

(b) to (d) The ISWRD Act, 1956 has already been amended in the year 2002 in consultation with all the State Governments whereby adjudication of water dispute by the Tribunals was made time bound.

Further, the National Water Policy, 2012 *inter-alia* recommends:

"A permanent Water Disputes Tribunal at the Centre should be established to resolve the disputes expeditiously in an equitable manner. Apart from using the "good offices" of the Union or the State Governments, as the case may be, the paths of arbitration and mediation may also be tried in dispute resolution."

The Proposal to set up a standing Tribunal to adjudicate inter-state river water disputes in consultation with the stakeholders including the States is at conceptual stage. No time line has been fixed.

#### **Ground water level**

1998.DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that ground water in many parts of the country is getting dry;

(b) if so, whether any survey have been conducted to find out the areas where ground water is getting dry and what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any technique exists to maintain groundwater levels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when such techniques would be used in those areas where ground water is getting dry?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ground water is continuously being exploited for drinking, irrigation and various other purposes, due to which ground water level in some various parts of the Country has declined. Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Water Resources carries out ground water monitoring, four times a year in the Country on regional scale. Ground water monitoring data of CGWB for pre-monsoon 2013 as compared with decadal mean of pre-monsoon (2003-2012) indicates that there was a rise in water level in respect of 44% of the wells and fall in 56% of the wells analysed.

(c) Rain water harvesting, artificial recharge and conservation of water are measures/ methods adopted for maintaining/ augmenting depleting ground water resources in the Country.

(d) The Central Government promotes water conservation measures in the Country by supplementing efforts of State Governments for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources. Steps taken by the Central Government include:

- (i) Extending technical and financial support to States/UTs under schemes such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme; Command Area Development and Water Management; Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies for conservation of water resources in the Country.
- (ii) CGWB has prepared a Master Plan for artificial recharge to ground water in the Country.
- (iii) Setting up of National Water Mission with the objective of, *inter-alia*, conservation of water resources.
- (iv) Circulation of a Model Bill by the Ministry of Water Resources to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact ground water legislation for its regulation, development and conservation;
- (v) Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under the Section 3(3) of The Environment Act, 1986 has notified 162 areas in the Country where withdrawal of ground water for the purpose other than drinking is prohibited.
- (vi) Advisory by CGWA to all the Chief Secretaries of the States and Administrators of the Union Territories, having 'Over-exploited' blocks', to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water/ rainwater harvesting.
- (vii) The Central Scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation, under implementation during XII Plan, *inter-alia*, envisages participatory management of groundwater involving Panchayati Raj Institutions, local communities, NGOs and other stakeholders for ensuring sustainable management of groundwater resources in the Country etc.