

PRECAUTION DURING MONSOON

As the Monsoon season breathes new life into the hills, painting them in vibrant hues of green and filling rivers with gushing waters, travelers are naturally drawn to these scenic landscapes. However, while the allure of mist-covered mountains, cascading waterfalls, and cool breezes is undeniable, the Monsoon also brings with it a host of challenges and risks, particularly in hilly regions. It is essential for both tourists and local authorities to recognize these dangers and take preventive measures to ensure safety and preparedness during this season.

Hilly terrains, though beautiful, are especially vulnerable to landslides, flash floods, road blockages, and reduced visibility due to fog and heavy rainfall. These factors can turn an enjoyable journey into a risky endeavour within moments. In light of the increasing number of accidents and disruptions reported each monsoon, proactive planning and awareness are crucial.

First and foremost, travelers must stay updated on weather forecasts and advisories issued by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) and local disaster management authorities. Postponing travel during heavy rainfall warnings or red alerts is a responsible decision. Likewise, choosing the right route and keeping alternative routes in mind can make a significant difference, especially if roads are closed due to landslides or flooding.

Equally important is the condition of the vehicle. Before heading into hilly terrain during monsoon, ensure that the vehicle's brakes, tires, headlights, and wipers are in optimal condition. Four-wheel drive vehicles are often better suited for steep, slippery roads. Drivers must avoid over-speeding and overtaking in blind spots, as winding roads become particularly treacherous during rains.

Carrying a Monsoon emergency kit is advisable. This should include essentials like drinking water, dry food, a flashlight, basic medicines, raincoats, umbrellas, a power bank, and a fully charged phone. Having a portable car battery charger, tow ropes, and a first aid kit is also recommended.

Travelers should also remain in constant touch with local administration, especially in remote areas. Informing someone about your itinerary and expected arrival time can be a lifesaving measure in case of emergencies.

From a governance perspective, local authorities must ensure timely clearance of roads, maintenance of drainage systems, and availability of helplines and disaster response teams. Signage alerting tourists of vulnerable spots-such as landslide-prone zones or riverbanks prone to flash floods-can prevent casualties.

Moreover, eco-sensitive tourism practices should be promoted. Reckless littering, off-road driving, and unregulated construction increase the fragility of already vulnerable hillsides. Sustainable tourism must be the guiding principle for all monsoon travelers.

While the monsoon transforms hilly regions into a breathtaking paradise, the hazards it brings cannot be ignored. A blend of awareness, preparation, responsible behavior, and institutional readiness can help ensure that people enjoy the season's beauty without falling victim to its fury. Let us all remember: a safe journey is the most beautiful journey.

Voicing concern only through UN desk route is not going to make Pakistan behave and yield occupied areas

UN could not execute Indian Complaint for 77Yrs-It is time to make a direct call on Pakistan to move out of POJK by an appointed day?

■ DAYA SAGAR

"Mein Congress Party Ko Kehna Chahta Hoon,Pak occupied Kashmir Aap Ne Diya Tha, Magar Lene Ka Kaam Bhartiye Janta Parti ki Sarkar Hi Karegi"," has said Home Minister Amit Shah in the Rajya Sabha on July 31, 2025, the 4rth day of debate on Operation Sindoor and since operation Sindoor is still live the resolve of 'BJP' Government has made more live the hopes of lakhs of POJK DPs-1947 families for return to their lands left behind in 1947when they were displaced from their hearths by Pakistani invaders.

The then Representative of India to United Nations Organisation had on 01-01-1948 filed a complaint before President of Security Council in terms of the instructions and text of the said complaint received by him through telegram from Government of India Dominion (Government of India).The brief of para -1 of the complaint went like <"1. Under Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, any Member may bring any situation whose continuance is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security to the attention of the Security Council. Such a situation now exists between India and Pakistan owing to the aid which invaders, consisting of nationals of Pakistan and of tribesmen from the territory immediately adjoining Pakistan on the north-west, are drawing from Pakistan for operations against Jammu and Kashmir, a State which has acceded to the Dominion of India and is part of India. The Government of India request the Security Council to call upon Pakistan to put an end immediately to the giving of such assistance, which is an act of aggression against India. If Pakistan does not do so, the Government of India may be compelled, in self- defence, to enter Pakistan territory, in order to take military action against the invaders. The matter is, therefore, one of extreme urgency and calls for immediate action by the Security Council for avoiding a breach of international peace" > .

In a way even after that still a low intensity war continued between India and Pakistan till

on 1st Jan 1949 ceasefire was officially called. After that India has fought three high intensity wars with Pakistan .UN could not get the occupied areas vacated 'from' Pakistan and position has not yet changed even till June 2025.

After 1st January 1948 complaint and ceasefire of 01-01-1949 there was 1965 Pak initiated Indo -Pak War and then was again 1971 Indo -Pak where in Indian forces didenter Pakistan and although a new republic of Bangladesh was born out of Pakistan but Pakistan Occupied areas of Indian State of J&K(POJK) still remained unrecovered / freed from Pakistan.

Instead Pakistan continued its activities for destabilising development and disturbing peace in J&K through indirect means/ methods supporting the anti India elements/ militancy across J&K. The 1947 families (then over 40000 families local) displaced from the areas of Indian state of J&K occupied by Pakistan (Kashmir Valley 28% area) & Ladakh Region (41%) and Jammu Region 27.5 %) who have not been even given the claims by GOI for the assets/ properties left behind since they are not taken as ' 1947 refugees from Pakistan' but are taken internally displaced persons from some parts of Indian state of J&K and since it has been the policy of Government of India to rehabilitate them back in their parent villages/ cities after freeing the areas from Pakistan they are still hopefully waiting for retrieval of their 'lands' even after over 77 years now. There another about 10000 families of 1965/1971 times who have displaced during 1965 & 1971 from areas under Pakistan control.

Not only that with the anti India designs of Pakistan over 60000 families (comprising of 'State Subjects/ Permanent Residents' of J&K and some non- permanent residents of J&K) were forced to desert their homes/ hearths in Kashmir Valley in 1989-1990s and since normal and secure social/civic environment could not be restored they are also staying away from their hearths for over 35 years now.



A Look through the Mist

With Kashmir Valley in particular the areas along the LOC being violated through direct/ indirect activities steered by Pakistan Government large amount of material/ emotional/executive energies of government pf India are being consumed in attending to Kashmir valley related political/ separatist/militancy/social issues where by the other areas of erstwhile state of J&K have also suffered of lack of attention / development in almost all sectors and particularly in horticulture/ agriculture, tourism, public infrastructure , employment generation, local crafts & industry and even surface transport links include rail.

If we go by the UN resolutionslike UNSC resolution -47 of 21 April 1948 (that asked for Pakistan to use its "best endeavours" to secure the withdrawal of all tribesmen and Pakistani nationals, putting an end to the fighting in the state) it could be clearly read that UN had then recognised Pakistan as aggressor and had that not been like that UN would not have asked Pakistan to pull back all its forces as well as the infiltrators that were entering/ had entered from Pakistan side. But ButPakistan did not start first actions that were needed as per Resolution -47 of 21 April 1948. Even nearly upto 77 years after that UN has not been able to make Pakistan withdraw . UNO has in a way failed to do its duty towards International community of which India forms the part .

Which was why instead of the 1947 POJK DPs returning back to their 'hearth's' in POJK areas Government of India had to see another mass migration of local Kashmir Valley population with nearly total Hindu population coming out for saving life & honour in 1990. Pakistan has continued to support and promote anti India elements and operations. In a way UNO has remained ineffective.

So it will not be unfair to infer that the then Narasimha Rao Ji Government (Pamulaparthi Venkata Narasimha RaoPM 21-06-1991 to 16 -05-1996; Congress MPs 252 and BJP MPs 121) too would have

sensed that voicing concern only through UN desk route is not going to make Pakistan behave and yield occupied areas. So it was on 22 February 1994 that Parliament of India while noting with deep concern that Pakistan instead of honoring UN resolutions had continued providing training support/ provisions to terrorists in camps located in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied 'Kashmir'/ providing material assistance to foreign mercenaries/ facilitating infiltration into J&K/ material & moral support to fringe separatist elements had sent a direct message to Pakistan through a Parliamentary Resolution that such activities /plans on the part of Pakistan were against the internationally accepted norms of inter-State conduct as also violation of the 1972 Shimla Agreement keeping in view that the State of Jammu & Kashmir has been, is and shall be an integral part of India and demanded (asked) that Pakistan must vacate the areas of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, which they have occupied through aggression...To be brief Parliament of India had on 22-02-1994pointedly demanded/asked that Pakistan must vacate the areas of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, which they have occupied in 1947 through aggression. And then it was for Executive(Government of India) to execute what Parliament had asked Pakistan to do (Pakistan must vacate).

But 1947 POJK areas still remained unrecovered and the 22nd Feb 1994 resolution remained unexecuted. India government has not done that (asked Pakistan pointedly) in black and white to vacate POJK areas by an appointed date till date (even nearly 30 yrs after that) which has surely been due to India being a votary of peaceful negotiations. So also is the question that needs to be further resolved and found answer in the meantime without losing any more time is what be done in case Pakistan does not respond to peaceful negotiations & notice for vacation by an appointed day and even UN remains ineffective?

To be continued
(The writer is a Sr Journalist & a known analyst of J&K affairs)

PM-KISAN: India's Global Blueprint for Empowering Farmers and Transforming Rural Economies

■ DR. PRAMOD MEHERDA & ARINDAM MODAK



In the journey of inclusive growth and rural prosperity, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) stands tall as a pioneering initiative by the Government of India. Launched by

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sri Narendra Modi, on 24th February 2019, it has profoundly impacted the lives of millions of small and marginal farmers and established itself as a global model for direct income support delivered through a fully digital, efficient, and transparent system.

Empowering Farmers Through Direct Support
At its core, PM-KISAN provides Rs 6,000 annually to eligible farmer families, disbursed in three equal installments of Rs 2,000 directly into their bank accounts via the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system. This streamlined, technology-driven approach eliminates intermediaries, delays, and leakages, ensuring every rupee reaches the intended beneficiary.

Since its inception, over Rs 3.69 lakh crore has been transferred, making PM-KISAN one of the largest digitally executed cash transfer programmes in the world. Beyond numbers,

it represents a shift in paradigm, from subsidies to empowerment, allowing farmers the autonomy to decide how best to utilise the support, whether for seeds, tools, education, or health.

A Game-Changer for India's Small Farmers

For India's more than 85% of farmers who own less than two hectares of land, the benefits serve as a crucial financial bridge during sowing or harvesting seasons. They relieve short-term cash flow stress, reduce dependence on informal credit, and provide a safety net in times of distress.

More than financial aid, PM-KISAN symbolizes inclusion, dignity, and the recognition of the farmer as a partner in nation-building.

A Triumph of Digital Governance

PM-KISAN owes much of its success to India's robust digital infrastructure. The JAM trinity, Jan Dhan bank accounts, Aadhaar biometric identity, and mobile connectivityhave enabled seamless delivery at scale. From self-registration to land ownership verification and DBT-enabled payments, the entire scheme'slifecycle is digital.

With support from State Governments, PM-KISAN operates as a digitally integrated, end-to-end model of governance. It has successfully unified land records, beneficiary databases, and payment systems across diverse geographies, creating a farmer-centric architecture unlike any in the world.

PM KISAN has also inspired Innovative projects in the agri-

culture ecosystem, such as the Kisan eMitra voice-based chatbot and the Agri Stack. The AgriStack is poised to deliver personalized, timely, and transparent services, enabling Indian agriculture to become future-ready.

Setting Global Standards

Around the world, direct benefit programmes are increasingly being recognised as effective tools for poverty alleviation. Yet PM-KISAN offers something unique-its sheer scale, speed, and digital integrity make it a replicable model for countries striving to reform fragmented agricultural support systems.

International institutions like IFPRI, FAO, ICAR, and ICRISAT have highlighted the role of PM KISAN in boosting smallholder incomes, improving credit access, reducing inequality, and encouraging adoption of modern practices. Its trust-based, unconditional approach, unlike conditional transfers in many countries, represents a leap forward in participatory and dignity-driven welfare delivery.

Catalysing Rural Development

PM-KISAN's positive impact goes far beyond individual beneficiaries. The infusion of predictable cash has revitalized rural markets, stimulated demand for agri-inputs, and strengthened household consumption patterns. It has played a pivotal role in empowering women, especially where bank accounts are jointly held.

Moreover, it complements other flagship schemes, such as Soil Health Cards, Kisan Credit Cards, PM Fasal Bima

Yojana, and e-NAM, by creating a holistic and interconnected rural development ecosystem. Its integration with the PM-Kisan Maandhan Yojana, a pension scheme for farmers, is a further step in building social security nets for India's agricultural workforce.

A vision for the future: Resilience, Equity, and Sustainability

PM-KISAN is more than a financial support mechanism. It is a transformative vision of farmer-led growth of the Government of India. By shifting from entitlement to empowerment, from assistance to autonomy, it redefines the contract between the state and the farmer.

As India aspires to become a \$5 trillion economy, initiatives like PM-KISAN form the foundation of inclusive progress. With continued integration of advanced technologies and a focus on climate resilience, sustainability, and precision agriculture, the scheme is set to evolve into an even more powerful force for change.

PM-KISAN is a story of trust, technology, and transformation. It is India's contribution to the world, a living example of how visionary policy, combined with digital innovation and political will, can empower millions and redefine governance for the 21st century.

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Rainwater Harvesting: A Sustainable Approach to Water Management

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Fresh water scarcity is a serious problem throughout the world for both urban and rural areas. It is become very difficult to mitigate the problem of water demand of rapidly growing population. Human developmental needs have placed an enormous strain on the quality and quantity of both underground and surface water. Changing weather and hydrologic cycles are impacting water security, access and quality. Presently many parts of the globe are experiencing localised floods, droughts, aridity and seawater intrusion during the different times of the year. The United Nations (UN) adopted a resolution in 2017, declaring 2018-28 as the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development. Water is an important resource for the development of any society and is helpful to maintain the integrity of the ecosystems. It is a critical resource for the growth of any economy. Water management is very essential to get the food security and prevent the soil erosion. It has been observed that demand of water has been increased almost eightfold in the last 100 years. There is availability of about 1,400 Million Cu. Kilometers of water in the world but only 0.003 per cent of this can be used for the hygiene, drinking, agriculture and industry. But all this water is not accessible because part of it flows through in to the rivers during the seasonal floods. The average annual rainfall overland is 1, 10,000 Km3, but about 70,000 km3 evaporate before reaching to the sea. The remaining 40,000 km3 is available for human use but two-thirds of it run off in floods. About 60 per cent area in India is still rain fed so the monsoon rains play a significant role in India. Global population is increasing at an alarming rate whereas the natural resources such as land and water are static. The world may face 40 per cent shortfall between forecast demand and available supply of water by 2030.It has been observed that the global water withdrawal grew 1.7 times faster than the population. Climate change may worsen the situation by increasing the frequency and intensity of floods and droughts, making water more unpredictable by altering hydrological cycles. Presently about 69 per cent of water withdrawn for human use is used by the agricultural sector, industry accounts for 23 per cent and domestic sector uses about 8 per cent.

In an age where water scarcity looms as a growing concern across the globe, finding effective and sustainable solutions have become paramount. Among the myriad of strategies being explored, rainwater harvesting emerges as a beacon of hope. Rainwater harvesting is an option in addressing the challenge on water scarcity. This involves the collection, storage, filtering and re-use of rainwater or recharging of underground water. Rainwater harvesting is happening in many parts of the world from Netherlands to Indonesia. Rainwater harvesting can reap economic benefits such as it lowers expenditure on water, enhances security during times of water scarcity. About 80 per cent of land is rain fed in the world and this land contributes about 60 per cent of food production. Rest 20 per cent comes under irrigated agriculture which contributes about 40 per cent of food production. It brings the self-sufficiency in the developing nations across the globe. The complexity of problems in rain fed agriculture is greater than that of irrigated agriculture. In India about 127 million ha cultivable land comes under rain fed condition which is approximately 70 per cent of the total cultivated land. Agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater and during the last 30 years food production has been increased by 100 per cent. Over 1 billion people across the world are involved in agriculture. And they generate about \$ 2.4 trillion in economic every year. Thus the importance of rainwater harvesting is increasing over the years. In India huge amount of budget is being invested on rainwater harvesting to mitigate the climate risks. Cost-effective technologies and an in depth analysis on rain water management are needed for the sustainable agriculture. There is need to adopt alternative food crops and irrigation practices for sustainable agriculture. Millets can be promoted under rain fed agricultural system as they can be grown with less water. Rainwater is recognized as the viable alternative to mitigate the demand of washing, sanitation and crop irrigation. It is also helpful to mitigate the demand of droughts. It will give the food security and reduce the impact on humans and environment. During rainfall 70 per cent of annual ground water is contributed by the states such as Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalya, Gujarat etc. There is 61 per cent contribution of recharge rainfall both from the monsoon and non-monsoon to the country's to the country's total annual

groundwater and the remaining 39 per cent recharge comes from other sources such as recharge from tanks, canal seepage, ponds and water conservation structures.

Given the escalating decline of groundwater levels and unpredictable climate patterns, rainwater harvesting is a practical solution to counter the consequences of increasing water scarcity. This practice can recharge aquifers, curb urban flooding and ensures water access in regions afflicted by the water shortages. Monsoon plays a significant role in the Indian agriculture as the major sown part of the country is still rain fed. The summer monsoon accounts for 70 to 80 per cent of the annual rainfall over the major parts of the South Asia. Timely rainfall is important for the Kharif season crops. Coastal areas of the country such as Tamil Nadu receive the much of the rainfall from the North-East Monsoons, between October and December. Average rainfall in India is 1183 mm out of which 75 per cent is received during the monsoon period i.e. July to September. This results runoffs during the monsoon period and thus there is need to work on the rain water harvesting so as to save the water for the rest of the year. If even 5 per cent of water is harvested, it would produce a substantial quantum of water to the tune of 900 million litres. Due to lack of storage infrastructure, and storage procedure only about 18-20 per cent of water is used. Thus, rainwater harvesting is very important. It is expected that about 24 million hectares of rainwater can be harvested by making the small structures for water harvesting. If monsoon water is properly harvested, 30 per cent of it can be harnessed for the Rabi season crops. About one tone of yield can be supplemented by utilizing the rain water. The remaining 70 per cent of the harvested water can be will help in recharging the groundwater aquifers which may help to raise the groundwater level by 2 metres. Our agricultural system is mainly depending on monsoon because we are growing water loving crops such as paddy and sugarcane. We need to grow less water loving crops such as pulses and oilseeds so that we can counter the erratic monsoons. With new innovations we can conserve the rainwater and ensure the bright future for our environment and crop production. Such as we can utilize the artificial intelligence in agriculture that can optimize the water usage. Rainwater harvesting can be very handy to increase the declining water levels. The

surface runoffs can be utilized efficiently. It can reduce floods on roads and roundabouts. Rainwater is simple, eco-friendly and economical.

Farmers use their own indigenous techniques to harvest rainwater. These innovations are helpful to mitigate their water needs. It is estimated that for every square foot of imperious surface, a one-inch rainfall will collect 0.623 gallons of water. We can harvest the rainwater at our rooftops of our houses. Rainwater is salt free and slightly acidic and plants can be grown with slightly acidic water. In India, different types of water harvesting structures are innovated, designed and used across the nation since old times. Through these techniques water is harvested by making small structures. These structures support the landscape and maintain biodiversity. These structures help to maintain the green cover and maintain flora and fauna in the environment. But with the passage of time these structures have become obsolete and their revival is needed. The govt. has taken several initiatives to manage the country's groundwater resources. These initiatives include formulation of master plan for artificial recharge to groundwater, circulation of a model bill to all the states/UTs and Implementation of the National Aquifer Mapping and Mangement Programme to map major aquifers. The other initiatives such as Har Khet Ko Pani, Pardhan Mantri Sinchayi Yojna, Atal Bhujal Yojana etc. focus on improving the ground water. Jal Shakti Abhiyan was launched in 2019 in 1592 blocks of the country. It is an innovative scheme focusing on the water conservation and water harvesting. Community based water management approach is needed. The focus should be given on the water reuse and recycling technologies. Smart water management system can help us to improve the reliability of water supply, reduce wastage of water and minimize the costs on water. The message of water conservation should be communicated at all levels through the information, education and communication so that challenge of water scarcity can be mitigated. Rainwater harvesting is a cost-effective method of conserving water. Although rainwater harvesting has been deemed as a fruitful concept, it has yet to bring the desirable results in rural India.

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