

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI  
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 92**  
ANSWERED ON – 22/07/2024

**CONTAMINATED DRINKING WATER**

92 # DR. BHIM SINGH:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that groundwater in a large part of Bihar is not potable as testing has revealed that it contains arsenic and other deadly chemicals;
- (b) if so, the assistance being provided by Government to the State Government in order to provide clean drinking water; and
- (c) whether Government would consider any plan to study the groundwater of districts/cities near Ganga and make it potable by getting it cleaned of the toxic chemicals present therein?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI  
(SHRI V. SOMANNA)

(a) to (c) Government of India, in partnership with States, is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) since August, 2019 to provide potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on regular & long-term basis to every rural household in the country. Drinking Water being a state subject, the responsibility of planning, approval, implementation, operation, and maintenance of drinking water supply schemes, including those under the Jal Jeevan Mission, lies with State/UT Governments. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, as per existing guidelines, Bureau of Indian Standards' BIS:10500 standards are adopted as benchmarks for quality of water being supplied through the piped water supply schemes. The Government of India supports the States including Bihar by providing technical and financial assistance.

States/ UTs have been advised to plan and implement piped water supply schemes based on safe water sources for the villages. As per Jal Jeevan Mission – Integrated Management Information System (JJM-IMIS), as on 18.07.2024, 96.08% of rural households in Bihar are reported to have functional tap connections in their homes. Also, as reported by State in JJM-IMIS, as on 18.07.2024, no rural habitations in Bihar are affected with Arsenic/ Fluoride contamination in drinking water sources. However, State has marked 51 habitations from Saharsa district as Iron-affected habitations. The block-wise details of Iron-affected habitations reported from Saharsa districts is at **Annex-I**.

The Central Public Health and Environment Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) has published a revised 'Manual on Water Supply and Treatment System (Drink From Tap), 2023' and the same was shared to States/ UT rural water supply department to adopt in the context of rural drinking water supply.

To enable States/ UTs to test water samples for water quality, and for sample collection, reporting, monitoring and surveillance of drinking water sources, an online JJM – Water Quality Management Information System (WQMIS) portal has been developed. The State-wise details of water quality test reported through WQMIS are available in public domain and can be accessed at:

<https://ejalshakti.gov.in/WQMIS/Main/report>

As reported by States/ UTs, as on 18.07.2024, there are robust network of 2,157 drinking water quality testing laboratories at different levels viz. State, Regional, District, sub-division and/ or block level in the country. States/UTs have been advised to carry out testing of water quality on a regular basis and take remedial action wherever necessary, to ensure that the water supplied to households is of prescribed quality. As reported by States/UTs on JJM-WQMIS portal, during 2023-24, more than 75 lakh water samples (from 92.36 % of villages) have been tested in the water testing laboratories and more than 108.54 lakh water samples (from 72.26% of village) using Field Testing Kits. As on 18.07.2024, more than 21.52 lakh samples in labs (from 62.17% villages) and 46.43 lakh samples using FTKs (from 47.36% of villages) have been tested so far during 2024-25.

The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) is implementing National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme (NAQUIM). The Aquifer Mapping is aimed to delineate aquifer disposition (water bearing formation) and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/ area specific ground water management plans which includes mitigation measures for addressing ground water quality. CGWB shared reports with respective concerned State and District authority for making policy and implementation. Public Interaction Programs (PIP) are being organized by CGWB at the grassroots level to disseminate the principles of the Aquifer Management Plans as part of the National Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) Programme for raising awareness among stakeholders about groundwater quality issues and mitigation measures.

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Annex-I referred in the reply to Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 92 answered on 22.07.2024

**Block-wise number of Iron-affected habitations reported from Saharsa district, Bihar**

(as on 18.07.2024)

S. no.	Block	No. of iron affected habitations from Saharsa district, Bihar
1.	Kahara	3
2.	Mahishi	12
3.	Nauhatta	13
4.	Simri Bakhtiarpur	13
5.	Sonbarsa	1
6.	Sour Bazar	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>

*Source: JJM-IMIS*

**Note:** As reported by State, no rural habitations in Bihar are affected with Arsenic/ Fluoride contamination in drinking water sources.