

Departmental preparedness made restoration of water supply possible

After 1999 super cyclone “FANI” was a great disaster in Odisha. Due to development of science, we could be able to know about the position of cyclone before it actually occurs. But it is a challenge for us to gain different comfortable to get as before. Post “FANI” there was bare necessity of water. During cyclone generally electricity disconnection made when the wind speed reaches about 55 kms. per hour. Before cyclone while there was disconnection of power supply, inspite of this severe loss was caused in electricity infrastructure.

The Housing and Urban Development Department in Government of Odisha has made all out efforts to gain normalcy in water supply during post FANI. Whereas in rural areas people depends upon wells, tube wells, ponds and canals as source of water, in populous ULBs, to provide water to the citizens, the Departmental Officers and workers were in readiness for possible disaster. During pre and post FANI, the way Officers and Staff took prompt action to restore water supply to the people was really a wonder and praiseworthy, said G.Mathivathnan, Principal Secretary to H & UD Department, Govt. of Odisha.

Public Health Engineering organization, under H & UD Department was well prepared in 42 ULBs where cyclone was expected to have impact by mobilizing 45 nos. of Senior PHEO Officers and arranging 102 DG sets, 169 tankers, 1356 PVC tanks which have been pre-positioned to ensure water supply in the urban areas. Due to restless efforts round the clock, including airlifting of technical experts and equipment from across India for repair of damaged systems & mobilizing DG sets, water tankers & PVC tanks from other states, the water supply could be fully restored to pre-cyclone status in all the 20 cyclone affected ULBs within 76 hours of the cyclone.

Before the onset of the cyclone all the storage reservoirs were kept full by continuous pumping operation. Enhanced water supply which enabled availability adequate stock of water at the household level & at all the storage reservoirs for next 24 hours.

On the day of cyclone, in the evening water was supplied from the stored reservers by gravity and supplied from water tankers and PVC tanks. Prepositioned DG set were made operational immediately after the cyclone to commence pumping from the production wells. Water tankers and PVC tanks were pressed into service at different places, so as to ensure supply and availability of water.

In Bhubaneswar, which was getting 70% of the area covered through Mundali system on 4th May, the technical exports from Kolkata reached the Mundali site at 6 PM on that evening and worked round the clock to make one of the two DG sets operational, thereby allowing 70% of the required water quantity for the 1 Million people to provide water by 5th May. The other DG set at Mundali, requiring equipment to be brought from Air cargo from Gujarat, reached at Kolkata and brought to Bhubaneswar site on 5th May. Simultaneously efforts were made for restoration grid of power supply at Mundali through Chandaka Grid which has 15 km long out of which 9 km is through thick reserve forest. Round the clock clearing the blockage of road of the uprooted trees, on war root basis, work could be completed on 8th May, providing 100% water supply to Bhubaneswar, Jatni & Khorda from 9th May onwards.

To provide water supply to the cyclone affected people in adverse condition was example of courage labour, sincerity and responsibility. Due to untiring efforts of the Departmental Officers, Workers, engaged labours and volunteers restoration of water supply in affected areas could be possible.