

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 420

ANSWERED ON 24.07.2023

SCHEME FOR CONSERVING SMALL RIVERS

420. SHRI SUJEET KUMAR

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

- (a) whether Government is aware about the rapid rate at which the rivers are drying up;
- (b) if so, the details of the small rivers that have dried up in the past five-years, State-wise; and
- (c) the details of the steps being taken by Government for conservation of small rivers?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) to (c) Flow in the rivers is a dynamic parameters and depends on many sub-parameters such as rainfall, its distribution pattern, duration and intensity in the catchment, health of catchment area, vegetation and withdrawals/utilization of water. Central Water Commission (CWC) carries out the hydrological observations on rivers across the country. The annual average flow data maintained by CWC for last 20 years for major/important rivers in the country does not indicate any significant decline in water availability.

Government has taken number of steps including campaigns to make "Jal Andolan a Jan-Andolan" for conservation of water and rejuvenation of small rivers. Some of them are as below;

1. Hon'ble Prime Minister launched the JSA: Catch the Rain (CTR) campaign on 22nd March 2021, the World Water Day, with the theme – “Catch The Rain, Where it falls, When it falls” to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country during the pre-monsoon and monsoon period i.e. from March 2021 to 30 November 2021. The focused interventions of the campaign included (1) water conservation and rainwater harvesting (2) enumerating, geo-tagging & making inventory of all water bodies; preparation of scientific plans for water conservation based on it, rejuvenation of small rivers (3) Setting up of Jal Shakti Kendras in all districts (4) intensive afforestation and (5) awareness generation. After its launch, Hon'ble Prime Minister wrote letters dated 24.03.2021 to all Sarpanchs urging them to take steps for conservation of water and exhorted to make water conservation a mass movement. Funds from MNREGA, finance commission grants were also pledged for the water

conservation works, including rejuvenation of small rivers, to be taken up. during this campaign, a total of 46,76,852 water related works were completed/on-going, in addition to 36,76,60,580 afforestation activities were carried out .

2. “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) -2022 was launched on 29.3.2022. During the campaign period from 12,28,553 water conservation and rainwater harvesting structures were done and 2,67,472 Traditional water Bodies were rejuvenated. 632 Jal Shakti Kendras were also set up
3. JSA: CTR 2023 was launched by Hon’ble President on 04.03.2023 for implementation across the country with the theme “**Source Sustainability for Drinking Water**” during 04.03.2023 to 30.11.2023 will special focus on 150 Water Stressed Districts (WSDs) of the country.
4. Department of Water Resources, RD& GR has instituted National Water Awards and monthly Water Heroes Contest to incentivize good practices in water conservation and ground water recharge.
5. Mass awareness programs (Trainings, Seminars, Workshops, Exhibitions, and Trade Fares etc.) are conducted from time to time each year in various parts of the country to promote water conservation initiatives including rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.
6. The Ministry of Rural Development in consultation and agreement with the Department of Water Resources, RD & GR and the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has developed an actionable framework for Natural Resources Management (NRM), titled 'Mission Water Conservation' to ensure gainful utilization of funds. The framework strives to ensure synergies in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), erstwhile integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) now PMKSY Watershed Development Component and Command Area Development & Water Management (CADWM), given their common objectives. Types of common works undertaken under these programmes/ schemes are water conservation and management, water harvesting, soil and moisture conservation, groundwater recharge, flood protection, land development, Command Area Development & Watershed Management.
7. A joint advisory of Department of Rural development (DoRD), Department of Water Resources, RD & GR (DoWR, RD & GR), Department of Land Resources (DoLR) and Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DoDWS) was issued on 24.04.2020 to all States/UTs to emphasize efforts in the area of water conservation and water management in the country essentially for rejuvenating small rivers by engaging the communities through participatory mode. The activities include augmentation of existing water sources(s), ground water recharge, rainwater harvesting and grey water management and recharge.

8. Hon'ble Prime Minister launched Amrit Sarovar Mission on 24th April 2022. The Mission is aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country as a part of celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
9. Under Namami Gange programme for integrated rejuvenation of National River Ganga and its tributaries, large numbers of smaller tributaries have been mapped along with their catchment area/ watershed and wetlands. A GIS based inventory of small rivers has also been created with additional district wise information. (<https://nmcg.nic.in/abamaps.aspx>). Restoration and rejuvenation of over 75 small rivers (lower order rivers/ tributaries of large rivers) leveraging support from MGNREGA, UP and involving District Ganga Committee's in Ganga basin have also been attempted. Besides, technical hand holding through Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga) led by IIT Kanpur and other academic institutions viz., IIT-BHU, BBAU, NIH as being partnering Institutions for providing scientific/ technical support.
10. Apart from these, state governments also have taken up many special programs for water conservation and rejuvenation of smaller rivers. for eg, Under Small River Rejuvenation & Conservation plan, 19 rivers have been identified & successfully taken up by UP government. These rivers are River Tedi, Manorama, Pandu, Varuna, Sasur Khaderi, Sai, Gomti, Aril, Morva, Mandakinim, Tamsa, Nad, Karnavati, Baan, Sot, Kali East, Dadi, Ishan and Budhi Ganga. For the conservation and rejuvenation six projects on River Shivna, Mandakini, Rispana & Bindal, Kosi, Budhi Gandak, Ramrekha with focussed interventions have been taken up in Ganga basin.
