

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WATER RESOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3667  
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2006  
PRIVATISATION OF WATER SECTOR  
Pathak Shri Brajesh

**Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) Whether the Government is contemplating to hand over water management to private sector ;
- (b) If so, the details and the reasons therefor ;
- (c) Whether the Government has formulated any national water policy; and
- (d) If so, the salient features thereof ?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV)

- (a) No, Sir.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) The National Water Policy, 2002 (NWP) was adopted by the National Water Resources Council during its 5th meeting held on 1st April, 2002.
- (d) The salient features of the National Water Policy, 2002 are given in the Annex.

**ANNEX**

**SALIENT FEATURES OF NATIONAL WATER POLICY, 2002 (Annex to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.3667 for answer on 18.12.2006)**

Water is a precious national resource and its planning, development and management should be governed by national perspectives.

A well developed information system for water related data at national/state level should be established with a net-work of data banks and data bases integrating and strengthening the existing central and state level agencies.

Water resources development and management will have to be planned for a hydrological unit. Appropriate river basin organisations should be established for the planned development and management of the river basins.

Water should be made available to water short areas by transfer from other areas including transfer from one river basin to another, after taking into account the requirements of the areas/basins.

Planning of water resources development projects should, as far as possible, be for multi-purpose with an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach having regard to human and ecological aspects including those of disadvantaged sections of the society.

In the allocation of water, first priority should be given for drinking water, followed by irrigation, hydro-power, ecology, agro-industries and non-agricultural industries, navigation and other uses, in that order.

The exploitation of groundwater should be regulated with reference to recharge possibilities and consideration of social equity. The detrimental environmental consequences of over-exploitation of ground water need to be effectively prevented.

Careful planning is necessary to ensure that construction and rehabilitation activities proceed simultaneously. A skeletal national policy on resettlement & rehabilitation needs to be formulated such that project affected persons share the benefits through proper rehabilitation.

Adequate emphasis needs to be given to the physical and financial sustainability of existing water resources facilities. There is need to ensure that the water charges for various uses should be fixed such as to cover at least the operation and maintenance charges initially and a part of the capital costs subsequently.

Management of the water resources for diverse uses should incorporate a participatory approach by involving users and other stakeholders alongwith various governmental agencies, in an effective and decisive manner.

Private sector participation should be encouraged in planning, development and management of water resources projects for diverse uses, wherever feasible.

Both surface water and ground water should be regularly monitored for quality. Effluents should be treated to acceptable levels and standards before discharging them into natural streams. Minimum flow should be ensured in the perennial streams for maintaining ecology.

Efficiency of utilization should be improved in all the diverse uses of water and conservation consciousness promoted through education, regulation, incentives and disincentives.

There should be a Master Plan for flood control and management for each flood prone basin. In flood control and management, the strategy should be to reduce the intensity of floods.

Land erosion by sea or river should be minimized by suitable cost-effective measures. Indiscriminate occupation of, and economic activity in coastal areas and flood plain zones should be regulated.

Needs of drought-prone areas should be given priority in the planning of project for development of water resources. These areas should be made less vulnerable through various measures.

The water sharing/distribution amongst the states should be guided by a national perspective with due regard to water resources availability and needs within the river basin. Training and research efforts should be intensified as an integral part of water resources development.