GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1836
ANSWERED ON 09/03/2026

STEPS TAKEN TO ENSURE AVAILABILITY OF SAFE DRINKING WATER

1836. SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK:

Will the Minister of *Housing and Urban Affairs* be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the towns and cities that faced public health crises in 2025 and in the beginning of 2026 due to contaminated piped water;

(b) the number of casualties and persons hospitalized for consuming contaminated water and the compensation paid to them;

(c) whether Government has identified the reasons for contamination and fixed accountability for any lapses;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the details on steps taken to ensure availability of safe drinking water?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS (SHRI TOKHAN SAHU)

(a) to (e): Water is a State subject. The State Governments are responsible for monitoring, enforcement, and corrective action for drinking water safety. The operation, maintenance and replacement of old deteriorated pipelines is the responsibility of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/ parastatals. 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 for approved infrastructure projects.

The State Government of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have informed that occurrence of drinking water contamination has been reported from Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation, Vadodara Municipal Corporation and Balanisore Municipality in Gujarat, Indore Municipal Corporation in Madhya Pradesh and Srikiakulam Municipal Corporation in Andhra Pradesh.

As informed by the State of Madhya Pradesh, on 28.12.2025, incidents of vomiting and diarrhoea were reported in the Bhagirathpura area which falls under Ward No. 11, Zone-4, Assembly Constituency Indore. The State Government has informed that 22 deaths were reported due to acute diarrheal disease in this area. Total 459 persons were hospitalized. The State Government has provided ex-gratia financial assistance to the families of the deceased as per prevailing State norms. Compensation amount of Rs. 2 lakhs were provided to dependents of each deceased. Medical treatment to affected persons was provided free of cost in Government/ Private hospitals.

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The State Government has also informed that upon receiving information of the 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. Standard Operating Procedures have been issued by the State Government to Urban Local Bodies to avoid contamination of water. The "Swaccha Jal Abhiyan" has been launched in the state of Madhya Pradesh by the Honorable Chief Minister from January 10, 2026 with the objective to ensure water security, water conservation and hearing of complains related to water.

The matter of drinking water contamination incident of Indore 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 of Madhya Pradesh has also informed that the Commissioner of Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) was transferred and the Additional Commissioner in charge of drinking water supply has been suspended. The Executive Engineer (Narmada) was also suspended for negligence in the discharge of his duties. The Assistant Engineer and Zonal Officer of Zone No. 04 were suspended and departmental inquiries has been initiated. A Muster Sub-Engineer was relieved from duty and his services has been terminated.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that in the beginning of 2026, gastroenteritis/ diarrhea cases were reported in certain localities (sporadically) of Srikakulam Municipal Corporation. The incident was localized to a few wards and immediate remedial measures were taken by the Municipal Corporation in coordination with the District Administration and the Medical & Health Department. 224 persons were hospitalized due to diarrhea/gastroenteritis symptoms and 2 deaths were reported. An amount of Rs.20.00 Lakhs (@ Rs.10.00 Lakhs per each person) paid as compensation to the family members of the deceased. Preliminary investigation and laboratory analysis of water samples conducted by the Regional Public Health Laboratory, Visakhapatnam indicated the presence of coliform bacteria in certain samples collected from parts of the distribution network and absence of adequate residual chlorine at some locations. Based on the preliminary report submitted by the District Collector and the Commissioner & Director of Municipal Administration, the State Government observed negligence in maintaining proper water supply monitoring and precautionary measures. Accordingly, the Municipal Commissioner, Srikakulam Municipal Corporation has been placed under suspension pending disciplinary proceedings and further inquiry

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As informed by State of Gujarat, in Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation, a localized typhoid outbreak was detected affecting 258 persons who were hospitalized. No death has been reported. In Balasinor Municipality, 506 persons have been hospitalized since October 2025 due to leakage in ageing drinking water pipelines and drainage line network. No deaths have been reported. In Vadodara Municipal Corporation 436 persons have been hospitalized due to water contamination from the year 2025. No death has been reported.

The State of Uttar Pradesh informed that complaints were received from Sector Delta-1 and Sector Alpha-2 of Greater Noida under the Greater Noida Authority. Immediate inspection revealed leakage in water connections in localized stretches, which were promptly rectified. Water samples collected from the affected areas were tested, and laboratory reports received so far indicate conformity with prescribed drinking water quality standards. In Haryana, an incident was reported in a private colony in sector 70-70A, Gurugram in December, 2025. The master supply of water is provided by Gurugram Municipal Development Authority (GMDA). After enquiry by the coloniser, the water storage tanks of individual house owners were found unclean and the same were cleaned and issue resolved.

Drinking water contamination in urban areas is a multi-factor issue and is generally attributable to distribution system vulnerabilities and interface issues with sewerage and sanitation infrastructure. Drinking water supplied in urban areas is required to conform to BIS IS 10500 standards; however, deterioration in quality may occur due to infrastructure-related, operational, environmental and maintenance factors across transmission, storage and distribution systems. The key reasons for contamination in drinking water supply includes leakages, pipe bursts and defective joints, cross-connections with Sewerage and Drainage Systems, ageing infrastructure and corrosion, intermittent water supply and negative pressure, stagnation and prolonged retention of water, poor maintenance of storage and associated infrastructure, inadequate sewerage and septage management, etc.

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

MoHUA has issued an advisory in January, 2026 to all the States to carry out comprehensive assessments of vulnerable areas & ageing infrastructure and to identify the crossing of sewer lines in close proximity to water supply lines and to conduct digital mapping of the existing water and sewer network using geo-spatial database created under AMRUT/AMRUT 2.0 in order to prevent health hazards.

AMRUT/AMRUT 2.0 guidelines allows for replacement of legacy infrastructure, vulnerable crossings and pressure-managed systems to reduce contamination risks as per priority of State. Further, AMRUT 2.0 Mission promotes 24x7 water supply with quality assurance, Drink from Tap (DfT) quality water in selected District Metered Areas (DMAs)/wards, online water quality monitoring, sensors and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), community participation, especially Women Self Help Groups (SHGs), in water quality testing.

Through AMRUT/ AMRUT 2.0 and in convergence with the States, 246 lakh water tap connections in the urban areas have been provided so far. 182 lakh sewer connections (including households covered through FSSM) have been provided through AMRUT/ AMRUT 2.0 and in convergence in AMRUT Cities. 93,457.51 km of water pipeline network has been laid/ replaced and 26,995.61 km of sewer network has been laid/ replaced.

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Under AMRUT, 258 water supply schemes have smart monitoring systems such as SCADA system and 1,422 water supply projects under AMRUT 2.0 has provision for SCADA system. Mission advocates ease of getting connections to minimize illegal connections. Mission has provision of ₹3,000 per connection to enhance last mile connectivity. Mission advocated to use of smart elements, flow meters, pressure valves, etc. to strengthen maintenance systems, digital monitoring, energy efficiency, etc.

For improvement in service delivery, States have taken up DfT projects and States are encouraged to implement at least one DfT project in a DMA or ward within each AMRUT city. 407 projects with 1,153 DMAs benefitting 16.72 lakh Households have been approved in 348 ULBs under AMRUT 2.0.

Through AMRUT Mitra initiative, Women SHGs have been engaged in water quality testing, Operation & Maintenance support, bill distribution and awareness.

MoHUA has issued an advisory "Strengthening Water Quality Monitoring in Cities through Community Participation" under AMRUT 2.0 in November, 2024 to all the States to formulate a Water Quality Monitoring strategy at the State or City level and to strengthen the institutional capacity for citywide monitoring of drinking water quality in urban areas along with Digital Display Boards for water quality parameters for public information & awareness.

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