

## Visit of South Asian Delegation to Europe

09 March-13 March 2015

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As we all are aware, about 70 per cent of the earth is covered by water. However, thanks to the level of technological development, not all water could be utilized to meet the burgeoning demands from the various sectors of economic activities as well as for the basic human needs. Shortage of pure drinkable water, lack of access to water for the agricultural purposes, hesitation on part of upper riparian states to share water with low riparian states, thus creating water scarcity situation in the low riparian states, water pollution, hydroelectricity and dam building etc. are the issues which concern most of the South Asian countries. European Union in its endeavor towards sustainable water resource management through some of the best practices model such as the Water Framework Directive, the European Flood Action Programme and the Danube Region Strategy, has a lot to share with the South Asian countries in their efforts to evolve a coherent strategy for the whole region to develop better coordination among these countries in terms of integrated water resource management inside their border and cross border river governance mechanism for water sharing and management. It was felt that a visit by a delegation from South Asian countries to Europe would facilitate a cross-exchange of experiences between Europe and South Asian countries in terms of water resource management.

It was in this direction that Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) organised a visit of the delegation from South Asian countries comprising India, Bangladesh and Nepal to Brussels (Belgium) and Bavaria (Germany) in Europe from 09 March to 13 March 2015 on the theme of water resource management. The delegation comprises following people:

1. **Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha**, Research Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), Delhi, India
2. **Ms. Madhavi Joshi**, Programme Director, Centre for Environment Education (West), Gujarat, India
3. **Dr. Anirban Ganguly**, Director, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation (SPMRF), Delhi, India
4. **Mr. Deepak Gyawali**, Academician, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Kathmandu, Nepal
5. **Mr. Md. Sarfaraz Wahed**, Director, Water Resources Division, Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), Dhaka, Bangladesh
6. **Dr. Ranjana Kumari**, Director, Centre for Social Research, Delhi, India

### Visit of Brussels

#### 09 March 2015

The delegates held discussions with European Union (EU) institutions and many think tanks in Brussels on issues related to water resource management in South Asia. The delegates interacted extensively with the various dignitaries from European Commission. They met the Director General (Environment) European Commission to discuss water scarcity and flood prevention in special reference to managing the cross border challenges. They had a meeting with the Director General (Regional and Urban Policy) to develop an understanding of the European Strategy for the Danube Region, a region which stretches from Black Forest (Germany) to Black Sea (Romania-Ukraine-Moldova). This region is home to about 115 million inhabitants. This should be useful in evolving a coherent strategy for the region which has transnational rivers in South Asia, e.g. the model could

possibly be replicated around the region formed by the Ganges and its tributaries in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. The delegates also met with the representatives of the International Mass Commission to know in details the cross-border governance of the River Mass. The representatives detailed about the challenges the Commission faces and the best practices they have evolved to manage cross border governance in more effective way.

It is not just the river water sharing which affects various aspects of life in South Asia but also how to clean up the water and make it usable for the burgeoning population. Fresh and drinkable water and supply thereof to the populace in South Asian Countries is the urgent need of the hour. The experience sharing of integrated water resource management and exchange of technology between Europe and South Asia would help a lot in improving the whole situation and creating a global common good. Meeting of the delegates with the European Technology Platform for Water (WasSTP) to discuss the European water sector in a holistic way and how the water sector is being improved was a step in the direction of experience sharing of water management with the help of evolving technology. Subsequently, the Director General (International Cooperation and Development, European Commission) while interacting with the delegation threw some lights on the EU support for sustainable water management in South Asia.



Delegation visiting EU Institutions

### **10 March 2015**

After interesting discussions on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> morning with the representatives of the EU, the delegation met at a Round Table on the theme of “Water—Source of Conflict or Promoter of Cooperation? European and South Asian Regional Cooperation in Water Management”, organized by HSF-Brussels, where the delegation interacted the experts from Universities, EU-offices and Embassies, and the interested Public.

The Round table started with the welcome speech by Dr Volker Bauer (Resident Representative, HSF India). He in his welcome remarks said that whether water was a source of conflict or promoter of cooperation depended on how one looked at it. He further said that it was a fact that we were living

in a water-stressed world. However, that had more to do with water resource management than the scarcity of the water. He suggested that given the multi-utility of water resources, Integrated Water Resources Management needed to be practiced locally as well as globally.

He encapsulated that the matrix of growing population and limited water resources in Asia, particularly South Asia, had posed a distinct set of challenges to the water expert and policy maker community. He also pointed out that there exist trans-boundary water disputes between the upper and lower riparian states in the region, for example, between India and Pakistan, China and India, and India and Bangladesh. However, those disputes or possibility of disputes could be resolved through talks and discussion among the countries interested. He also emphasized that one could also learn from the experiences of European countries on how they resolved their trans-boundary water disputes.

The following speakers participated in the Round Table:

- **Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha**
- **Ms. Madhavi Joshi**
- **Mr. Deepak Gyawali**
- **Mr. Md. Sarfaraz Wahed**
- **Pavel Misiga** (European Commission, DG Environment, Head of Unit for Water)
- **Paolo Ciccarelli** (European Commission, DG International Cooperation and Development, Head of Unit for Water, Energy and Infrastructures)

The Round Table was moderated by Mr **Ronald A. Kingham**, Co-founder and Director, Institute for Environmental Security.

After this round table, the delegation headed towards Bavaria.



Round Table on the theme of “Water—Source of Conflict or Promoter of Cooperation? European and South Asian Regional Cooperation in Water Management”

## Visit of Bavaria

**11 March 2015**

The delegation was welcomed at the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection by Prof. Dr-Ing. Martin Grambow (head of department Water Management & Soil Protection) and Dr Klaus Arzet (head “international river basin management”, Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection). Prof. Dr-Ing. Martin Grambow made a brief presentation to the delegation on “Water Policies and Measures in Germany and Bavaria” at the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection. This brief was followed by a round table discussion on international water issues.



Delegation in Munich: Dr. Arzet, Dr. Ganguly & Dr. Sinha (left to right)

**12 March 2015**

The delegation made a field visit to the renatured area of Isar River. The visit was guided by Mr Robert Harfmann, Water Management Bureau, Munich. Thence, the delegation together with Mr. Worst visited the water catchment plant at Thalham. During the visit, Dr Oliver Weis (water expert, Municipal Works, Munich) introduced Munich’s water supply and recovery system to the delegation. The delegation also visited the Reisach power storage, spiral chamber, ecologic protection at Thalham to have firsthand experience of hydroelectric energy production practices in Bavaria.





Mr. Harfmann (in yellow jacket) explaining details about Isar River



Dr. Weiss explaining Water Management at EMAS

From Thalham, the delegation reached Tegernsee to see the water plant there. Mr Josef Bierschneider (Mayor, Kreuth municipality) introduced about water treatment and removal concept to the delegation. The delegation was also informed about the Waste Water Association during their visit to Gmund at the Tegernsee Lake.



Delegates at the Waste Water Treatment Plant

Then the delegation had an evening discussion about water management at the Hanns Seidel Foundation's Training Center at Wildbad-Kreuth.



**13 March 2015**

The delegation, guided by Mr Dimitrios Nikolaidis (head of hydroelectric power plants, municipal works, Munich) moved towards Leitzach Pumped Hydro Storage at Lake Seeham in Vagen.



Mr. Nikolaidis explaining Energy Management at Leitzach-I

In the afternoon, the delegation held a discussion on “The Mandate and Work of German Political Foundations in the German Foreign Development Policy” with Dr Dietmar Ehm, Head of division for policy issues, Institute for International Cooperation, Hanns Seidel Foundation. It was followed by another discussion on “Inter-State-Water-Management in South Asia” with Waltina Scheumann, research fellow, German Development Institute and Dr Daniel Karthe, research fellow, Department Aquatic Ecosystem Analysis and Management, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research.

The delegation also participated in the International Conference on water management at the Conference Centre of Hanns Seidel Foundation. In the Conference, Dr. Dietmar Ehm, HSF, made the introduction and the Key note speech was delivered by Prof. Dr-Ing. Martin Grambow. This followed by a panel discussion on “Water in South Asia”. The following expert speakers were in the panel discussion:

- Prof. Dr-Ing. Martin Grambow
- Dr Waltina Scheumann, research fellow, German Development Institute
- Dr Uttam Kumar Sinha
- Md Sarfaraz Wahed

The delegation visit ends here.



Water Management Conference at HSF Head Office in Munich

Also see the reports from HSF Head Office, Munich :

**Auf dem Weg zu einem besseren Wassermanagement,**  
<http://www.hss.de/internationale-arbeit/themen/themen-2015/auf-dem-weg-zu-einem-besseren-wassermanagement.html>

**Transnationales Wassermanagement in Südasien und Europa,**  
<http://www.hss.de/internationale-arbeit/themen/themen-2015/transnationales-wassermanagement-in-suedasien-und-europa.html>