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72% wastewater remains untreated: Reuse after treatment, can solve India's growing water crisis

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Amidst growing water crisis, there is an important aspect that needs urgent attention. Data shows that out of the urban wastewater and sewage generated in India, a mere 28 per cent --20,236 million litre per day or MLD, undergoes treatment, leaving a substantial 72% untreated and allowed to flow into rivers, lakes and land.

All this treated water – and the remaining untreated amount if treated – holds an opportunity within itself--the opportunity to ease India's urban water crisis, says a new report from Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) that has been released now.

The report, titled 'Waste to Worth: Managing India's urban water crisis through wastewater reuse', was released at a national workshop organised jointly by CSE and the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG). Speaking on the occasion, Sunita Narain said, "India faces significant water scarcity challenges due to rapid urbanisation, industrial growth, population expansion – and most importantly - climate change. Wastewater reuse can be a key part of the strategy to address these concerns and promote water circularity and sustainability."

She is director general, CSE. Also, Rajiv Kumar Mital, director general, NMCG addressed the inaugural session.

Releasing the report, Rajiv Mital said: "Using and disposing treated water, without harnessing its potential, means we are losing out on utilising an important resource. The challenge is to scale up and ensure that the work we do in this sector is impactful."

The Jal Shakti Ministry has mandated that cities must recycle and reuse at least 20 per cent of the water they consume.



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future, and for managing the ever-growing demand for freshwater."

The CSE report points out that the gap in total sewage water generated and its treatment is the highest in Uttar Pradesh, followed by the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Haryana (in that order). Says Chakraborty: "Having said that, the report also highlights good examples -- cases of states that have introduced policies to encourage treated wastewater reuse."

Maharashtra, for instance, mandates industries in urban areas to use treated wastewater. Gujarat targets 100 per cent reuse with applications in agriculture and industry, and Tamil Nadu promotes reuse for industrial and urban greening projects.

Cities like Nagpur, Bengaluru and Chennai have taken the lead in implementing wastewater reuse practices. Nagpur supplies treated wastewater to power plants, significantly

reducing freshwater usage, while Bengaluru utilises it for agriculture, lake revival and groundwater recharge. Chennai has adopted treated wastewater for industrial applications, urban landscaping and groundwater recharge.

It also highlights the critical importance of prioritising treated wastewater reuse as a public good, particularly for irrigation and groundwater recharge, while ensuring equity and justice for underserved communities. It urges a critical reevaluation of treated wastewater reuse from both a policy and practice standpoint.

The urgency of water scarcity demands a fresh perspective on how we prioritise and utilise treated wastewater as a new and vital water resource. By promoting equity, fostering climate resilience, and advocating for sustainable water management practices, this report serves as a blueprint for building a robust framework for treated wastewater reuse across India.

After Assad overthrown, focus now on Syria's future

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As Bashar Al-Assad's regime has fallen and he leaves Syria, the biggest concern is that will Syrians finally be able to live peacefully and have the real independence. For over fifty years, the family controlled Syria. First, the father Hafez Al-Assad &

later the son. But the lightning speed at which the rebels reached Damascus, was no less than a surprise. Not just the international community and countries with stakes in the region, but the citizens were also in a state of shock and disbelief that the regime had crumbled. Once it was clear that the iron Fisted rule has gone, the prisons have been opened and the new era

has dawned, there was excitement within the country, even though people were skeptic and the question remains one everyone's lips--what next? Soon after Assad fell, the US, Turkey and Israel struck even as Syrians were dismantling the statues of tearing off posters and pictures of Assad and his father. Even as the world was taking note of the developments, Israel began its

strikes on Syria. Apart from US that is keenly following the events, Turkey is a beneficiary as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) now controls Damascus. UN envoy too met HTS leader Ahmad Al-Sharaa to discuss on the ongoing issues, transfer of power and the next steps. Over the last several years, Syrians suffered too much and now need peace & healing. {Report on next page}

Rebuilding nation is biggest challenge after decades of turmoil in Syria

The conflict in Syria claimed innumerable lives and displaced millions

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Over the last several years, Syrians suffered enormously due to the political conflict and insurgency. Now, rebels have managed to overthrow the regime.

But, there are multiple issues. Huge population had shifted within country and many among the millions who are refugees in other countries.

These Syrian migrants who've been living in Turkey & other nations, expect a return.

Rebels have currently seized the opportunity and initially it seems that they wish to have a smooth transition & power shift.

The instructions were given not to harass citizens irrespective of their past allegiance.

All the major players in the Middle East are keeping a close watch. For Iran, it is not a favourable situation and Russia was also taken aback. In fact, as expected, Bashar fled to Russia for safety.



In the middle east, countries have gone through turmoil and internal conflicts apart from external forces' intrusion and war thrust on these countries, repeatedly.

Yemen witnessed a humanitarian tragedy and Iraq suffered decades of political instability and internal struggle.

If this was not enough, the worst was the recent attack

on Gaza. Iran has faced sanctions and this caused a huge economic crisis for the country.

As Israel attacked Gaza, the internal displacement in Palestine, the worsening humanitarian crisis was already affecting the entire region. In these circumstances, stability in Syria is much needed for progress in Arab world.

The United States is in contact with the rebels. Meanwhile, UN has appealed to all the major players to ensure that there is no violence.

Post-Assad, it is going to be a huge challenge to rebuild the country that has been badly devastated and has its economy crippled.

Concerns remain about relations between different communities and faiths, however, there is also a silver lining that things could improve, now.

Syria has a population of nearly 25 million or 2.5 crore. It is surrounded by Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel on different sides.

A strategically important country in West Asia that has been a playground for Russia and other big countries.

The citizens now expect peace, healing and reconciliation, apart from focus on rebuilding the nation.

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Discussing the aspect of love in Urdu poetry and comparing the intensity of 'ishq' in poetry of Mir, Ghalib, Firaq & Sahir

Swati Sani talks about her journey in the world of Urdu literature and shares her insights at a poetic evening organised by Library on Wheels. She has been translating the couplets of master poets of Urdu.

Shams Ur Rehman Alavi

Great poets and their poetry came up for discussion at a poetic evening and conversation on Urdu shaayri.

The difference in the treatment of 'love' in the poetry of four major Urdu poets of different eras—Mir, Ghalib, Firaq and Sahir, was the topic of the event.

Swati Sani spoke at length about the difference between the 'lover in Mir's poetry and the kind of love is expressed in Ghalib's collection of poetry. As couplets after couplets were recited the audience were enchanted. The best of couplets of

these poets and their lives, the spiritual or divine love, the intensity of love and longing, was explained, through their ash'ar. Sai Deshpande had a lively conversation with Swati Sani & asked the latter about how she entered the world of Urdu poetry after a successful career in advertising. The concept of Library on Wheels was also explained, as it has been received well in Nagpur. Mayank and other members of the team, were behind this event. The audience applauded as couplet after couplet, the great shayars and their poetry was discussed live at the café Seven O Eleven.

