
C-PACT WATER BULLETIN

CPACT & WSP (Water Science Program) presents a monthly news bulletin of latest news from India and abroad on debates, concerns, and events related to water.

Water-Tourism-Consumption-Waste (Ladhak)

Sreedeeep Bhattacharya, Associate Professor, C-PACT

The carbon footprint of popular culture has rarely left such footmarks on an entire landscape like it has in Pangong in the last few years. The impact of the movie *3 Idiots* (2009) is so widely felt and visible that it does not really call for a before-after analysis of one of the most spectacular lakes in the world. Jaw dropping records from Leh Tourism reception center reveals that numbers went up from 77,800 in 2010 to 1,48,588 in 2011, which apparently is more than half of the entire population of the entire region of Ladakh. Between 2014-17, five and a half lakh tourists visited Ladakh out of which 2016 alone recorded close to two lakhs. There are close to 7000 taxis functional during the peak season between May-August and the number of tents along Pangong has significantly gone up. Popular imageries have encouraged tourism through simulated images that project the space as a site of fantasy and pleasure waiting to be collectively gazed upon. Construction and consolidation of such a gaze is often mediated through signage, which in this case is the massive commodification of areas surrounding the shooting-points of *3 Idiots'* climax scene, near Spangmik village. A range of eating, staying and selfie-points are named after the fictional figure – Rancho. The plantation of the replica of a yellow scooter (used by Kareena in the last scene) aims to take the simulated experience closer to the staged-authenticity, offering an easily identifiable signpost for visual consumption.

Tourism has flourished in Ladakh in the last decade also because of massive improvement in road conditions after the war in Kargil – making the road trip way more pleasurable. Frequent flights from Delhi make it possible to fly over the rouge terrain in no time these days. But, one must realize that it needs a lot of commodities transported from elsewhere to counter the challenge and restrictions imposed by a high altitude desert devoid of vegetation and to serve the ever-desiring tourists wanting to carry homely comforts no matter where they go.



Pleasure seeking requires delivery of facilities such as running hot water, western commode, well-cushioned beds, tasty food, clean water and many such amenities. In the absence of an exhaustive list of typical visiting and shopping sites selling a vast array of predictable tourist experiences, the restless tourist can often get bored here and seek all the comfort in the tent after reconciling with the absence of specific and predetermined sites of simulation. Hence more and more home stays give away to luxury tents. Most tourists are eager to perform the familiar even in a space that is so unusual. Such a scenario is apt for the entry of everything that is a part of a ‘package’ – packaged trip, packaged food, packaged water, packaged comfort of luxury tents. As the mercury touches subzero temperatures in October, the rush of organized mass tourists wanting all the domestic comforts and a possible duplication of their household facilities finally come to an end. Seeking familiarity of food, comfort, connectivity in one of the most environmentally sensitive zones lead to visually predominant abundance of trash and tremendous tampering of the local eco-systems. Along with the leftovers of one-time-use commodities, they leave being traces of their horrendous comfort-seeking desires in an otherwise inhospitable geographical locale.



Makeshift arrangements of superior self-indulgent materials lay barren – stripped off its flesh with bones exposed – often leading to the worst form of visual pollution against such a breathtaking backdrop. A sensational backdrop that otherwise deserves an immersive pause has been converted into consumerist rubble to cater to mass tourism.

While the upsurge of tourism in recent years may have provided livelihood to several families across Ladakh – increasing their consumerist aspirations – the increased tourist flow has led to the betterment of services desired by the packaged-tourists and creation of pockets of seasonal spectacles to be abandoned soon after the tourists depart. The material excess consumed during the season lay abandoned waiting for yet another onslaught in the next season. Even though Government of India has declared Pangong as a cold desert sanctuary and The High Court has issued all illegal business establishments to be removed from the vicinity, pictures prove otherwise. Most of these tent areas are leased out by locals for a sum of one lakh rupees per season to people mostly from Leh. Those who take it up on lease make that much in a week's time during the peak of a season. In my last five visits in the last eight years, I have observed additional makeovers on the shore of Pangong. Thousands of tourists visit Pangong everyday and the numbers are bound to increase in the coming years. The covered-up basins, commodes and pipes gaze at the uninvited tourist strolling in the off season as fragments of its former self and the lake-view is absolutely damaged by the chaotic assemble of these ruinlike materials.

To read full paper, click: <https://journal.equinoxpub.com/JCA/article/view/18842>

Latest News

Government Trying To Undertake Ganga-like Rejuvenation Of 5 More Rivers: Official



A scientific study on the lines of the Ganga river cleaning project will be done for Periyar, Cauvery, Godavari, Narmada and Mahanadi, another official added.

[Read More:](#)

NGT Directs Delhi, Haryana To Prepare Environment Plan For Najafgarh Lake



The controversy over declaration of Najafgarh Jheel (lake) as a water body, falling both in Delhi and Gurgaon in Haryana, led the National Green Tribunal Friday to direct both the governments to prepare an environment plan to prevent encroachments and construction in the area.

[Read more:](#)

UP govt to install 8,000 solar borewells, 35 per cent in Purvanchal districts



The details emerged during Chief Secretary Rajendra Kumar Tiwari's assessment of action plans prepared by various departments for the overall development of Purvanchal districts of the state.

[Read More:](#)

Need to focus on agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion and skill development: Study



Government needs to focus on areas such as agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion and skill development under the aspirational district programme, a study assessing the impact of the aspirational district programme has suggested.

[Read more:](#)

WB govt to provide tap water supply to 55 lakh households by March next year: Official



The West Bengal government has set a target to provide 55 lakh households in the state with tap water supply by March next year, a senior official said on Monday. He said the government has decided to provide tap water supply to at least 20,000 households daily under the "Jal Swapno" scheme and work for the same will start from October.

[Read more:](#)

Bihar man digs 5-km canal to bring water to his village



A man in Bihar's Gaya district has carved out a 5-km canal in over 20 years to bring irrigation water to the fields in his village.

The feat of Loungi Bhuiyan, a resident of Kolithwa village, makes one recall the toil of 'Mountain Man' Dashrath Manjhi, another native of Bihar who cut a road through a hill near his village in 22 years.

[Read more:](#)

Academic news: scholarships

Applications Invited for IWC Water Leadership Program Scholarship 2020/2021



For the 2020/21 round we are offering a total of 5 scholarships:

Two (2) scholarships funded by IWC (1 x full scholarship*, 1 x half scholarship*)

Two (2) scholarships funded by Clearwater (2 x full scholarships*)

One (1) scholarship funded by NSW Water Directorate (1 x full scholarship**)

[Read more:](#)

Queen Mary bursaries and scholarships



Worshipful Company of Water Conservators bursary

Level: Masters

Course: MSc Water and Environmental Management

Country: United Kingdom

Value: Up to £4,000

No. of awards: Various

Deadline: Thursday 5th August 2021, 5pm

[Read more:](#)

International Water Centre Scholarships for International Students



International Water Centre Masters (MS) Degree

Deadline: 1 Aug 2020 (annual)

Study in: Australia

Next course starts Feb 2021

[Read more:](#)

Conference/ Course/ Training Seminar Workshop/Contest:

Training-cum-Workshop on “Overview of Water Resources Sector in India” through Distance Learning for Media Professionals



Government of India

Ministry of Jal Shakti

Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

Department of Water Resources, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti is functioning as “Centre of Excellence” in the field of training and capacity building to water sector professionals in the planning, development and management of water resources.

[Read more:](#)

5th International Conference Water resources and wetlands



9 September 2020 09:00 - 13 September 2020 18:00, Tulcea, Romania

[Read more:](#)

The 2nd International conference on Water Resources in Arid Areas (WRAA2020) in Oman



21-24 Sep 2020 – Sultan Qaboos University, Oman

[Read more:](#)

Students News

ORIENTATION PROGRAMME: 17th August 2020 M.Sc. WATER SCIENCE AND POLICY



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