

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:794

ANSWERED ON:28.04.2016

Safe Drinking Water

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

- (a) whether India has the highest number of people without access to safe drinking water as per the report released by Water Aid , if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether India lags behind even the under-developed countries in providing safe drinking water to its people, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to provide safe drinking water in the wake of depleting water resources in the country;
- (d) the number and percentage of people deprived of safe drinking water in the country, State/UT-wise; and
- (e) whether the Government is aware of the poor management of water resources and poor planning and execution of water supply projects across the country and if so, the details thereof and the action taken / proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
(SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV)

(a) As per Water Aid report released on World Water Day i.e. 22nd March, 2016, India is among top 10 countries in the world with the largest absolute number of people living without access to safe water. However, the said report envisages the comprehensive details of the whole country i.e. including rural and urban population of the country. This Ministry, however, deals with rural drinking water supply only.

(b) As per the Water-Aid Report 2016, India ranks 1st in terms of absolute number of people living without access to safe drinking water. However, if it comes to percentage of the total population, India is nowhere in the top 10 countries where people are living without access to safe drinking water. As per the report, 5.9 % of Indian population is without access to safe drinking water.

(c) Rural Drinking Water Supply is a State subject. States are vested with power to select, design, approve, execute and monitor drinking water supply facilities for providing safe drinking water to their rural populace. The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation assists the States through Centrally Sponsored Programme, National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) to improve the drinking water facility in the rural areas of the country. 10% of funds under NRDWP are available with States as Sustainability Component which can be utilized for recharging ground water table which includes rain water harvesting also.

This Ministry has prepared a Strategic Plan for the rural drinking water sector for the period 2011 to 2022. Timelines of the same is as under:-

By 2017,

Ensure that at least 50% of rural households are provided with piped water supply; at least 35% of rural households have piped water supply with a household connection.

By 2022,

Ensure that at least 90% of rural households are provided with piped water supply; at least 80% of rural households have piped water supply with a household connection.

As on 25.04.2016, as per information provided by State Government on online portal of the Ministry i.e. Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), 51.04% of total rural population has been covered with piped water supply.

(d) As per information provided by States on IMIS, as on 31.03.2016, there are 328.77 Lakhs rural population residing in the habitations affected with the chemical contamination are at risk with respect to safe drinking water. The State-wise details of population and percentage of people at risk are at Annexure.

(e) Increase in coverage of drinking water to the rural population is an ongoing process. Most of the rural water supply schemes in the country are based on ground water sources and every year a number of schemes in the country stop giving the desired yield due to multitude of factors, the primary being depletion of ground water because of scanty rainfall and inadequate groundwater recharge. The schemes getting defunct every year is not solely because of management of water resources but mainly because of the depletion of ground water, water getting affected with contamination etc. To offset this, the Ministry is now focusing on schemes based on secure & perennial surface water sources. However, such schemes are expensive and have a long gestation period.

