

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WATER RESOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:2  
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2012  
CONTAMINATION OF GROUNDWATER  
De Dr. Ratna;Singh Shri Yashvir

**Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) the amount of funds allocated and utilised to improve the quality of groundwater in the country during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of the recent report of the National Cancer Registry Programme regarding presence of heavy metals and lethal chemicals in groundwater in the Gangetic belt and if so, the details thereof and the factors responsible for this situation;
- (c) whether several States including Maharashtra are badly affected due to the presence of arsenic and other harmful elements in the groundwater;
- (d) if so, the details of the affected regions along with the level of the contaminants as compared to acceptable World Health Organisation norms and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the remedial measures taken by the Government thereon?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES ( SHRI HARISH RAWAT )

(a) to (e)A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 2 TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.11.2012 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING "CONTAMINATION OF GROUNDWATER" ASKED BY DR. RATNA DE (NAG) AND SHRI YASHVIR SINGH:

(a)Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has informed that 20% of the allocated funds under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) are earmarked for water quality problems. Further, it is indicated that the States may utilize upto 67% of funds released under NRDWP for improving water quality of ground and surface water. The allocation, release and expenditure under the NRDWP, State-wise for the last three years and the current year is given in Annexure.

(b)The National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research Under Indian Council of Medical Research has informed that there is no report to-date by the National Cancer Registry Programme regarding presence of heavy metals and lethal chemicals in ground water in Gangetic belt.

(c)Yes Sir. Some States are affected due to the presence of Arsenic and other harmful elements in the ground water. However, Maharashtra is affected by harmful concentrations of elements other than arsenic.

(d)According to the findings of the Central Ground Water Board and the States of Bihar and West Bengal, eight States have excess concentration of Arsenic, beyond the World Health Organization norms of 0.01 mg/litre. Besides this, 19 States have higher concentration of Fluoride, 20 States with higher concentration of Nitrate and 23 States have higher concentration of Iron. There are also reports of sporadic occurrence of heavy metals like Lead, Chromium, Cadmium and Manganese in the ground water of 13 States. Arsenic, Fluoride and Iron are mostly due to natural geological occurrence. Nitrate and heavy metals are both due to natural occurrence and man-made activities like mining, industry and waste disposal.

(e)Since in situ treatment of polluted aquifers is difficult, remedial measures are concentrated on providing alternate sources of water supply. The CGWB has assisted in identifying aquifers which are free from contaminants in the States of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Haryana.