

Illegal encroachment in ponds

†893. SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that ponds have a significant role in increasing groundwater table but most of the ponds have been illegally encroached upon, if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(b) whether Government proposes any plan to free ponds from illegal encroachments, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) and (b) Seepage from ponds under favourable hydrogeological condition may recharge the ground water, thereby raising the ground water table.

Works related to water resources development & management are planned, funded, executed and maintained by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Government of India provides technical and financial assistance to encourage sustainable development and efficient management of water resources through various schemes and programmes.

The matter related to encroachment of water bodies comes under the purview of the concerned State Governments. However, considering the importance of water bodies for socio economic development, Secretary (DoWR, RD & GR) *vide* letter dated 26.02.2016 requested State Governments to take necessary steps for keeping all the water bodies encroachment free. Further, Secretary (DoWR, RD & GR) *vide* letter dated 07.11.2016 requested the State Governments to take appropriate action in respect of inclusion of water bodies in land records, inclusion of water bodies as integral part of town planning process, strict action for the encroachers, etc.

'Draft guidelines for Conservation and Protection of Water Bodies' have also been circulated to the Central Ministries and States/UTs.

Promotion of rain water harvesting

894. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to promote rain water harvesting throughout the country in a big ways, if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.