

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

STARRED QUESTION NO. *176

ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026

ILLEGAL EXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER

*176 SHRI A. A. RAHIM:

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

- (a) data on groundwater levels during the last three years, including the number of assessed units classified as Semi-Critical, Critical, and Over-Exploited, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) number of illegal groundwater extraction that was detected involving MNCs and Indian firms, along with details of the entities, locations, quantities extracted, and the sectors involved;
- (c) the enforcement actions taken in each of these cases, including penalties imposed and corrective measures mandated;
- (d) guidelines or regulatory mechanisms currently in place to prevent large-scale withdrawals by industrial or commercial users; and
- (e) whether Government proposes any reforms to enhance surveillance, strengthen penal provisions, and improve inter-agency coordination?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI C R PATIL)

- (a) to (e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. *176 TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026 IN RAJYA SABHA REGARDING “ILLEGAL EXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER”

(a) Ground water level monitoring is conducted on a regular basis by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under this Ministry and respective State Governments. Perusal of data on ground water levels throughout the country as recorded by CGWB during its post-monsoon monitoring during the last five years shows that between 85% to 90% of the monitored wells during the period have registered ground water levels within the range of 0-10 mbgl (meters below ground level), indicating ease of access to ground water. Year-wise details are provided at:

<https://cgwb.gov.in/cgwbpnm/public/uploads/documents/17725322541859357281file.pdf>

Assessment of Dynamic Ground Water Resources of the country is being carried out annually since 2022 by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in coordination with the State Governments. Under this exercise, categorization of various Assessment Units (AUs) of the country (which are generally Blocks/Tehsils/Taluks/Mandals etc.) into ‘Over-Exploited’, ‘Critical’, Semi-critical’ and ‘Safe’ units is done based on their Stage of Ground water Extraction (SoE).

The year-wise and State/UT-wise details of Assessment Units categorized as Over-exploited, Critical and Semi-critical in the last three years are provided at:

<https://cgwb.gov.in/cgwbpnm/public/uploads/documents/17725323911089867886file.pdf>

(b) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) under this Ministry regulates ground water withdrawal in 19 States/UTs by way of issuing No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for ground water extraction for various purposes like industrial, infrastructure, mining etc. in accordance with its Guidelines dated 24.09.2020. In the rest of the states and UTs, State Ground Water Authorities (SGWAs) regulate groundwater.

Thus far, CGWA has identified 2,833 cases of groundwater extraction without valid NOC or in excess of quantum approved in NOC. Out of these, 2370 cases pertain to the industrial sector, 385 cases to the infrastructure sector and 78 cases to the mining sector. The information is maintained sector-wise and State-wise and is not segregated separately for MNCs and Indian firms. The State-wise and sector-wise details of number of entities found to be involved in groundwater extraction without valid NOC or in excess of quantum approved in NOC is given at **Annexure**.

(c) In cases of groundwater extraction without valid NOC or in excess of quantum approved in NOC, enforcement action is taken in accordance with the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Guidelines dated 24.09.2020. The principal enforcement measure includes imposition of Environmental Compensation (EC) charges for the quantity/duration of groundwater extraction not covered by NOC. Additionally, CGWA also monitors the compliance of various NOC conditions and directs to take corrective measures failing which penalties are imposed. As per the available information, all cases put

together, as on 15.02.2026, a total EC of 2017.97 cr and penalty of 121.06 cr (from 10,049 cases) has been imposed by CGWA on various projects.

(d) The Guidelines dated 24.09.2020 for regulation of ground water extraction have several safeguards for preventing over-extraction by the projects. Firstly, ground water extraction charges follow a slab structure with higher charges imposed for over-exploited, critical, semi-critical areas and for higher quantum of extraction. Secondly, installation of water flow meters and regular maintenance and submission of extraction data is a mandatory condition as per NOC. Further, no new industries are permitted to extract groundwater in over-exploited areas other than MSMEs. Moreover, industries extracting ground water more than 100 KLD (1 Lakh Litres per day) have to get water audit done biennially through certified Water Auditors for recommending measures to minimize the water requirement of the industry.

(e) Regulation of groundwater extraction is an evolving process. Based on the experience gained during processing of NOC applications, field-level implementation, emerging hydrogeological understanding and representations received from various stakeholders including industrial associations, the Ministry takes proactive steps from time to time to address issues, streamline procedures and improve coordination. In this direction, for improving real time monitoring of ground water extraction, installation of Water Flow Meters with telemetry system is promoted by CGWA. Further, with an objective to promote ease of doing business and improve coordination, state of the art yet user friendly Bhu-Neer portal has been launched which makes the NOC application processing a completely automated one.

ANNEXURE**ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *176 TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026 REGARDING “ILLEGAL EXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER”**

**State-wise No. of cases with illegal GW extraction/Environmental Compensation (EC)
(up to 15.02.2026)**

States/ UTs	Sectors			Total Projects
	Industrial	Infrastructure	Mining	
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	2	0	2
Arunachal Pradesh	4	1	0	5
Assam	146	13	0	159
Bihar	63	11	0	74
Chhattisgarh	50	6	9	65
Dadra & Nagar Haveli; And Daman & Diu	195	2	0	197
Gujarat	915	35	5	955
Jharkhand	60	7	16	83
Madhya Pradesh	52	10	13	75
Maharashtra	185	48	7	240
Manipur	2	0	0	2
Meghalaya	5	2	0	7
Nagaland	1	0	0	1
Odisha	102	68	16	186
Rajasthan	403	152	12	567
Tripura	8	1	0	9
Uttarakhand	179	27	0	206
Grand Total	2370	385	78	2833
