

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1334
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2011
CONSERVATION OF GROUNDWATER
Naik Dr. Sanjeev Ganesh;Singh Baba Shri K.C.;Sule Supriya

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Planning Commission has pointed out that the country is likely to face water crisis;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the annual extraction of groundwater in the country is by far the highest in the world and the unsustainable over-extraction has lowered the water table to dangerous level, as midterm appraisal of the 11th Five Year Plan; and
- (d) if so, the measures initiated by the Government in the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. The Planning Commission, in the XI Plan document has pointed out that the total water resources availability in the country remains constant, the per capita availability of water has been steadily declining since 1951 due to population growth. The twin indicators of water scarcity are, per capita availability and storage. A 'per capita availability' of less than 1700 cubic metres (m³) is termed a water stressed condition, while if it falls below 1000 cubic meters, it is termed as water scarcity condition. While on average the country may be nearing the water stressed condition, on an individual river basin wise situation, 9 out of our 20 river basins with 200 million populations are already facing a water scarcity condition. However, the per capita availability of water works out to be 1625 cubic metres as per the current population of the country in 2010.

(c) Yes, Sir. As per Mid Term Appraisal (MTA) of the XI Five Year Plan, the annual extraction of groundwater in the country is by far the highest in the world and the growing dependence on ground water has led to over unsustainable / over extraction which is lowering the water table in many parts of the country.

(d) The measures initiated by the Government in the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) are :

(i) Artificial recharge projects are being taken up under the ongoing Central Sector Scheme of Ground Water Management & Regulation in priority areas viz. over-exploited and critical assessment units, urban areas etc.

(ii) Scheme of Dug well recharge was implemented during 2007-10 in Over- exploited, Critical and Semi-Critical assessment units of seven States viz. Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, underlain predominantly by hard rock terrain, to provide sustainability to the dugwells.

(iii) Various activities including mass awareness campaigns, training programmes, workshops, painting competitions etc, have been organized under the scheme of Information, Education & Communication of Ministry of Water Resources.

(iv) Ministry of Water Resources has instituted Bhoomijal Samvardhan Puraskars & National Water Award to encourage adoption of innovative practices of ground water augmentation and artificial recharge through people's participation. The awards aim to encourage the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/ Gram Panchayats/ Urban Local Bodies (for population up to 1 lakh)/ Institutions/ Corporate Sector and Individuals for adopting innovative practices of ground water augmentation by rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge, promoting water use efficiency, recycling & re-use of water and creating awareness through people's participation in the targeted areas resulting into the sustainability of ground water resources.

(v) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has directed all the Residential Group Housing Societies/ Institutions/Schools/ Hotels/ Industrial Establishments falling in the over-exploited and critical areas (Except in the water logged areas) in the country to adopt Roof Top Rain Water harvesting systems in their premises.

(vi) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has issued directions to Heads of Central Road Research Institute, National Highway Authority of India, Central Public Works Department, Railway Board, Sports Authority, Airports Authority of India, Civil Aviation, Youth Affairs & Sports to implement the Scheme of Ground Water Recharge along all National/State Highways and other roads, railway tracks and other establishments of Railways, all stadia and airports.

(vii) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) is not giving permission on extraction of Ground water for commercial activities in

notified over exploited areas.