

Protection and preservation of small rivers

2321. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that many small rivers in the country are under the threat of drying up permanently;
- (b) whether Government has taken steps to protect and preserve such rivers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) Central Water Commission is observing Hydrological Parameters at 878 locations on major rivers and their tributaries all over the country. Analysis of the Hydrological data of last 10 years available with CWC does not indicate drying of any major river.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Decline in groundwater level

2322. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI:

SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the study of the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) which reveals that groundwater in Hyderabad, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Chennai, along with several other northern cities are declining at a rapid pace during the last three years;
- (b) if so, the reasons of decline and the number of cities which are almost bone dry;
- (c) what steps have been taken so far by the Ministry in this regard; and
- (d) what steps are being taken/proposed to be taken by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) to trace new aquifers using airborne electromagnetic techniques in various parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad has informed that one of their Scientist, in an interview with a Reporter of The Times of India, had stated that "ground water level in Hyderabad is declining at a rapid pace and more or less similar situation is prevailing in many big cities like New Delhi, Mumbai". However, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Water Resources, monitors ground water levels on regional basis four times a year through a network of 15653 observation wells located all over the country. Based on data analysis of last 3 years, decline has not been observed in ground water levels in Mumbai and Chennai. Declining trends were however, observed in the range of 0.14 to 0.77 meter (m)/year, in Hyderabad, 0.01 to more than 2 ml year, in Delhi and 0.015 to 3.9 m/year in Ahmedabad.

(c) A Model Bill has been circulated to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact ground water legislation for its regulation and development. Besides, Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has issued advisories to Chief Secretaries of States and Administrators of UTs having over-exploited blocks so as to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water/rainwater harvesting. CGWA has also taken up with various Central and State Government organizations for adopting rainwater harvesting and recharge to the ground water.

(d) During 2012-13, CGWB has undertaken Pilot Project on aquifer mapping in 6 areas in the States of Maharashtra (part of Nagpur district), Rajasthan (parts of Dausa and Jaisalmer districts), Bihar (part of Patna district), Karnataka (part of Tumkur district) and Tamilnadu (part of Cuddalore district) using advanced geophysical techniques to test the efficacy of technologies in mapping of aquifers in different hydro-geological terrain.

Financial assistance under AIBP

2323. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received letters from the Chief Minister of Gujarat for considering Desert Development Programme (DDP) areas at par with Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) areas for providing financial assistance under AIBP;

(b) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to fulfil the said requests;