GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:873
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2016
Misuse of Ground Water
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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ground water is a rapidly diminishing resource in India;
(b) if so, whether the experts from the Government have visited a few States to ascertain the ground water situation, if so, the details and the findings thereof;
(c) whether the Government has begun consultations with the States to frame a Bill to prevent the misuse of ground water, if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether management of water, being a State subject, has complicated efforts to manage water resources, if so, whether ground water exploitation and contamination has affected nearly 60 per cent of Indian districts; and
(e) if so, the steps taken by the Government to save the ground water and stop the misuse of ground water?

Answer

THE HON'BLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (PROF. SANWAR LAL JAT)
(a) At present, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and State Ground Water Organizations jointly assess replenishable ground water resources of the Country periodically with block/taluka/firka as an assessment unit. As per the latest assessment (as on March 2011), out of 6607 assessment units (Blocks/ Mandals/ Talukas/ Firkas/ Districts) in the Country, 1071 units falling in 16 States and 2 UTs have been categorized as 'Over-Exploited'. In addition, 217 assessment units are 'Critical' and 697 are 'Semi-Critical' on the basis of declining ground water level and stage of ground water development/utilization.

(b) This Ministry has deputed technical team having representatives from Central Water Commission (CWC), CGWB and other experts for on the spot study of water situation in Latur district of Maharashtra and proposed long & short term measures including excavation of bore wells, artificial recharge and rainwater harvesting and mass awareness programmes on water conservation and interlinking of Bhima and Manjara Rivers. The technical team(s) have also been directed for on the spot study of water situation in other drought affected/water scarce regions/areas of the Country.

(c) A Model Bill - 2005 has been circulated to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for its regulation and development which includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 15 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the lines of Model bill.

(d) The effective and sustainable management of ground water requires participation of all stakeholders including Central and State Governments. As per the latest Assessment of the ground water resource (2011) of the country jointly carried out by Central Ground Water Board and State Ground Water Department, the annual Replenishable Ground Water Resource of the country is 433 BCM, the net annual ground water availability is 398 BCM (Billion Cubic Metre). The annual ground water draft is 245 BCM and the Stage of Ground Water Development is 62%.

Ground water quality data generated by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) indicates that ground water in various parts in Ten (10) States for Arsenic, Twenty (20) States for Fluoride, Twenty One (21) States for Nitrate, Twenty Six (26) States and Union Territories for Iron, and Fifteen (15) States for Heavy Metals such as Lead, Chromium and Cadmium have concentration higher than the norms, on the date of analysis, prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards. However contamination in ground water is sporadic in nature.

(e) Following steps have been taken to save and stop the misuse of the ground water :
â€¢ As per Schedule-I of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the water conservation and water harvesting structures to augment ground water constitute a special focus area for MGNREGA works.
â€¢ During XI Plan, Demonstrative Artificial Recharge Projects were taken up under Central Sector Scheme "Ground Water Management & Regulation". The scheme on Artificial Recharge project under Ground Water Management & Regulation Scheme has been discontinued during the XII Plan period.

â€¢ A conceptual document entitled "Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water in India" has been prepared during the year 2013, which envisages construction of different types of Artificial Recharge and Rainwater Harvesting structures in the Country in an area of 9,41,541 sq.km for harnessing surplus monsoon runoff to augment ground water resources. The Master Plan has been circulated to all State Governments for implementation.
â€¢ Ministry of Urban Development in its Draft Model Building Bye-Laws (2015) has incorporated a Chapter on Provision of Rain Water Harvesting.
â€¢ Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under 'The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986' for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management has issued advisory to States/ Union Territories and Ministry of Urban

Development to take necessary measures for adopting rain water harvesting/ artificial recharge in all the Government buildings. Besides, 30 States/UTs have made rainwater harvesting mandatory by enacting laws / formulating rules & regulations / by including provisions in building bye-laws / through suitable Government Orders etc.
â€¢ CGWB has been organizing mass awareness programmes in the Country to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.

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