

Waterman takes to streets against 3rd Hindon bridge

WEDNESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2012 14:18 SP SINGH | GHAZIABAD

'Waterman of India' Rajender Singh along with residents of Ghaziabad staged a dharna against the proposed third Hindon Bridge claiming that the Hindon Air Force station is in danger. Singh, a well-known water conservationist from Rajasthan and a Magsaysay awardee, said it is not merely a case of water flooding towards Hindon Air Base through the agricultural land of Karhera village but the basic issue is that the irrigation department of UP diverted the Hindon river water flow towards Hindon Air Force station endangering its establishment.

He alleged that it is the open loot of natural resources. The river has not been diverted by the department at its own some politicians were behind it who were benefited by diversion to protect their huge chunk of land in riverbed. "Due to this diversion, simultaneously water is flowing towards the strategically located airbase, the river naturally had to flow through farmers land destroying their crops," he added.

Vikrant Sharma, an environmentalist and member Jal Biradari, who had filed petition before the National Green Tribunal (NGT), said, "We had raised this issue when the foundation was being laid during the BSP Government but no one paid attention to us and hence we had to go the Supreme Court that referred our case to the NGT. Despite court direction the irrigation department continued filling mud in the river so we had to file contempt of court petition after which the NGT has fixed January 11, 2013 for the next date of hearing". Protesters claimed that the proposed third bridge over Hindon River in the city is an environmental hazard. The land filled by sand to erect a bridge has blocked the main water flow and forced the river to change its main water stream from original place to west side that would endanger the country's strategically located Hindon Air Force base.