

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:111

ANSWERED ON:05.12.2013

CONTAMINATED DRINKING WATER

Baitha Shri Kameshwar ;Bhagat Shri Sudarshan;Hussain Shri Syed Shahnawaz;Punia Shri P.L.

**Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the drinking water in various parts of the country including Bihar has been found to be contaminated with Arsenic, Fluoride and other chemicals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State/ UT-wise indicating the health-hazards likely to be fall thereby; and
- (c) the measure taken by the Government to provide the people with safe drinking water?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI)

(a) and (b) As reported by the State/ Union Territory Governments, including Bihar, into the on-line Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of the Ministry as on 28/11/2013, there were 78,757 water quality affected rural habitations remaining to be covered with safe drinking water supply in the country. State/ UT-wise number of such remaining water quality affected habitations which inter alia include arsenic, fluoride and other chemical contamination as on 28/11/2013 is at Annexure.

Prolonged consumption of drinking water with arsenic in excess of permissible limits may lead to arsenecosis (Keratosi and / or melanosis) disease. Similarly, prolonged consumption of drinking water with fluoride in excess of permissible limits may lead to dental, skeletal and non-skeletal fluorosis disease. Excess iron and /or salinity in drinking water are unacceptable to people because of unaesthetics, taste and / or odour. Prolonged consumption of drinking water with excess nitrate may lead to methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome) especially in infants.

(c) Rural water supply is a State subject. This Ministry supplements the efforts of the States by providing them with technical and financial assistance under the centrally sponsored National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) for providing safe and adequate drinking water facilities in rural areas of the country. Up to 67 per cent of the NRDWP funds allocated to States can be utilized for tackling water quality problems in rural areas of the country. Further, 5% of NRDWP funds are earmarked and allocated to those States facing problems of chemical contamination in drinking water and with Japanese Encephalitis and Acute Encephalitis Syndrome affected high priority districts. In addition to this, Government of India provides 3 per cent NRDWP funds on 100 per cent Central assistance basis to States for water quality monitoring and surveillance, which inter alia include taking up works relating to setting up of new or up-gradation of State/district/ sub-district water quality testing laboratories, providing chemicals and consumables to laboratories, providing field test kits/ refills to Gram Panchayats etc. Further up to 10 per cent of NRDWP funds allocated to States could be utilized for sustainability of drinking water sources which inter alia include artificial recharge of ground water and other methods, which may dilute the level of contamination in aquifers.

Further, powers to plan, design, approve, implement and monitor water supply schemes including optimum use of water treatment technologies have already been delegated to the State Governments.