

Uses of ground water

†3529. DR. VIJAYLAXMI SADHO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether water level in the country is rapidly falling down due to excessive use of ground-water for industrial, domestic and agriculture purposes;
- (b) if so, the measures being taken by Government to check it;
- (c) whether Government has formulated any policy for conservation, promotion and protection of water at national level; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Ground water levels in various parts of the country are declining due to continuous exploitation as a result of growth in population, increased industrialization and irrigation. The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has notified 162 areas in the country for the purpose of regulation of ground water development, wherein, exploitation of ground water for any use other than drinking & domestic purpose is not permitted. In addition, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has prepared a conceptual document entitled “Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water in India,” which envisages construction of different types of Artificial Recharge and Rainwater Harvesting structures in the Country in an area of 9,41,541 square km by harnessing surplus monsoon runoff to augment ground water resources. A National Water Mission, has also been set up to *inter-alia*, promote conservation of water resources. This Ministry has also circulated a Model Bill to all the States/Union Territories to regulate/control, develop, and manage ground water. Moreover, initiatives for water conservation and water recharge are being undertaken by the respective State Governments which, *inter-alia*, include conservation of water resources in the reservoirs and traditional water bodies, etc. Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to the State Governments through various schemes and programmes to facilitate this.

(c) and (d) Government of India has formulated the National Water Policy (2012), wherein, several recommendations have been made for conservation, development and management of water resources in the country. The salient features of the National Water Policy (2012) include need for a National Water Framework Law; water be treated as

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economic good so as to promote its conservation and efficient use; recognize ecological needs of the river; adaptation of strategies to address issues of climate change; evolve benchmarks for water uses; setting up of Water Regulatory Authority; incentivization for recycle and re-use; statutory powers to water users associations to collect and retain a portion of water charges; removal of disparity in stipulations for water supply in urban and rural areas; managing water resources projects and services through community participation and adequate grants to the States to update technology, design practices, planning and management etc.

Control of flood in Bihar

3530. SHRIMATI KAHKASHAN PERWEEN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kosi River is known as the “Sorrow of Bihar” as its annual flood affects about 21,000 square km (8,100 sq miles) of fertile agricultural lands thereby disturbing the rural economy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of steps being taken by the Central Government to control flood situation in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) In view of severe flood damages caused by river Kosi, the people sometimes call it as “Sorrow of Bihar”. As per State-wise data maintained by Central Water Commission for the period from 1953 to 2013, about 0.596 million hectare (i.e. 5960 sq. km.) of cropped area is affected by floods in Bihar annually, which includes cropped area affected due to floods in river Kosi.

The subject of management of floods falls within the purview of the States and the Union Government provides technical, advisory, catalytic and promotional financial support to all States including Bihar for effective management of floods in critical areas. The following major steps have been taken by the Government of India (GoI) to help Government of Bihar in control of floods.

(i) Ganga Flood Control Commission was set up in 1972 at Patna which advises the Ganga basin States on flood management measures. It has prepared