

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 27
ANSWERED ON 02/02/2026

**PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF SEWAGE-CONTAMINATED DRINKING WATER IN
INDORE**

27. DR. SYED NASEER HUSSAIN:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of reports that consumption of sewage-contaminated drinking water in the Bhagirathpura area of Indore, Madhya Pradesh has been linked to multiple deaths and hospitalisations in January, 2026; and

(b) the reasons for the failure of local water supply and sanitation infrastructure that allowed sewage to enter the potable water system?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI
(SHRI C R PATIL)

(a) and (b): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) and (b) of Rajya Sabha Starred question no. *27 answered on 02/02/2026 regarding “Public health impact of sewage-contaminated drinking water in Indore” asked by Dr. Syed Naseer Hussain

(a) and (b) The Government is aware of the contaminated water incident in Indore. Water is a State subject. Government of India supplements the efforts of the States through schematic interventions/ advisories. It provides financial and technical support to the States through various schemes/ Missions such as Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and AMRUT 2.0 in urban areas and Jal Jeevan Mission in rural areas for approved infrastructure projects. Under this Mission, the State/ UTs are empowered to select, appraise, prioritise and implement the projects as per their local requirements including augmentation/ rehabilitation of infrastructure as per Mission guidelines. The State Governments are responsible for monitoring, enforcement and corrective action for drinking water safety. The operation, maintenance and replacement of old deteriorated pipelines in urban areas is the responsibility of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/ parastatals.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has published Manual on Water Supply and Treatment Systems (Drink from Tap) in March 2024 (<https://mohua.gov.in/publication/manual-on-water-supply-and-treatment-systems---drink-from-tap---march-2024.php>), for reference by the States/ ULBs for designing, implementation, drinking water quality and monitoring of the water supply projects.

The State Government has informed that immediately upon receiving information on 28.12.2025 regarding incidents of vomiting and diarrhoea in Bhagirath Pura, Indore, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) along with the Health Department and Public Health Engineering Department initiated a joint and prompt response. First and foremost, all sick patients were attended to and the ones who were serious, were hospitalized in super-specialty Medical College and Private Hospital of repute. Not so sick were attended to by Health and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) workers with door-to-door survey and distribution of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) packets and Chlorine tablets for Water disinfection. Water Supply through pipelines and borewells were completely stopped and water tankers were forced into service. Samples were taken from multiple supply points at user end to ascertain the type of contamination and sent to National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited labs. Immediate remedial action like identifications of leakages, possibility of inter mixing of contaminated water was taken up and repair works started. The area has old pipelines dating 1997 and some of it is damaged. Municipal administration has identified the old stretches of pipeline in Bhagiratpura area and 9.5 km of pipelines has been laid before the incident.

Thereafter, new contract for laying of 5.8 km pipeline has been awarded of which 0.965 km pipeline has been laid.

The State Government has provided ex-gratia financial assistance to the families of the deceased as per prevailing State norms. ₹40 lakh compensation was given to the deceased from Bhagirath Pura. Medical treatment to affected persons was provided free of cost in Government/Private hospitals. In Bhagirath Pura, 35,421 households surveyed by health officials in which 1,64,942 people were screened. 454 patients were admitted to hospital out of which 441 have been discharged. AIIMS Bhopal experts visited Indore on 03.01.2026 and shared protocol regarding the treatment during meetings and 24X7 medical facility has been ensured by the State.

The matter is sub judice vide Writ Petition no. 247 of 2026 and others in the Hon'ble High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Indore. Hon'ble High Court in their order dated 27.01.2026 appointed Justice Sushil Kumar Gupta, former Judge of Madhya Pradesh High Court, a one-man commission of inquiry into the issues relating to water contamination in Bhagirath Pura, Indore. The terms of reference of the Commission include submission of report on the cause of contamination and provide its inputs on public health on matters such as number of actual deaths of affected residents on account of contaminated water, nature of disease reported, adequacy of medical response and preventive measures, immediate steps required to ensure safe drinking water, long-term infrastructural and monitoring reforms, and identification and fixing responsibility upon the officers and officials found prima facie responsible for the Bhagirathpura water contamination incident and suggest guidelines for compensation to affected residents, particularly vulnerable sections.

The State Government has also informed that Standard Operating Procedures have been issued to Urban Local Bodies to avoid contamination of water. About 14,181 leakages were detected till date out of which 12,634 leakages have been repaired. Out of 3,298 Over Head Tanks in the State, 3,109 have been cleaned. Similarly, out of 21,215 tubewells, 179 were found polluted and 86 tubewells were closed for use. Regular testing of quality of water is ensured. 656 water samples were found fail out of 80,976 samples, while action was taken at 588 points where pollution was detected. Issues of contamination of water were resolved through 2,821 ***Jal Sunwai***.

A Statewide Clean Water Campaign "***Swacch Jal Abhiyaan***" has been launched from January 10, 2026 with the objective of ensuring the quality of drinking water supplied to citizens in urban and rural areas of the State, building public trust in the water supply system, and realizing the vision of water-secure cities and villages. The campaign's theme is Water Security, Water Conservation, Water Awareness i.e. "***Jal Suraksha, Jal Sanrakshan, Jal Sunwai***".