

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:642
ANSWERED ON:08.07.2009
WATER CRISES IN THE COUNTRY
Chauhan Shri Sanjay Singh

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the water level of various rivers in the country is gradually decreasing;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, river-wise;
- (c) the quantum of river water utilized every year for irrigation and drinking separately;
- (d) whether any assessment of the water crisis in the country has been done;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (f) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

- (a) The analysis of the average annual flow data of major rivers in the country does not indicate any significant decreasing trend.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Year-wise information about utilization of river water for various purposes is not available. However, the present level of utilization of surface water has been assessed to be about 450 billion cubic meter (BCM).
- (d) to (f) The increasing population, industrialization and urbanization have resulted in reducing per capita water availability. In addition, there is considerable temporal and spatial variation in the availability of water resources. The over-exploitation of water resources and particularly that of ground water resources has led to decline in ground water table in some areas and also deterioration in water quality. Issues related to impact of climate change on water resources are also very important. Several schemes have been undertaken by the State Governments for conservation of water. The Government of India has also drawn up National Perspective Plan for optimal utilization of the water resources particularly through diversion of surplus flood water to water deficient areas. With a view to expedite early completion of schemes and utilization of water resources, Government of India provides assistance to States under its various Programmes e.g. `Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme` and `Command Area Development and Water Management Programme`. Assistance is also provided to the States under the schemes `National Projects for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture`, `Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dug wells` etc. Several measures have been taken by Government of India for ensuring sustainability of water resources. Ministry of Water Resources has drafted and circulated a bill for ground water regulation and management to all the States and legislation has been enacted by 11 States and Union territories.