

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:69

ANSWERED ON:27.11.2014

CONTAMINATION OF WATER

Azad Shri Kirti (JHA);Singh Deo Shri Kalikesh Narayan

**Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the contamination of Ground Water with arsenic is spreading across the country,if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is planning to take special measures to deal with the situation and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government monitors and record the arsenic contaminated cases and if so, the details thereof along with action taken to provide treatment and rehabilitate the affected persons; and
- (d) whether the Government proposes to chalk out any National Policy on the subject, if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (SUSHRI UMA BHARTI)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.69 TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.11.2014 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING "CONTAMINATION OF WATER" ASKED BY SHRI KIRTI AZAD AND SHRI KALIKESH N. SINGH DEO, HON'BLE M.Ps, LOK SABHA:

(a) Yes Madam. Ground water quality data generated during various scientific studies and ground water quality monitoring by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) indicates contamination by Arsenic beyond maximum permissible limit of 0.05 mg/l (as per BIS) in isolated pockets of ten States viz. Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(b) 'Water' being a State subject, necessary measures to address the problem of ground water contamination and providing safe water supply is undertaken by the State Governments. Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments. Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), under Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has carried out scientific investigations in and around some of the Arsenic affected areas including through exploratory drilling as a part of ongoing activity under ground water exploration to delineate arsenic free aquifers at selected locations, in the States of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Assam. The successful exploratory wells are handed over to the concerned State agencies for utilization. Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation supplements the efforts of the States by providing them 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. Upto 67 percent of the NRDWP funds allocated to States can be utilized for tackling water quality problems in rural areas of the Country. Further, 5% of the NRDWP funds are earmarked and allocated to those States facing problems of chemical contamination in drinking water.

(c) & (d) As per the information received from Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, as on 01.04.2014, 29.45 lakh people are at risk of consuming arsenic rich water in 1991 habitations. Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has covered 2184 habitations in the current Five Year Plan to ensure provision of arsenic free water. Details relating to treatment and rehabilitation are not maintained centrally.

Issues related to ground water management have been covered in the National Water Policy, 2012 adopted by the National Water Resources Council, inter-alia, comprising Chief Ministers of all States and related Union Ministers. "Safe Water" for drinking has been defined as a pre-emptive need, emphasizing necessary efforts for treatment of water (which includes ground water) and removal of all kinds of contamination – both anthropogenic and geogenic, like arsenic etc. The National Water Policy, 2012 has stressed on the need for mapping of aquifers to know the quantum and quality of ground water resources and arresting trends of declining ground water level in over-exploited areas.

The National Water Policy, 2012 considers ground water as part of overall water resources. Arsenic contamination is one of the type of contaminations for which the National Water Policy, 2012 stresses on remedial measures through continuing research and advancement in technology.

