GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1754
ANSWERED ON 28.11.2019

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

1754. SHRI VINAYAK RAUT
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SHRI RATANSINH MAGANSINH RATHOD

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the National Water Policy, 2012;
(b) whether the existing National Water Policy was found to be inadequate to resolve the various water issues and if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government plans to come out with an updated version of the National Water Policy and if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether the Government has conducted any meeting with the States to review the steps taken by various States on water conservation and the implementation of action plans to deal with the water supply situation and if so, the details thereof;
(e) whether the Government has also requested the States/UTs to constitute a committee to monitor the progress of water conservation/harvesting and if so, the details thereof; and
(f) the time by which a comprehensive new National Water Policy is likely to be announced and implemented?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI & SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA)

(a) to (f) The salient features of National Water Policy 2012 are enclosed as **Annexure**. Many challenges have emerged significantly in water sector, which requires to be addressed through appropriate revision of National Water Policy. In order to meet the present challenges in water sector, revision of National Water Policy 2012 has been envisaged by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti and a drafting committee has been constituted on 5th November, 2019 to revise the National Water Policy. The revision of National Water Policy requires wider consultation with various stakeholders including State Governments.

A meeting of the State Ministers in-charge of Water Resources, Water Supply and Sanitation was held on 11th June 2019 at New Delhi to review the steps taken by various States on water conservation and the implementation of action plans to deal with the water supply situation, plan for water harvesting and conservation in convergence with other programmes. State Governments were requested to complete water conservation measures for large-scale rain water harvesting.

Government of India has launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA), a water conservation campaign, which is being implemented in 256 water-stressed districts of the country. The Phase–I was implemented from 1st July, 2019 to 30th September, 2019 across the country and Phase–II is being implemented from 1st October, 2019 to 30th November, 2019 in the Southern States which receive retreating monsoon. During the campaign, officers, groundwater experts and scientists from the Government of India have worked with State and District officials in these districts to promote water conservation and water resource management by focusing on accelerated implementation of five target interventions, viz. water conservation & rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies/ tanks, reuse and recharge of bore wells, watershed development and intensive afforestation. With this campaign, huge awareness has been generated and various stakeholders, viz. government departments, agencies, NGOs, officials, Panchayats, individuals, etc. have started taking steps for water conservation.

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ANNEXURE

Annexure referred to in reply to parts (a) to (f) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1754 to be answered on 28.11.2019 regarding "National Water Policy".

Salient features of National Water Policy 2012

- Emphasis on the need for a national water framework law, comprehensive legislation for optimum development of inter-State rivers and river valleys.
- Water, after meeting the pre-emptive needs for safe drinking water and sanitation, achieving food security, supporting poor people dependent on agriculture for their livelihood and high priority allocation for minimum eco-system needs, be treated as economic good so as to promote its conservation and efficient use.
- A portion of river flows should be kept aside to meet ecological needs ensuring that the proportional low and high flow releases correspond in time closely to the natural flow regime.
- Adaptation strategies in view of climate change for designing and management of water resources structures and review of acceptability criteria has been emphasized.
- A system to evolve benchmarks for water uses for different purposes, i.e., water footprints, and water auditing be developed to ensure efficient use of water. Project financing has been suggested as a tool to incentivize efficient & economic use of water.
- Setting up of Water Regulatory Authority has been recommended. Incentivization of recycle and re-use has been recommended.
- Water Users Associations should be given statutory powers to collect and retain a portion of water charges, manage the volumetric quantum of water allotted to them and maintain the distribution system in their jurisdiction.
- Water resources projects and services should be managed with community participation. Wherever the State Governments or local governing bodies so decide, the private sector can be encouraged to become a service provider in public private partnership model to meet agreed terms of service delivery, including penalties for failure.
- Compatible agricultural strategies and cropping patterns and improved water application methods, such as land leveling and/or drip / sprinkler irrigation should be adopted to meet challenges of climate change. Industrial processes should be made more water efficient.
- Declining ground water levels in over-exploited areas should be arrested by introducing improved technologies of water use, incentivizing efficient water use and encouraging community based management of aquifers. In addition, where necessary, artificial recharging projects should be undertaken.
- An institutional arrangement for promotion, regulation and evolving mechanisms for efficient use of water at basin/sub-basin level should be established at the national level
- Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) taking river basin / sub-basin as a unit should be the main principle for planning, development and management of water resources

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