

## URBAN HIMALAYAS RUNNING DRY

# Water insecurity in the region if timely action is not taken: New study

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A RECENT study covering 12 towns across four countries - Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan - in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region shows that Himalayan towns are facing increased water insecurity in the wake of inadequate urban planning, coupled with rapid climate change.

The study - first-of-its-kind in the HKH - shows that the interlinks of water availability, water supply systems, rapid urbanisation and the consequent increase in water demand (both daily and seasonal) are leading to increasing water insecurity in the region, Dr Anjal Prakash, Research Director and Adjunct

Associate Professor of the Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business (ISB), told The Indian Express.

This water insecurity is attributed to poor water governance, lack of urban planning, poor tourism management during peak seasons and climate-related risks and challenges.

The study, published in the journal 'Water Policy', also shows that communities in the region are coping through short-term strategies such as groundwater extraction, which is proving to be unsustainable. There is a lack of long-term strategies for water sustainability in urban centres, and this requires the special attention of planners and local governments, the study stipulates.

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