

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA
REJUVENATION
RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2961

ANSWERED ON 27.03.2023

WATER CRISIS IN THE NORTH EASTERN STATES

2961. SHRI RAKESH SINHA

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of groundwater level in the North Eastern States of the country;
- (b) the details of the major sources of water in these States;
- (c) the comparative status of groundwater level in the States of Meghalaya, Nagaland , Mizoram, Manipur and Assam; and
- (d) the steps which have been taken to preserve and constructively utilise water resources in Meghalaya?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) is periodically monitoring the ground water levels throughout the country including five North Eastern (NE) States (Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh) on a regional scale, through a network of monitoring wells. During the November 2022, the depth to water level in these NE States ranged from 0.1 metre to 18.32 metres below ground level (m bgl). Further, about 87.8% of the wells monitored in these NE States have registered the water level upto 5 mbgl.

(b) The Dynamic Ground Water Resources of the country including NE States are being periodically assessed jointly by CGWB and States. As per the latest assessment (2022) in NE States the Total Annual Ground Water Recharge is 35.88 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM).

Further, as per the CWC report surface water in NE States are available through Brahmaputra Basin ; Barak & other basins and Minor rivers draining into Myanmar and Bangladesh. Basin-wise average water availability and other related details can be seen in the web-link - <https://cwc.gov.in/sites/default/files/main-report.pdf>.

(c) The range of depth to water level during November 2022 in Assam varies from 0.1 m to 18.32 m whereas, in Meghalaya and Nagaland it varies from 0.15 m to 4.93 m and 0.63 m to 6.73 m respectively. In Assam and Meghalaya most of the wells have depth to water level between 0-5 m

whereas in Nagaland 75% of monitored wells having depth to water level between 5-10 mbgl. The groundwater level information with respect to Mizoram and Manipur is not readily available.

(d) Water being State subject, to preserve and constructively utilize water resources in the country falls within States' mandate however, a number of initiatives have been taken by Central Government for sustainable management of groundwater which can be seen in the web-link http://jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Steps%20taken%20by%20the%20Central%20Govt%20for%20water_depletion_july2022.pdf.

Further, the important steps taken by the Central Government for sustainable ground water management in Meghalaya are given below:

- i. CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme which is aimed to delineate aquifer disposition and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/ area specific ground water management plans with community participation. In Meghalaya, the entire mappable area of 10,645 Sq. Km. have been covered and the management plans are shared with the respective State Governments for taking appropriate measures / implementation.
- ii. Further, Public Interaction Programs (PIP) are being organised at grassroots level for disseminating the outputs of National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) Studies for the benefit of the stakeholders. So far, 100 such programs have been conducted in different parts of the North Eastern States including Meghalaya in which nearly 6,137 people have participated.
- iii. Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater- 2020 has been prepared by CGWB in consultation with States/UTs indicating various structures for the different terrain conditions of the country including tentative estimated cost. The Master Plan envisages construction of about Farm Ponds (500 Nos), renovation of existing water bodies (100 Nos), check dams (600 Nos), Gabbion Structures (800 Nos) in Meghalaya. It also recommends the Roof top rain water harvesting in 14,514 Schools to harvest 8,68,358 cubic metre of water, 547 Health Centre to harvest 1,29,360 cubic metre of water, at the cost of Rs. 1,01,902.50 Lakh. Master plan also envisages the development of springs in 3,810 villages with an estimated cost of Rs. 44,462.70 Lakh for benefit of 54864 people. The Master Plan has been shared with the State for implementation under relevant Central/State schemes.
- iv. Model Building Bye Laws (MBBL) 2016 circulated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs include provisions for Rainwater Harvesting and it has been shared with all the States/ UTs. Meghalaya also have adopted the provisions of rainwater harvesting of MBBL-2016.
