

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4545

ANSWERED ON:03.05.2012

MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba; Dharmshi Shri Babar Gajanan; Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the current institutional and legal structures that deal with water in our country are inadequate which is the major impediment in achieving better management;
- (b) if so, whether the Government is taking measures to ensure that planning, development and management of water resources keep pace with current realities;
- (c) if so, whether there is a proposal under consideration of the Union Government to regularize and legislate on groundwater extraction; and
- (d) whether the Government has drawn any framework to achieve these objectives in water management especially demand side management for proper utilization and distribution of water in the country and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

- (a) There is a notion that the current institutional and legal structures that deal with water in the country are inadequate, fragmented and need urgent reform. The planning, development and management of water resources has to keep pace with current realities.
- (b) The State Governments take necessary action to ensure that planning, development and management of water resources keep pace with current realities. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Government technically and financially.
- (c) Water being a State subject, the Central Government has circulated to the States/ Union Territories the Model Bill to Regulate and Control the Development and Management of Ground Water to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation.
- (d) No, Madam. However, National Water Resources Council has adopted National Water Policy, 2002 laying down policy directives on water resources planning and management for proper utilisation and distribution of water in the country. The salient features of National Water Policy, 2002 is annexed.

Annexure

(Annexure referred in reply to the Unstarred Question No. 4545 to be answered on 3.5.2012 in the Lok Sabha regarding Management of Water Resources.)

Salient Features of National Water Policy - 2002

Water is a prime natural resource, a basic human need and a precious national asset. Planning, development and management of water resources need to 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 available to the country should be brought within the category of utilizable resources to the maximum possible extent.

Non-conventional methods for utilization of water such as through inter-basin transfers, artificial recharge of ground water and desalination of brackish or sea water as well as traditional water conservation practices like rainwater harvesting, including roof-top rainwater harvesting, need to be practiced to further increase the utilizable water resources. Promotion of frontier research and development, in a focused manner, for these techniques is necessary.

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 and smoothly. A skeletal national policy on resettlement & rehabilitation needs to be formulated so 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 a 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.

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.