projects in cutting edge areas of life sciences and biotechnology such as stem cell biology, nanotechnology, biomedical devices and implants and advanced agriculture technologies. Different models of public private partnerships schemes have been launched benefitting so far more than 140 small and medium enterprises. Special schemes such as Innovation of Science Pursuit for Inspire Research (INSPIRE), Rapid Young Scientists Research Grants (RAPID), Young Innovator Fellowships (YIF) and programme for upgrading undergraduate colleges have been launched for attracting students to science with significant outcome. In health care, products such as vaccines and diagnostics kits for rotavirus diarrhea, malaria, dengue have been developed and clinical trials conducted. Through agricultural biotechnology, new crop varieties of maize, rice, wheat, chickpea, tomato and brinjal have been developed. The biotech industry during 2010-11 recorded a growth of US $ 4.00 billion (Rs. 17249.34 Crores) from the level of US$ 1.00 billion (Rs. 4745 crore) in 2006-2007.

(f) Does not arise.

Electronic Media under PCI

763. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal that the electronic media be brought under the ambit of the Press Council of India (PCI);

(b) whether PCI would be reconstituted as the Media Council; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) to (c) Press Council of India has proposed to bring electronic media also under its jurisdiction by amendment in the Press Council Act, 1978. The Press Council of India has also proposed to rename itself as Media Council.

The amendments to the Act are under consideration of the Government and if considered necessary, would be drafted carefully after wide consultation with the stakeholders and evolving consensus on the important issues relating to the media.

Water quality in rivers

764. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Water Commission has recently released a report on water quality in rivers of the country;

(b) if so, the salient features of the report;

(c) whether Government has found that the quality of water in rivers is deteriorating day-by-day and even unfit for consumption; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to improve the quality of water in rivers across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT PALA): (a) and (b) Yes Madam, Central Water Commission (CWC)'s Report entitled "Water Quality 'Hot-spots' in Rivers of India" has been released in October, 2011. The salient features of the Report are given in Statement-I *(See* below).

(c) CWC has informed that the quality of water in some stretches of some of the rivers has deteriorated.

(d) Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) has informed that conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. MoEF is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments for abatement of pollution in rivers through the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). Major steps taken by MoEF to improve the quality of water in rivers across the country include:

i. Action against polluting industries for not complying with the standards by State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB).

ii. Installing of sewage treatment facilities by urban local bodies,

iii. Formulation and implementation of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) by MoEF.

Details of steps proposed to be taken by MoEF to improve the quality of water in rivers across the country is given in Statement-II.

Statement-I

Salient Features of the Report entitled

Water Quality 'Hot-Spots' in rivers of India

- The report attempts to provide the water quality scenario of our rivers *viz-a-viz* Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) and other Standards. The report is based on the average values observed during the last 10 years at CWC monitoring Stations.

- High values of pH greater than 8.5 are observed during the Monsoon season (July - September) at water quality stations at Seondha and Gummanur. During the non-monsoon season (October - June), high values of pH greater than 8.5 are found at 12 water quality stations in 8 states. (BIS recommended range for pH is 6.5 to 8.5).

- High values of Electrical Conductance (EC) in excess of 3000 micro Siemens per centimeter, (µS/cm) are observed at 3 water quality stations spread in 3 states. (BIS recommended limit for EC is 750 µS/cm that can be extended to 3000 uS/cm in case of no alternate source available).

- One water quality station in the State of Tamil Nadu has Chloride concentration in excess of 1000 milligram per litre (mg/1). (BIS recommended limit for Chloride concentration is 250 mg/l that can be extended to 1000 mg/l in case of no alternate source available).

- Water having Fluoride concentration of more than 1.5 mg/l is not suitable for drinking purposes. Fluoride concentration more the 1.5 mg/l is observed at 15 water quality stations in 10 states. (BIS recommended limit for Fluoride concentration is 1.0 mg/l that can be extended to 1.5 mg/1 in case of no alternate source available).

- All the water quality stations of CWC have Nitrate concentration within the permissible limit.

- Water having Sulphate concentration more than 400 mg/l is not suitable for drinking purposes. Sulphate concentration more than 400 mg/l is observed during Monsoon season at one water quality stations in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

- The permissible Iron concentration in surface water is less than 1.0 mg/litre as per the BIS Standard for drinking water. High concentration of iron greater than 1.0 mg/1 is observed at 22 water quality stations in 6 states.

- All the water quality stations of CWC have Calcium concentration within the permissible limit.

- Water having Magnesium concentration of more than 100 mg/1 is not suitable for drinking purposes. Relatively high value of Magnesium in excess of 100 mg/l is observed at one water quality station in the State of Tamil Nadu.

- BIS has recommended 5.0 mg/l concentration of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) for outdoor bathing. Dissolved Oxygen below 5.0 mg/l is observed at 17 water quality stations in 9 states.

- BIS has recommended 3.0 mg/l concentration of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) for outdoor bathing. Relatively high values of BOD (more than 3.0 mg/l) are observed at 37 water quality stations in 14 states.

- As per CPCB guidelines, for outdoor bathing, the Total Coliforms count should be equal to or less than 500 Most Probable Number per Hundred milliliter (MPN/100 ml). Most of the middle and lower stretches of Indian rivers are high in Total Coliforms. It has been reported that stretches which are high in BOD have high Total Coliforms and Fecal Coliforms also.

- All the water quality stations of CWC have Arsenic concentration within the permissible limit prescribed by BIS.

Statement-II

Steps proposed to improve the quality of water in rivers *

- Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. MoEF is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments for abatement of pollution in rivers through the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP).

- The River Conservation Programme started with the launching of the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) in 1985 in the identified polluted stretches of the river Ganga and the Plan was expanded to include other major rivers under NRCP which presently covers 39 rivers in 190 towns spread over 20 states. The objective of NRCP is to check pollution in rivers and to improve their water quality through implementation of various pollution abatement schemes which include interception and diversion of raw sewage, setting up of sewage treatment plants, creation of low cost sanitation facilities, setting up of electric/improved wood crematoria and river front development.

- The sanctioned cost of projects is Rs.7638.48 Crore as on 30th September, 2011.The Plan is implemented on a cost sharing ratio of 70:30 between the Centre and States. For North-eastern States, this ratio is 90:10.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- The Central Government has constituted the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) in February, 2009 as an empowered Authority for conservation of the river Ganga by adopting a holistic approach. So far, sewage treatment capacity of 4418 million litres per day (mid) has been created under NRCP. With the pollution abatement works completed so far, despite significant increase in urbanization, industrialization and growth in population in cities along the banks of river, the water quality in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) values for major rivers is reported to have improved as compared to the water quality before taking up pollution abatement works under NRCP, based on independent monitoring undertaken by reputed institutions.

- Creation of infrastructure for sewage management and disposal is also being undertaken through other central schemes such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under state schemes.

Water sharing between India and Nepal

†765. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are various treaties and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) regarding water sharing between India and Nepal;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the names of rivers for which such treaties and MoUs exist;

(c) when the above decisions on water pertaining to each river were taken; and

(d) the details of action taken in each case, so far, after taking the decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT PALA): (a) to (d) In April 1954, the Government of India and the Government of Nepal entered into an agreement to undertake construction of Kosi project on river Kosi in Nepal, for mutual benefit including flood control. This agreement was revised in 1966.

Similarly, the two Governments entered into an agreement in December 1959, to % implement Gandak project on river Gandak in Nepal.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.