

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

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UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 893

ANSWERED ON 11.12.2023

DEPENDENCE ON RIVER WATER

893. SMT. SEEMA DWIVEDI

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the country should reduce its dependence on river water in the North Eastern Region and enhance its developmental footprint to ensure economic growth and build water harvesting, storing, and recycling techniques;
- (b) if so, the details of the initiatives that are proposed to be taken by Government keeping in mind that this will not only help to move towards sustainable development but also reduce dependence on the unstable supply of river water; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) As per the CWC Study "Reassessment of Water Availability in India using Space Inputs, 2019", the average annual water availability of 20 river basins of the country is 1999.20 BCM. As per the aforesaid report, the average annual water availability of 3 river basins located in the north-eastern region of the country, viz, 1) Brahmaputra, 2) Barak & Others, and 3) Minor rivers draining into Myanmar and Bangladesh is 644.84 BCM, which is quite significant. However, dependence of any area on one source of water, i.e. the surface water exposes it to the vulnerabilities of climate change and erratic precipitation patterns. Therefore, the best strategy to deal with the dynamic nature of hydrological cycle is by ensuring sustainability of groundwater and surface water resources through convergence of various schemes.

Water being a State subject, steps for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources are primarily undertaken by the respective State Governments. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to them through various schemes and programmes.

(b) Various initiatives have been undertaken by Govt. of India relating to water resources conservation throughout the country including the north-eastern region are as follows:

- i. Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater- 2020 has been prepared by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in consultation with States/UTs. The Master Plan envisages construction of about 1.42 crore rain water harvesting and artificial recharge structures in the country to harness 185 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) of monsoon rainfall. The Master Plan has been circulated to all the States/UTs for implementation.

- ii. Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under Section 3 (3) of the “Environment (Protection) Act, 1986” grants No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for ground water abstraction to Industries, Infrastructure units and Mining projects in feasible areas in certain States/UTs where regulation is not being done by the respective State/UTs.
- iii. A nationwide programme of “National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM)” for mapping of aquifers, their characterization and development of aquifer management facilitate sustainable development of ground water resources. Under NAQUIM 2.0 programme, various studies have been taken up based on ground water related issues including areas with springs in North Eastern Region. The core objective of NAQUIM 2.0 is to present implementable ground water management plans and strategies. Public Interaction Programs are also being organised at grass root level for disseminating the tenets under National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) Programme for the benefit of the stakeholders.
- iv. Government has been implementing Pradhan Mantry Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) since 2015-16 in the country including north-eastern states with an aim to enhance physical access of water on farm and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve on farm water use efficiency, introduce sustainable water conservation practices etc. Central funding is also being provided to schemes for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies of various State Governments, including north-eastern states.
- v. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) includes water conservation and water harvesting structures as one of the activities under its natural resource management (NRM) component.
- vi. Jal Jeevan Mission is implemented for ensuring sustainability of groundwater resources and surface water-based sources through convergence of various schemes.
- vii. 15th Finance Commission grants have been released to States to be utilized through Rural Local Bodies. Financial assistance given to various States under 15th Finance Commission tied grants can be inter alia utilised for rainwater harvesting.
- viii. Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing Per Drop More Crop scheme which is operational from 2015-16 in the Country. The Per Drop More Crop scheme mainly focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through Micro Irrigation (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation System).
- ix. ‘Sahi Fasal’ campaign was launched by National Water Mission (NWM) to nudge farmers in the water stressed areas to grow crops which use water very efficiently, are economically remunerative, are healthy and nutritious, suited to the agro-climatic-hydro characteristics of the area, and are environment friendly.
- x. The Hon’ble Prime Minister launched the “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) with the theme “Catch the Rain - Where it Falls When it Falls” on 22nd March 2021, the World Water Day, to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country during 22nd March, 2021 to 30th November, 2021 - the pre-monsoon and monsoon period. JSA:CTR campaign had five focused interventions-(1) rainwater harvesting & water conservation (2)

enumerating, geo-tagging & making inventory of all water bodies; preparation of scientific plans for water conservation (3) setting up Jal Shakti Kendras in all districts (4) intensive afforestation and (5) awareness generation. 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain-2022' has been launched by the Hon'ble President of India on 29.03.2022. The Ministry of Jal Shakti has been implementing Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) since 2019 on an annual basis except 2020 due to Covid pandemic. In the current year, Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2023, 4th in the series of JSA, has been launched for implementation during 04.03.2023 to 30.11.2023.

- xi. Mission Amrit Sarovar has been launched on 24th April, 2022 with the aim to construct/rejuvenate at least 75 Amrit Sarovars (with a pondage area of 1 acre having water holding capacity of 10000 cubic metre) in each district across India to overcome the water crisis.
- xii. Mass awareness programmes (Trainings, Seminars, Workshops, etc.) are conducted from time to time each year under the information, Education & Communication (IEC) Scheme of DoWR, RD & GR in various parts of the Country to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water. Posts on awareness on water harvesting and conservation have been shared regularly on the Department's social media platforms.
- xiii. The Ministry has instituted National Water Awards to incentivise good practices done in water conservation and management. The first National Water Awards were launched in 2018, the second in 2019, the third in 2020. These awards focused on recognizing good work and efforts by individuals and organisations across all sectors to create awareness among people about importance of water including water harvesting and conservation.
- xiv. Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UT to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for regulation of its development, which also includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 21 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation including North Eastern States Assam and Nagaland.
- xv. Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has released Model Building Bye-laws, 2016 which recommends Rainwater Harvesting for all types of Building with plot size 100 sq.m or more. So far, 35 States including North Eastern States Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura have incorporated the provisions in their respective building bye laws.

(c) Not Applicable.
