

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4559
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2010
CONTAMINATION OF GROUND WATER
Badal Harsimrat Kaur

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the over-dependence on fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals for surplus foodgrains has contaminated the ground water in various parts of the country and thereby caused serious ailments like cancer, hepatitis, cholera, etc.;
- (b) if so, the facts and details in this regard, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Union Government has received any reports from the State Governments including Punjab in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government on such reports?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

- (a): Excessive use of fertilizers in agricultural fields may be one of the causes of increase in the level of nitrate in ground water resulting in pollution of ground water. Generally pesticides damage liver and nervous system and some are also reported to be carcinogens and may cause cancer. However, Hepatitis is caused by virus and Cholera is caused by bacterial pathogen
- (b): Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), Ministry of Water Resources, during the course of ground water regime monitoring and after conducting various scientific studies have revealed the occurrences of pollutants beyond the permissible limit of drinking water standards (BIS-10500) in some parts of the country. As per the information received from Water Quality Division, Ministry of Water Resources 368 districts in 21 States /UTs including 17 districts in Punjab have shown localized occurrence of nitrate (>45 mg per litre) in ground water.
- (c): Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has not received any report from any State Government in this regard including the state of Punjab.
- (d): Does not arise.