

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4135

ANSWERED ON:21.03.2013

CONTAMINATION OF GROUND WATER

Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun;Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Jawale Shri Haribhau Madhav;Jeyadural Shri S. R.;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Ramkishun Shri ;Shekhar Shri Neeraj;Singh Shri Yashvir

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government is aware that crops are being affected by the presence of arsenic and other heavy metals in ground water and arsenic content has been found in grains produced in several areas of the country which has dangerous effects on human beings and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Central Ground Water Board carries out any survey for chemical quantity of water in shallow aquifers in different States;
- (c) if so, the details of such survey carried out by the Board during the last three years, State/UT and year-wise;
- (d) whether the efforts made by the Government to contain these harmful substances has resulted in reduction of these substances;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps taken or being taken to contain the harmful substances in ground water; and
- (f) the quantum of funds released to the States including Uttar Pradesh during the last three years and the current year for the purpose?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), a constituent organization of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), has carried out work in collaboration with Rice Research Station, Chinsurah, Hoogly, West Bengal. The contamination of arsenic in rice, including the dangerous implication of consumption of such arsenic contaminated rice grains in West Bengal is documented in the study. To overcome this menace, CSIR-NBRI has identified low grain arsenic rice cultivar (CN 1646-2, CN1643-3, Gotrabhog and Nayanamoni), which has been recommended for growing in the State of West Bengal. The level of arsenic in rice grain, ground water and paddy field soil in some districts of West Bengal are given at Annexure-I. Further, the arsenic level in the ground water collected from 5 districts of Uttar Pradesh being used for irrigation of agriculture soil is at Annexure-II.

(b) & (c) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Water Resources regularly monitors ground water quality of shallow aquifers on regional scale once every year including last three years during pre-monsoon (April/May) through a network of 10714 observation wells located throughout the Country. As per ground water quality data generated during various scientific studies and ground water quality monitoring, ground water in some parts of various States are contaminated by Salinity, Arsenic, Fluoride, Iron, Nitrate and heavy metals. Eight States have excess concentration of Arsenic, 19 States have higher concentration of Fluoride, 20 States have higher concentration of Nitrate and 23 States have higher concentration of Iron beyond prescribed norms. State-wise details are given at Annexure-III. There are also reports of sporadic occurrence of heavy metals like Lead, Chromium, Cadmium and Manganese in the ground water in 13 States.

(d) & (e) Since in-situ treatment of contaminated aquifers due to presence of Arsenic, Fluoride, Iron, Nitrate and Heavy Metals is difficult, remedial measures are concentrated on providing alternate sources of water supply. The CGWB assists the States in identifying aquifers which are free from geogenic contaminants. Besides, Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation (MoDWS) has informed that 20% of the allocated funds under the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) are earmarked for water quality problems. Further, it is indicated that the States may utilize up to 65% of funds released under NRDWP for improving water quality of ground and surface water.

(f) As per the information given by the MoDWS, the summary details of funds released under NRDWP during the past three years and current year upto 15.11.2012, State-wise including Uttar Pradesh are given in Annexure-IV.