

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1049

ANSWERED ON:03.03.2010

AVAILABILITY OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the availability of water can be increased from 10% to 20% by improving existing surface and ground irrigation arrangement in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether only 84% use of existing irrigation arrangement is possible in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has taken any steps to improve irrigation arrangements during the last years; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the prospective plan of the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT H. PALA)

(a) and (b) The average annual water availability of the country has been assessed to be about 1869 billion cubic meter (BCM) which may be considered to remain unchanged. It is estimated that owing to topographic, hydrological and other constraints, about 1123 BCM can be utilised for various purposes including irrigation. The National Commission on Integrated Water Resources Development (NCIWRD) has assessed the total water requirement for various purposes as 1180 BCM by the year 2050. In order to meet the growing demand for water, necessary measures are taken for conservation of water and their efficient use.

The National Commission on Integrated Water Resources Development has assumed that it should be possible to achieve the level of irrigation efficiency of 60% for surface water from the present level of about 35-40 % and that the efficiency of ground water can be increased from the present level of about 65-70 % to about 75 %.

(c) to (f) As per the available information, the irrigation potential utilized is about 85% of the irrigation potential created. A study conducted by Indian Institute of Management (IIM) has identified various reasons for the gap between the irrigation potential created and irrigation utilized which inter-alia includes :

- (i) lack of proper operation,
- (ii) incomplete distribution system,
- (iii) non-completion of command area development works
- (iv) changes from the initially designed cropping pattern, and
- (v) diversion of irrigable land for other purposes.

Several measures are taken by the respective State Governments for improving the efficient use of created facilities, which include extension, renovation and modernization of irrigation projects, Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies and Command Area Development & Water Management. Due emphasis has been laid on these measures in the XI Plan. Government of India provides central assistance to the Government through various schemes/ programmes, such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programmes (AIBP); Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM); National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies etc. Government of India also encourages rainwater harvesting and recharge to groundwater for conservation of water.