

father's name) near the Mumbai Pune highway. 13 acres of this was acquired for the infamous Pavna dam at paltry compensation of Rs 25 000, but all 21 acres remain submerged, without any compensation or rehabilitation. (NAPM PR, The Hindu 15x08, 21x08)

Temples submerged by Bhakra to be relocated The Union Tourism and Culture Ministry has written to the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh that 12 of the 28 temples submerged behind the Bhakra dam 45 years ago when the project was completed in 1963 would be treated as monuments of national importance. The Union Minister has asked Archaeological Survey of India to take up the translocation work; some of the temples were built in the eighth century. (The Tribune 051208)

WATER SECTOR

Water issue plays crucial role in Rajasthan elections From the results of the Rajasthan assembly elections, it seems water issue has played a crucial role. In Tonk district, where people were killed in police firing two years while demanding water from Bisalpur Dam, the BJP, which was ruling the state then, could not win even a single seat out of four. In Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts, where too farmers were killed in police firing while demanding just share in water allocation during BJP rule in 2004, BJP could win only two of the eleven seats. In case of one of the two seats where BJP won, the winning candidate was a rebel Congress candidate who joined BJP just 10 days before the nominations. (The Tribune 111208)

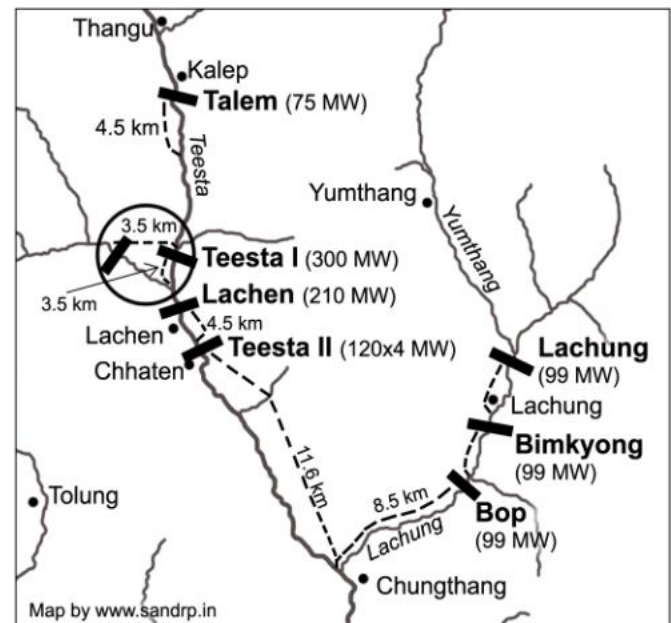
WATER OPTIONS

Check dams change face of a Vidarbha village Two check dams built over the existing percolation tank in the Dhangarwadi village in Yavatmal district in Vidarbha region in Maharashtra in 2006 has changed the face of the village. People are now able to take two crops in 70 ha of land. The two check dams have been built at a cost of Rs 3.5 lakh by Dilasa Sanstha, an NGO working in this region with average annual rainfall of 900-1000 mm. People that were not sure of even a single crop in this village are now sure of two crops in a year, with yields going up by upto 200%. (Indian Express 161108)

Lake renovated in Barmer The 700 year old Molap lake in Tirisingari Soda village in Barmer district has been renovated with funds from the UNDP and the Italian Development Council. The lake, 80 km from Jodhpur is helping the people of this village with 225 households and also some 20 neighboring villages. The village has formed a Jal Sabha (Water Assembly) and Jal Kosh (Water Fund) for maintaining the lake. The work of the village impressed Sweden's Crown Princess Victoria during her visit there recently. At Godawas, another village in the district, the school has a roof top rain harvesting structures and the students have formed Jal Dal (Water Group) and Gullak (Piggy bank). (The Hindu 25x08)

HYDROPOWER PROJECTS

MoEF cancels seven HEPs in North Sikkim



In view of the observation of Carrying Capacity Study of Teesta Basin as ecologically sensitive North Sikkim, Ministry of Environment and Forests have decided that projects above Chungthang area should not be considered for construction of dams and large scale developmental activities.

The Carrying Capacity study has been done by Centre for Inter-Disciplinary Studies of the Mountain and Hill Environment, University of Delhi which was commissioned by MoEF. MoEF has informed the state govt to scrap five projects- Teesta I (300 MW), Teesta II (480 MW), Bhimkyong (99 MW), Bop (99 MW) and Lachung (99 MW) HEPs, with a total installed capacity of 1077 MW, falling under this area. In reply ministry has not received any response from the state till date.

Besides these five projects, Lachen (210 MW, with NHPC) and Talem (75 MW) HEPs are also proposed upstream of Chungthang. Accordingly these two projects should also be scrapped which has not mentioned by MoEF.

In the meanwhile, a number of organizations (including Kalpavriksh, ACT, SANDRP) have written to the Expert Appraisal Committee of the Ministry of Environment and forest on the River Valley projects that the application for the scoping of the EIA for the Teesta IV hydropower project should be rejected at this stage itself, since if the Teesta IV project comes up, it will destroy the last remaining stretch of the Teesta river in Sikkim. More over that project would be in violation of the decision of the MEF, not to allow any dam with height above 80 m (from the deepest foundation level) on the Teesta River, even downstream from Chungthang. (Information received under RTI on 051208)