

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1995

ANSWERED ON 07.08.2023

HEAVY METALS IN GROUNDWATER

1995. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR

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

- (a) whether Ministry has taken up the matter of presence of heavy metals in groundwater with Ministry of Science and Technology and other scientific/technological institutions for research and eradication of the same from groundwater;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reports thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) to (c) Water being State subject, taking up the matter of presence of heavy metals in groundwater with scientific/technological institutions for research and eradication of the same from groundwater falls under their mandate. However, techniques for making safe drinking water available after necessary remediation/treatment and also taking corrective action to reduce anthropogenic contamination of groundwater are readily available and cost effective.

Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) generates ground water quality data of the country on a regional scale as part of its ground water quality monitoring program and various scientific studies. These studies indicate the occurrence of Heavy Metals beyond permissible limits (as per BIS) for human consumption in isolated pockets in certain States / UTs. The information generated by the CGWB is shared with States/UTs for necessary interventions.

Further, CGWB has entered into a Memorandum of agreement (MoU) with Geological Survey of India on study on heavy metals and toxic constituents like Uranium, Lead, Arsenic, Fluoride and Mercury contamination of ground water in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Assam. The MoU was signed in 2022 for a period of five years and the results of the study would help in better understanding of the distribution, source, mobilization of the contaminants and possible remedial measures.

In addition, Government of India is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – Har Ghar Jal, since August, 2019, in partnership with States/UTs, to make provision of potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on regular & long-term basis to every rural household. Under JJM,

while allocating the funds to States/ UTs, 10% weightage is given to the population residing in habitations affected by chemical contaminants including Heavy Metals. States/ UTs have been advised to plan and implement piped water supply schemes of bulk water transfer based on safe water sources such as surface water sources or alternative safe ground water sources for the villages with water quality issues.

Since, planning, implementation and commissioning of piped water supply scheme based on a safe water source may take time, purely as an interim measure, States/ UTs have been advised to install community water purification plants (CWPPs) especially in Arsenic and Fluoride affected habitations to provide potable water to every household at the rate of 8–10 litre per capita per day (lpcd) to meet their drinking and cooking requirements.

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs on June 25, 2015, in 500 selected cities across the country covering around 60% of the Urban Population and is being implemented in collaboration with States/UTs. AMRUT focuses on development of basic urban infrastructure in the selected cities in the sectors of Water Supply, Sewerage and Septage Management, Storm Water Drainage, Non-Motorised Urban Transport, and Permeable Green Spaces & Parks.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), in association with State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees (SPCBs/PCCs), is implementing the provisions of the Water (Prevention & Control) Act, 1974 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to prevent and control pollution in water.
