

High level of Uranium concentration in groundwater samples

2309. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether Atomic Minerals Directorate has found dangerously high levels of Uranium concentration in the groundwater samples taken in Lambapur-Peddagattu region of Telangana;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the proposed steps Government has initiated to safeguard the health of people;

(c) whether Government has any plan to undertake a high level probe in the matter and find out the issues involved to avoid major mishap in Lambapur-Peddagattu and adjoining regions, including Nagarjuna Sagar Dam area because of its close proximity of Uranium deposits and groundwater; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) to (d) The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) under Department of Atomic Energy collects environmental baseline data including ground water samples around the Uranium deposits, before mining is taken up.

As part of environmental baseline data collection around the Lambapur - Peddagattu region, Nalgonda district, Telangana, AMD has collected ground water samples from 25 private tube wells/hand pumps during the period November, 2018 to July, 2019.

Out of the 25 samples, four are from hand pumps used for domestic purposes and balance 21 are from tube wells used for irrigation purposes. The four hand pump sample locations (from which the water is used domestic purposes) have Uranium values in the range of 6 to 48 ppb which is below the prescribed safety limit (60 ppb) by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). The Uranium values in the balance water samples vary from 1 to 2,618 ppb. Thirteen out of the twenty-five water samples have Uranium content less than 60ppb. The data has been shared with Government of Telangana.

Most of the sample locations with high Uranium contents fall in cultivated land where the water is used for irrigation purposes. High uranium content in the ground water from granitic country rock is a common occurrence in such type of terrain.

In addition 17 surface water samples along the periphery of Nagarjuna Sagar Dam

area were collected and Uranium content was found to vary between 2 to 3 ppb, indicating no effect of the Lambapur - Peddagattu Uranium deposits on the dam water.

Further as per information received from Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, the supply of safe drinking water in Lambapur-Peddagattu area of P. A. Pally Mandal in Nalgonda district is by surface drinking water through 'Akkampally Balancing Reservoir' under mission Bhagiratha and the area no longer depends on ground water sources.

In addition, Rural drinking water is a State subject and Government of India supplements the efforts of State government by providing financial and technical assistance to provide potable water to rural population through the centrally sponsored scheme, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). While allocating the funds to States/UTs under JJM, ten percent weightage has been given to the population residing in habitations affected by chemical contaminants. The funds provided under JJM can be utilized for taking up schemes in water quality affected areas on priority.

Water conservation fee

2310. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRI VAIKO:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to levy water conservation fee, in order to discourage excessive exploitation of groundwater;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of other action plans for the conservation of water;
- (d) whether residential complexes and agriculture will be exempted, while charging the industries for commercial exploitation; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and by what time the action plan will be ready?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) to (e) Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under Section 3(3) of the 'Environment (Protection) Act, 1986' for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the Country. CGWA, in its latest water regulation guidelines notified *vide* Gazette Notification SO 6140(E) dated 12.12.2018 had proposed introduction of Water Conservation Fee (WCF).