



# President of India inaugurates India water Week-2017

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The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated India Water Week-2017 today (October 10, 2017) in New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that water is essential to life. It is fundamental to the economy and to ecology - and to human equity. The issue of water is becoming still more critical in view of climate change and related environmental concerns. Better and more efficient use of water is a challenge for Indian agriculture and industry alike. It requires us to set new benchmarks in both our villages and in the cities we build.

The President said that currently, 80 per cent of water in India is used by agriculture and only 15 per cent by industry. In the coming years, this ratio will change. The total demand for water will also rise. Efficiency of water use and reuse, therefore, has to be built into the blueprint of industrial projects. Business and industry need to be a part of the solution.

The President said that in urban India, 40 billion litres of waste water is produced every day. It is vital to adopt technology to reduce the toxic content of this water, and to deploy it for irrigation and other purposes. This has to be part of any urban planning programme.

The President urged a water management approach that is localised. He stated that it should empower village and neighbourhood communities and build their capacity to manage, allocate and value their water resources. Any 21st century water policy must factor in the concept of the value of water. It must encourage all stakeholders, including communities, to expand their minds - and to graduate from allocating a quantum of water to allocating a quantum of benefits.

The President said that access to water is a byword for human dignity. For India, providing safe drinking water to a population spread across six hundred thousand villages and urban areas is not just a project proposal. It is a sacred commitment. The government has prepared a strategic plan for ensuring drinking water supply in all rural areas by 2022, when India complete 75 years of Independence. By that year, the goal is to cover 90 per cent of rural households with piped water supply. We **cannot** fail. The deliberations of this conference have to ensure that we **do not fail**.

Among the dignitaries present on the occasion were Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri Nitin Gadkari; Union Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, Sushri Uma Bharti; Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal; and Minister of State for HRD and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Dr Satya Pal Singh.

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