

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3441

ANSWERED ON 23.03.2026

OVER EXTRACTION OF WATER

3441. Dr. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:

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

- (a) whether India remains the world's largest extractor of groundwater, with extraction rates vastly exceeding natural recharge;
- (b) the details of the over-exploited and critical blocks that have worsened despite the interventions of the Atal Bhujal Yojana;
- (c) the reasons for the failure to incentivize farmers to shift away from water-guzzling crops like paddy and sugarcane in water-stressed regions;
- (d) the total quantum of unutilized funds under the groundwater management schemes; and
- (e) the strict regulatory steps being taken to heavily penalize illegal commercial and industrial groundwater extraction?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment of the country is carried out annually by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in coordination with State Governments. As per the latest assessment for 2025, the total Annual Ground Water Recharge in the country is 448.52 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) and the Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource is 407.75 BCM. The total Annual Ground Water Extraction has been assessed as 247.22 BCM. Accordingly, the Stage of Ground Water Extraction (SoE), defined as the ratio of Annual Ground Water Extraction to Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource for all uses, is 60.63% for the country as a whole.

The assessment data further indicates that total annual ground water recharge has increased from 432 BCM in 2017 to 448.52 BCM in 2025. During the same period, the percentage of safe assessment units increased from 62.6% to 73.14%, while the over-exploited units declined from 17.2% to 10.8%.

(b) Atal Bhujal Yojana, a community led participatory ground water management scheme, was implemented as a pilot scheme across 8,203 priority water stressed Gram Panchayats in 229 Blocks of seven states viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Under the scheme, community led preparation of Water Budgets (WBs) and Water Security Plans (WSPs) was completed and annually updated for all covered GPs. Further, construction/rejuvenation of more than 83,000 water harvesting and artificial recharge structures was done and an area of around 9.7 lakh Hectares was brought under efficient irrigation practices. As a result, 180 out of 229 Blocks have shown improvement in ground water levels during periodic assessments conducted from 2023 to 2025.

(c) The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW), GoI, is implementing the Crop Diversification Programme (CDP), which is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Pradhan Mantri-Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) in the Original Green Revolution States viz; Haryana, Punjab & Uttar Pradesh since 2013-14 to divert the area of water guzzling paddy crop to alternative crops like pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals, nutri cereals, etc. As per the available information, an area of around 6.96 lakh Hectares has been diverted from water intensive crops under CDP through alternative crop demonstrations from 2013-14 to 2024-25.

Apart from implementing CDP, the state governments are also encouraging farmers to shift from Rice-Wheat-based crop system through various interventions viz, in Punjab various sustainable farming practices like promoting / encouraging millets cultivation, ensuring supply of quality planting material of various fruits, vegetables etc., are being implemented and in Haryana, through the “Mera Pani Meri Virasat” scheme, the issue of declining groundwater is being addressed by diversifying the paddy crop to alternate high-value crops. Moreover, both Punjab and Haryana States have established centers of excellence for various fruits and vegetables to promote their cultivation.

Additionally, DA & FW, GoI, is implementing Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) Scheme in the country, since 2015-16, which focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level through Micro Irrigation. The Operational Guidelines of PDMC focus on promoting Micro Irrigation especially in water guzzling crops including paddy and sugarcane. Thus far, an area of around 108 lakh Hectares in the country has been covered under micro-irrigation through PDMC scheme.

(d) The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti is implementing the Ground Water Management and Regulation (GWMR) Scheme, a continuing Central Sector Scheme for activities such as exploration, monitoring of groundwater levels and quality, and assessment of groundwater resources across the country.

During the scheme period 2021–2026, an amount of Rs. 997 crore has been allocated, out of which Rs. 806.2 crore has been utilized as on 14.03.2026.

(e) Extraction cum use of Groundwater is regulated by Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) in 19 States/UTs by way of issuing NOCs as per the provisions of its Guidelines dated 24.09.2020. Remaining 17 States/UTs have their own regulatory frameworks/mechanism. The Guidelines stipulate that all project proponents, like infrastructure projects, mines, industries etc. extracting ground water should compulsorily obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from CGWA. Additionally, the following stringent measures have been mandated by the Guidelines to regulate over extraction:

- NOC shall not be granted to new industries in over-exploited areas, except for MSMEs.
- NOC shall be granted only in case of non-availability of sufficient quantity of local government water supply.
- Industries shall adopt water efficient practices to reduce dependence on ground water and those industries extracting more than 100 Kilo Litres/Day (KLD) of ground water shall undertake biennial water audit.
- All projects must mandatorily install water flow meters and ground water extraction data should be regularly shared with CGWA for monitoring and ensuring compliance.
- Ground water extraction charges are being levied on all the project proponents, which increase proportionately based on consumption.
- Hefty Environmental Compensation (EC) charges for unlawful extraction and penalties for non-compliance with NOC conditions are being imposed as deterrent measures.
