.61Cumecs | O: 82.98Cume cs | O: 55.63Cume cs | O: 38.76Cumecs | O: 124.91Cumecs | O: 2.5Cumecs |

Live Storage capacity & Live Storage available

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Cap: 482155 Ham | Cap: 341371 Ham | Cap: 267600 Ham | Cap: 96993 Ham | Cap: 93500 Ham | Cap: 148550 Ham | Cap: 55650 Ham |
| LS: 454407 Ham | LS: 359731 Ham | LS: 62973.16 Ham | LS: 92110.84 Ham | LS: 32086 Ham | LS: 51557.33 Ham | LS: 42096 Ham |

The RED line corresponds to Full Reservoir Capacity

Source: <http://www.dowrorissa.gov.in/Flood/ReservoirGraph.htm>

MAIN WEATHER OBSERVATIONS (Recorded during past 24 hours)

Monsoon Watch

◆ From 0830 hours IST of yesterday to 0830 hours IST of today, widespread rainfall has occurred over Gangetic West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands; fairly widespread over Bihar, SubHimalaya West Bengal & Sikkim, northeastern states, Jharkhand and Orissa; scattered over east Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Konkan & Goa and Kerala and isolated over Uttarakhand, west Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat region, Madhya Pradesh, interior Maharashtra, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, coastal Karnataka, south interior Karnataka and Tamilnadu. Weather remained mainly dry over rest of the country. The chief amounts of rainfall (3 cm and above) recorded at 0830 hours IST of today are: Keonjhar-19, Ranchi-9, Dehri-8, Sundergarh-6, Silchar, Cherrapunji, Golaghat, Jamshedpur, Hirakud, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Churk-5 each, Gaya and Daltonganj-4 each, Gangtok, Guwahati, Chaibasa, Haldia, Kolkata, Contai, Champa, Bhawani Patna, Baripada, Port Blair, Car Nicobar and Hut Bay-3 each.

Synoptic features (based on 1430 hrs IST Observations)

◆ The depression over Jharkhand and neighbourhood has weakened into a well mark low pressure area over the same region. The associated upper air cyclonic circulation extends upto mid tropospheric levels.

◆ The western end of monsoon trough runs close to foot hills of Himalayas and its eastern end passes through Gorakhpur, Daltongunj, centre of low (Jamshedpur), Balasore and thence southeastwards to eastcentral Bay of Bengal.

Satellite Observations:

◆ Kalpana-1 cloud imagery at 1430 hours IST shows convective clouds over parts of east Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, east Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, west Jharkhand, West Bengal, north eastern states, north, east central & southeast Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. Low/medium clouds are seen over remaining parts of the country outside Punjab, Haryana, north Rajasthan and west Uttar Pradesh.

Major features of weather forecast (upto 1430 hours IST of 26-Sep-2011).

◆ Fairly Widespread rain/thundershowers would occur over east Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, east Madhya Pradesh, sub Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim and northeastern states.

◆ Fairly Widespread rain/thundershowers would occur over Gangetic West Bengal, Orissa and Jharkhand during next 24 hours and decrease thereafter.

◆ Isolated rain/thundershowers would occur along west coast and weather would remain mainly dry over northwest & adjoining central India and interior south peninsula.

Warning

◆ Isolated heavy rainfall would occur over east Uttar Pradesh, north Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, sub Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim, Assam and Meghalaya during next 48 hours.

Source: IMD

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Water Initiatives Odisha: *Fighting water woes, combating climate change...* more than two decades now!

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Please join our group 'Save Rivers Save Civilizations' at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/220598744649462>
Kiss the rain when you can, because water and abundance are falling apart...(Ranjan Panda)

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Water Initiatives Odisha (WIO) is a state level coalition of civil society organisations, farmers, academia, media and other concerned, which has been working on water, environment and climate change issues in the state for more than two decades now.