

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

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1214

ANSWERED ON 10.03.2025

RESTRUCTURING AND CHALLENGES IN WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1214. SHRI MANOJ KUMAR JHA

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

- (a) whether Government has implemented any recommendations of the Mihir Shah Committee for restructuring the Central Water Commission (CWC) and the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB);
- (b) if not, the reasons for the delay and whether a timeline has been set for establishing a National Water Commission as recommended by the Committee;
- (c) whether Government is addressing the 30 per cent human resource shortage in the CGWB and the lack of inter-disciplinary professionals in water management agencies; and
- (d) the steps being taken to improve collaboration between Central and State agencies for groundwater conservation?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) In order to consider implementing the recommendations of Dr. Mihir Shah Committee, this Department had constituted various Committee, Working Group and had also engaged Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad for suggesting ways and means to implement the suggestions made in the Report.

Various other efforts have been made since the submission of the Report of the Mihir Shah Committee and the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation has come up with a Common Pool Resources (CPR) with a view to focus upon amalgamating available resources of Central Water Commission (CWC) and Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) for creating a strong base for both the organisations to work towards a common goal of water management, which is one of the objectives of the report submitted by Dr. Mihir Shah. These CPRs include water quality laboratories, civil engineering works common to both the organisations, trained manpower, office spaces, joint interactions with States/UTs, etc.

(c) The net vacancy position in CGWB, after accounting for the posts already abolished/deemed abolished and those identified as dying cadre/surrender under the cadre review proposal, comes to around 14% only. For these too, the Ministry has already taken various steps to fill up the vacant posts by way of promotions from the feeder cadre as well as direct recruitments, as the case may be. To cover the gap in the interim period, the Ministry has also permitted CGWB to hire adequate number of Young Professionals and Consultants of suitable qualification and experience so as to ensure smooth functioning of the organization.

Here it may also be mentioned that, with a vision to shape CGWB into a premier scientific organization, a comprehensive cadre re-structuring has been taken up for the first time since the establishment of the organization.

(d) The Government of India is committed to achieve the sustainable groundwater management objectives by upholding the constitutional spirit of federalism. The following are some important steps taken by this Ministry for improving collaboration, knowledge sharing and extending technical and financial support to the state governments:

- Various activities in the ground water sector like Annual Ground Water Resource Assessment, preparation of Masterplan for artificial recharge are being conducted with active collaboration between CGWB and concerned state departments.
- The data and knowledge generated by CGWB on seasonal ground water levels, ground water quality, aquifer mapping, etc., are regularly shared with concerned State/District administrations for taking up suitable field interventions.
- Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) is handholding the States to come up with their own regulatory guidelines for ground water regulations.
- Various important schemes of the ministry like Jal Shakti Abhiyan, Atal Bhujal Yojana, National Hydrology Project, GWM&R, etc., are being implemented in close association with state and district administration.
- A National Inter-departmental Steering Committee (NISC) has been working since 2012 under the Chairpersonship of the Secretary, D/o Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation for smooth management of ground water related issues in the country. Subsequently, realizing the importance of co-ordinated and streamlined approach in dealing with water sector issues, the NISC was reconstituted in 2024 with enhanced scope and wider Terms of Reference.
- Further, in order to bring sharper focus on the subject of co-ordinated and integrated water management, with active participation of concerned Central Ministries/Departments and State Governments, D/o Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation has already organized the two All India Annual State Ministers' Conference on Water at Bhopal and Udaipur in 2023 and 2025 respectively. The primary objective of the Conferences is to seek and strengthen the partnership with the States and stakeholder Ministries.
