

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2640

ANSWERED ON 16.03.2026

STATUS OF GROUNDWATER RESERVES IN TAMIL NADU

2640. SHRI R. DHARMAR:

Will the Minister of **Jal Shakti** be pleased to state:

- (a) current status of groundwater reserves in the State of Tamil Nadu, district-wise, as per the latest assessment, especially from Ramanathapuram district;
- (b) whether there has been a decline in groundwater levels in the State over the last five years and the regions most affected by groundwater depletion;
- (c) steps taken by Government to replenish groundwater, including rainwater harvesting, artificial recharge, watershed management and regulation of borewells, in the State of Tamil Nadu; and
- (d) whether the Central Government has any plans to support farmers and local communities in the State dependent on groundwater for irrigation and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) The Dynamic Ground Water Resources are being annually assessed for the whole country, including the state of Tamil Nadu, by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in coordination with the respective State Governments. As per the latest assessment of 2025, in the State of Tamil Nadu, the total Annual Ground Water Recharge is 22.61 Billion Cubic Meter (BCM) and the Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource is 20.46 BCM. The Total Annual Ground Water Extraction in the state has been estimated as 15.04 BCM and accordingly, the Stage of Ground Water Extraction (SoE), which is a measure of Annual Ground Water Extraction for all purposes over Annual Extractable Ground Water is arrived at 73.50 % for the State as a whole. The district-wise Ground Water Resources for State of Tamil Nadu (2025) including for Ramanathapuram district can be seen at the following link :

<https://cgwb.gov.in/cgwbpm/download/1741#page=196>

(b) Upon comparison of post-monsoon, 2025 groundwater levels of CGWB's monitoring wells in Tamil Nadu with the mean post-monsoon groundwater levels of previous five years i.e. 2020–2024, it emerges that about 60% of the monitored wells have registered rise in groundwater levels. However, in the districts of Dindigul, Kanniyakumari, Namakkal, Pudukkottai, Sivaganga, Thoothukkudi and Tiruppur fall in groundwater levels has been observed.

(c) Water being a State subject, the responsibility of addressing the ground water related issues lies primarily with the concerned State Governments. However, the Central Government facilitates the efforts of the State Governments by way of technical and financial assistance through its various schemes and projects. In this direction, the important steps taken by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and other central ministries for ground water conservation and replenishment through rain water harvesting, artificial recharge and regulation of ground water extraction in the country, including Tamil Nadu, are given below:-

- i. Efforts of the Government for augmenting the water/groundwater resources of the country are mainly channeled through the flagship campaign of Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA), an annual mission mode programme for taking up water harvesting and artificial recharge activities. As per the available information, under JSA, more than 2 Cr water conservation and artificial recharge works have been taken up through convergence in the country so far, with around 14.35 lakh works in Tamil Nadu, which has played a key role in enhancing the sustainability of ground water resources.
- ii. To further strengthen the momentum of JSA, Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) initiative has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in 2024 with a vision to make rain water harvesting a mass movement in the country. By promoting community ownership and responsibility, the initiative seeks to develop cost-effective, local solutions tailored to specific water challenges across different regions. Thus far, more than 45 lakh rain water harvesting and artificial recharge structures have been constructed across the country under this initiative, with 1.87 lakh such structures in Tamil Nadu.
- iii. After the successful completion of NAQUIM 1.0, which mapped the aquifers of the country for the entire mappable area of 25 lakh sq. kms, including 1.05 lakh sq km of Tamil Nadu, CGWB has now embarked upon NAQUIM 2.0, focusing on water stressed and quality affected pockets, with a view to provide aquifer data of high granularity along with appropriate management plans.
- iv. Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched by the Government of India, which aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country, including Tamil Nadu. As an outcome nearly 69,000 Amrit Sarovars have been constructed/rejuvenated in the country, with 2,488 in Tamil Nadu.
- v. On the ground water regulation front, the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti is involved in regulation of ground water extraction at the central level. That apart, 17 States/UTs, including Tamil Nadu, are having their own regulatory mechanism/bodies. For remaining 19 States/UTs CGWA issues No Objection Certificates

(NOCs) for ground water extraction for various purposes in accordance with its Guidelines dated 24.09.2020 which have pan India applicability.

- vi. In addition to the above, as per the information received from the State Government of Tamil Nadu, the Directorate of Town Panchayats is actively engaged in construction of rooftop rainwater harvesting structures on all government, commercial and residential buildings. Further, under various state government projects like Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization Project (TNIAMP), Mission on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture (MSDA), Chief Minister's Dryland Development Mission (CMDDM) etc. large-scale construction of farm ponds and check dams has been taken up across the state.

(d) The Union Government has been promoting the welfare of farmers by encouraging efficient water use, groundwater recharge and improved irrigation practices. The important steps taken by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and other Central Ministries in this regard are given below:

- i) The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare (MoA&FW) has been implementing the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme in the country since 2015–16, including in the State of Tamil Nadu. The PDMC focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at the farm level through micro-irrigation for various crops, viz. drip and sprinkler irrigation systems. Under the scheme, subsidy is provided to individual farmers for installation of micro-irrigation systems.

- ii) The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana- Har Khet Ko Paani- Ground Water component (PMKSY-HKKP-GW), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, was implemented to support small and marginal farmers in areas having potential for groundwater development. The scheme was implemented in ten States, including Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, it was implemented in 14 districts and brought 621.28 hectares of rain-fed agricultural land under assured groundwater irrigation, enabling farmers to cultivate additional crops and reducing dependence on monsoon rainfall.
