

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

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1863**

ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026

**GROUNDWATER POLLUTION IN RURAL AREAS OF BIHAR**

1863 # SHRI SANJAY YADAV:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the levels of Arsenic, Fluoride, and Iron in groundwater exceed the prescribed limits in approximately 26 per cent of rural wards in 31 out of 38 districts of the State of Bihar;
- (b) if so, a ward-wise list of the affected districts;
- (c) whether the excess of chemical elements has increased the risk of diseases such as cancer, bone weakness, and neurological disorders, and it is adversely affecting soil fertility and food security; and
- (d) the measures taken so far by Government in the affected districts regarding water purification and alternative drinking water supply?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI**

**(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)**

**(a) & (b)** Monitoring of groundwater quality in the country is conducted by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under this Ministry and respective State Governments on a regular basis. CGWB conducts ground water quality testing and surveillance through its network of monitoring stations as per its prescribed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). However, such monitoring is not conducted at rural ward level.

As per the Annual Ground Water Quality Report – 2025, published by CGWB based on its monitoring data, groundwater quality in the State of Bihar remains largely potable, except for localized occurrences of certain contaminants, such as arsenic, fluoride and heavy metals, beyond permissible limits in some isolated pockets. The report can be viewed at:

<https://cgwb.gov.in/cgwbpm/public/uploads/documents/1762854375262680475file.pdf>

**(c)** Drinking water having Arsenic, Fluoride or heavy metals above the permissible limits over a sustained period of time is known to cause several adverse health effects. As per the available research and literature, long-term consumption of water contaminated with Arsenic, Fluoride and heavy metals like Iron may lead to various health issues like Arsenicosis, diseases of the skin, skeletal and/ or dental fluorosis, organ damage, kidney diseases, etc. Further, some of the contaminants may enter top soil layer affecting crop growth.

**(d)** Water is a State subject and the responsibility of taking initiatives to mitigate ground water contamination and to provide safe drinking water to citizens lies primarily with the State governments.

However, to complement the efforts of the state governments, several steps have been taken by the Central Government to address these issues in the country including in Bihar. Some of the important ones are mentioned below:-

- i. The ground water quality data generated by CGWB is regularly disseminated through Annual Reports, Half-yearly Bulletins and Fortnightly Alerts for quick action by the stakeholders.
- ii. In order to enhance monitoring efficiency, a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Groundwater Quality Monitoring has been adopted by CGWB, which stipulates more frequent and denser sampling, particularly in vulnerable areas to ensure a more comprehensive assessment of groundwater quality.
- iii. CGWB has also developed an innovative cement sealing technology for tapping deeper Arsenic free aquifers in the Arsenic affected areas and has so far successfully constructed 40 Arsenic safe exploratory wells in Bihar and is also providing technical assistance to state departments for taking up similar constructions.
- iv. Under the National Aquifer Mapping Programme (NAQUIM) of CGWB, while taking up aquifer studies, special attention is being given to the aspect of ground water quality including contamination by toxic substances such as Arsenic, Fluoride, heavy metals etc.
- v. Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – Har Ghar Jal, is being implemented by this Ministry in partnership with states, marks an important milestone for providing contamination free potable tap water to every rural household of the country in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on regular & long-term basis. Following measures have been taken under JJM to facilitate action on water quality aspects at state level, including in Bihar :-

- Under the JJM, Bureau of Indian Standards' BIS:10500 standards have been adopted as prescribed norms for quality of tap water service delivery.
- While allocating the funds to States/ UTs, 10% weightage is given to the population residing in habitations affected by chemical contaminants.
- Around 2870 water quality testing laboratories have been set up in the country, with 123 in Bihar. Besides this, five persons, preferably women are identified and trained from every village for testing the water samples through Field Test Kits (FTKs).
- States/ UTs have also been advised to install community water purification plants (CWPPs) as an interim measure, especially in quality affected habitations to provide potable drinking water to every household.

- vi. The ground water pollution also owes its origin to contamination of surface water sources for which various efforts have been made in the country like installing Sewage Treatment Plants, Effluent Treatment Plants and better system of sewage networks etc. Under National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), the government has initiated several steps for improving the water quality along the river Ganga and its tributaries which also covers the area of Bihar.

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