



1. Chennai's drinking water woes, made the 'crisis' viral, raising questions about choice of water governance strategies in India.

- Why Water Stress and Water Scarcity is becoming increased concern in India?
- How can water governance be improved in India?
- What steps need to be taken to address the challenges for water governance in India?



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In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

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What is the context about?



India's 'water crisis' took over social media recently. That India's cities are running out of water, coupled with Chennai's drinking water woes, made the 'crisis' viral, raising questions about the quality of the discourse and choice of water governance strategies in India.



Usually, a delayed monsoon or a drought, combined with compelling images of parched lands and queues for water in urban areas raise an alarm in the minds of the public. Similarly, episodes of inter-State river water disputes catch public attention.



India is a country which experiences both floods and droughts periodically and simultaneously too. The impact of global warming further intensifies the situation resulting in uneven distribution of rainfall, melting of glaciers and water availability.

Why Water Stress and Water Scarcity is becoming increased concern in India?



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Water scarcity is the insufficient availability of water resources to the demands of water usage within a region or a country.



Water Stress is a different thing than water scarcity, it is difficulty in accessing the sources of fresh water for use over a period of time which may result in further depletion of water in the region.



Inefficient water management and uneven distribution: In India, some regions have an excess amount of water for their needs or requirements while some regions are facing droughts or have less amount of water simultaneously.

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Improper water irrigation: as we know India is one of the top agricultural countries in the world so they need for the water for irrigation is very high. Traditional techniques of the water irrigation resulted in the loss of water due to evaporation, drainage, excess use of groundwater, etc.



Government several policies to farmers for providing free electricity and financial support for water extraction through tube wells and bore wells resulted in the exploitation of water.



Rapid urbanization, industrialization, population growth, demand for domestic use increases the demand for water in India.



How can water governance be improved in India?



The new institutional structures need to be in close touch with new interdisciplinary knowledge in water science and policy. For this, institutions of water science and policy research need to pay attention to the much-neglected social, political, economic and ecological dimensions and the schools of water engineering need to be encouraged to be at the forefront through coordinated and sustained research programmes.



The institutions should also work to build wider professional linkages with various parts of the Ministry of Water Resources and the RBOs



With limited availability of water, water security will depend heavily on technological innovations aimed at better efficiency of water use and better de-pollution from waste water.

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River Basin Organizations (RBOs) with institutional authority for keeping the river basin and groundwater aquifers in good condition and productivity need to be established. They can be responsible for allocation of river flows and ground water to competing needs and demands in the basin



Effective functioning of RBOs will depend on the availability of recent knowledge and quantitative scientific data on the movement of water along all the links within the hydrological cycle, for the respective basins.



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What steps need to be taken to address the challenges for water governance in India?

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First, India needs to reconsider the institutional processes for dissemination of knowledge about water resource management. There is a certain amount of danger inherent in the casual manner in which knowledge about water resources is legitimised and consumed, particularly in these days of ‘viral’ information.



Second, we need to recognise the crisis is not as much of scarcity as of delivery. The challenge is to ensure an adequate access to quality water, more so in urban areas where inequities over space and time are acute.



We need to also realise that with the country’s rapid urbanisation, demand cannot be met by groundwater reserves alone. For instance, according to the Delhi Jal Board estimates, groundwater meets just 10% of Delhi’s drinking water needs. The rest is met by surface water sources, most of it transported from outside Delhi.