

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1070

ANSWERED ON:25.11.2009

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

Basavaraj Shri Gangasandra Siddappa; Dhruvanarayana Shri R. ; Sule Supriya

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Water Policy has accorded first priority to drinking water in planning and operation of water resources system;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the challenges before the Government to solve the water scarcity in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has set up any committee to solve the water crises in the country as per the directives of the Supreme Court of India;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the causes identified by the Committee for the scarcity of water in the country; and
- (e) the effective steps/measures taken/to be taken by the Government to meet the shortage of water in the country?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) The National Water Policy has accorded first priority to drinking water in planning and operation of water resource system. Further, the National Water Policy provides that adequate safe drinking water facilities should be provided to the entire population both in urban and in rural areas and that irrigation and multi-purpose projects should invariably include a drinking water component, wherever there is no alternative source of drinking water. The Policy also states that the drinking water needs of human beings and animals should be the first charge on any available water.

As per the directive of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Government of India has constituted a Technical Expert Committee on water solution under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Science & Technology. The function of the Technical Expert Committee are as under:

"(a) The function of the Technical Expert Committee will be to find technical solutions, test validate and prove the feasibility of implementation of these technical solutions in different social contexts;

(b) The Chairman of the Committee will approach the Government for constituting an Empowered Committee of Secretaries under his Chairmanship to serve as the decision making body of the mission and to monitor and review the progress of the activities by the Technical Expert Committee; and

(c) The Committee shall undertake its task on war footing and shall comply with the guidelines issued by the Honorable Supreme Court."

The Plan Document for the Technology Mission: Winning Augmentation and Renovation for water, prepared by the Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology mentions that "problems associated with water can be broadly grouped as (a) availability of water, (b) poor quality of water for the intended use, and (c) indiscriminate use of a valuable natural resource namely water." The Plan Document further mentions that "the selected approach plan includes selection of about 25 different water related challenges in select locations and matching most appropriate technology solutions within the capacity of the local community to apply the solution in a sustainable manner followed by technical scale evaluation and proving of viabilities in credible sizes".