GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4273
ANSWERED ON:20.02.2014
STUDY BY NGRI
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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the study of the premier National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) which reveals that groundwater in Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai,along with several other Northern cities is declining at a rapid pace;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether any steps are being taken/ proposed to be taken by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) to trace new aquifers using heliborne electromagnetic techniques in various parts of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State/UT wise

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE AND WATER RESOURCES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad has informed that one of their Scientist, in an interview with a Reporter of The Times of India, had stated that "ground water level in Hyderabad is declining at a rapid pace and more or less similar situation is prevailing in many big cities like New Delhi, Mumbai". Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Water Resources, monitors ground water level on regional basis four times a year through a network of observation wells located all over the Country. Based on data analysis of last 3 years, decline has not been observed in ground water levels in Mumbai and Chennai. Declining trends were observed in the range of 0.14 to 0.77 metre (m) /year in Hyderabad, 0.01 to more than 2 m/year in Delhi and 0.015 to 3.9m/year in Ahmedabad.

(b) The Central Government promotes various water conservation measures in the Country by supplementing efforts of State Governments for sustainable development, augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources. Steps taken by the Central Government include:

(i) Extending technical and financial support to States/UTs under schemes such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme; Command Area Development and Water Management; Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies for conservation of water resources in the Country.

(ii) CGWB has prepared a Master Plan for artificial recharge to ground water in the Country.

(iii) Setting up of National Water Mission with the objective of, inter-alia, conservation of water resources.

(iv) Circulation of a Model Bill by the Ministry of Water Resources to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact ground water legislation for its regulation, development and conservation;

(v) Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under the Section 3(3) of The Environment Act, 1986 has notified 162 areas in the Country where withdrawal of ground water for the purpose other than drinking is prohibited.

(vi) Advisory by CGWA to all the Chief Secretaries of the States and Administrators of the Union Territories, having 'Over-exploited' blocks, to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water/ rainwater harvesting.

(vii) The Central Scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation, under implementation during XII Plan, inter-alia, envisages participatory management of groundwater involving Panchayati Raj Institutions, local communities, NGOs and other stakeholders for ensuring sustainable management of groundwater resources in the Country etc.

(c) & (d) During 2012-13, CGWB has undertaken a Pilot Project on Aquifer Mapping in Six areas in the States of Maharashtra (part of Nagpur district), Rajasthan (parts of Dausa and Jaisalmer districts), Bihar (part of Patna district), Karnataka (part of Tumkur district) and Tamilnadu (part of Cuddalore district) using advanced geophysical techniques including Heliborne Transient Electromagnetic technique to test the efficacy of technologies in mapping of aquifers in different hydro-geological terrain.