

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA
REJUVENATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2814
ANSWERED ON 28.03.2022
DEPLETING GROUNDWATER LEVELS

2814. SHRI SANJAY SINGH

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware about the abysmal state of groundwater levels in various parts of the country;
- (b) if so, what are the steps taken by Government in this regard;
- (c) whether Government plans a national strategy on groundwater conservation, with consultations from the State Governments;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether Government is aware that despite depleting groundwater levels, the extraction continues in various parts for various purposes including agriculture (which is extremely water intensive); and
- (f) if so, what has Government done in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI
(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) is periodically monitoring the ground water levels throughout the Country on a regional scale, through a network of monitoring wells. During the November 2021, about 68.8% of the wells monitored in the country have registered the water level upto 05 metre below ground level (mbgl).

In order to assess the long term fluctuation in ground water levels, the water level data collected by CGWB during November 2021 have been compared with the decadal mean of November (2011-2020). Analysis of water level data indicates that about 70% of the wells have registered rise in ground water levels whereas about 30% of the wells have registered decline in ground water levels.

(b) to (d) Though Water is a State subject, Central Government has taken a number of important measures for conservation, management of ground water including effective implementation of rain water harvesting in the country, which can be seen at [URL:http://jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Steps_to_control_water_depletion_Feb2021.pdf](http://jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Steps_to_control_water_depletion_Feb2021.pdf). Some of the important initiatives in this regard are also given at **Annexure**.

Government of India launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in 2019 in 256 water stressed districts in the country in collaboration with States which continued during 2021 also to improve water availability including ground water conditions in the country. Further, the campaign “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister on 22 March 2021.

National Water Policy (2012) has been formulated by Department of Water Resources, RD & GR, inter-alia advocates rainwater harvesting and conservation of water and highlights the need for augmenting the availability of water through direct use of rainfall. It also advocates conservation of river, river bodies and infrastructure should be undertaken in a scientifically planned manner through community participation.

Model Building Bye Laws (MBBL) 2016 circulated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs include provisions for Rainwater Harvesting. So far 33 States / UTs have adopted the provisions of rainwater harvesting of MBBL-2016.

(e) & (f) As per latest assessment, the groundwater in the country is being extracted for various purposes with major extraction share (around 89%) have been reported from Agriculture sector.

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 grants 'No Objection Certificates' (NOC) for ground water abstraction in 20 States/UTs through guidelines which are modified from time to time. The latest guidelines in this regard with pan-India applicability have been issued on 24 Sep 2020. Other States/UTs, regulate ground water as per their extant guidelines/provisions.

Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal), being implemented in certain water stressed areas of the country, which includes activities like preparation of water security plan at Gram Panchayat level in participatory mode by involving communities to use available groundwater and surface water in an efficient manner in all the sectors including agriculture.

Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing Per Drop More Crop component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) which is operational from 2015-16. The PMKSY-Per Drop More Crop mainly focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through micro irrigation (drip and sprinkler irrigation system) to reduce the extraction of groundwater for agriculture.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) to (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2814 TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 28.03.2022 REGARDING “DEPLETING GROUNDWATER LEVELS”.**Important initiatives on management of groundwater resources**

Government of India launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in 2019, a time bound campaign with a mission mode approach intended to improve water availability including ground water conditions in the water stressed blocks of 256 districts in India. In this regard, teams of officers from Central Government along-with technical officers from Ministry of Jal Shakti were deputed to visit water stressed districts and to work in close collaboration with district level officials to undertake suitable interventions.

In addition, Ministry of Jal Shakti has taken up the “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) with the theme “Catch the Rain - Where it Falls When it Falls” to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country during 22nd March 2021 to 30th November 2021. The campaign was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister on 22 March 2021.

Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, RD & GR (DoWR, RD & GR) is implementing Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal), a Rs. 6,000 crore Central Sector Scheme, for sustainable management of ground water resources with community participation. Atal Jal is being implemented in 80 water stressed districts and 8,565 Gram Panchayats of seven States viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The scheme includes innovative recharge structures including rain water harvesting structures.

Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), in consultation with States/UTs, has prepared ‘Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater - 2020’. The Master Plan – 2020 is a macro level plan indicating various structures for the different terrain conditions of the country. The Master Plan - 2020 envisages construction of about 1.42 crore rain water harvesting and artificial recharge structures in the country to harness 185 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM).

National Aquifer Mapping and Management program (NAQUIM) is being implemented by CGWB as part of Ground Water Management and Regulation (GWM & R) Scheme, a Central Sector scheme. NAQUIM envisages mapping of aquifers (water bearing formations), their characterization and development of Aquifer Management Plans to facilitate sustainable management of groundwater resources in the country.

Government of India generally supports artificial groundwater recharge/water harvesting works in the country through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Prime Minister Krishi Sinchayee Yojana - Watershed Development component (PMKSY-WDC), ‘Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI) and Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies schemes’ a component of PMKSY.
