

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 889

ANSWERED ON 27.07.2026

DECLINING WATER AVAILABILITY AND CANAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN PUNJAB

889 Dr. VIKRAMJIT SINGH SAHNEY:

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

- (a) whether Government has undertaken any assessment of water losses and irrigation inefficiencies in the State of Punjab due to ageing canal infrastructure and excessive dependence on groundwater;
- (b) the details of Central assistance provided to the State under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and other irrigation schemes during the last five years;
- (c) whether any proposal for canal modernisation, aquifer recharge or micro-irrigation expansion from Punjab is pending with the Central Government; and
- (d) steps taken by the Central Government to improve irrigation efficiency and promote sustainable water management in Punjab?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) Water being a State subject, it is for the State Government concerned to plan, implement and manage the irrigation projects, and to prepare action plan to make irrigation system more extensive and efficient in the State. Role of Government of India is to provide technical support, and partial financial assistance for identified projects under the ongoing schemes.

However, recognising the need to improve the efficiency of the canal system in Punjab, the Government of India, in September 2018, approved financial assistance for the Relining of Rajasthan Feeder and Sirhind Feeder.

During the preparation of the DPR, an assessment of seepage losses in the dilapidated Rajasthan Feeder was carried out. The earlier reported seepage loss before relining was about 3.02 cumecs per million square metres of wetted surface. After relining, the seepage loss was assessed at about 0.6 cumecs per million square metres of wetted surface, indicating a reduction of about 2.42 cumecs per million square metres, in the portion where re-lining of the canal was done.

(b) to (d) The details of central assistance provided to the State of Punjab under different components of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY) during last five years, is given below:

Sl.No.	Scheme/Component of PMKSY	Central assistance provided during 2021-2022 to 2025-26 (Rs. in crore)
1.	PMKSY-Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme	1036.00
2.	PMKSY-Command Area Development and Water	98.85

	Management	
3.	PMKSY-Watershed Development	19.16
4.	Per Drop More Crop	23.06

Decision regarding inclusion of new projects for central assistance under PMKSY depends on approved guidelines and financial allocations for the scheme for the period 2026-31, concurrent with the 16th Finance Commission cycle.

Steps taken by Government for increase in irrigation coverage, improvement in irrigation efficiency and promote sustainable water management in Punjab are given below.

1. 223.62 thousand hectare irrigation potential has been created/restored, 114.52 thousand hectare command area has been developed through projects implemented in Punjab under PMKSY since 2016-17. This has brought additional area under surface water irrigation, increased water conveyance efficiency and reduced dependence on ground water for irrigation in the State. Further, 22.39 thousand area has been brought under micro irrigation in Punjab through PDMC, for enhancement in water application efficiency.
2. Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under this Ministry has taken up National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme (NAQUIM) throughout the country. The Aquifer mapping for the entire mappable area of the country of about 25 lakh square kilometre has been completed including an area of 50,369 square kilometre in Punjab. Based on NAQUIM studies, groundwater management plans have been prepared wherein crop-diversification, promotion and adoption of water use efficiency & conservation practices viz. drip/sprinkler has been proposed as one of the demand side management measures for sustainable groundwater development. The management plans have been prepared and shared with the respective State governments for taking appropriate measures/implementation.
3. Under the National Aquifer Mapping Programme (NAQUIM) of CGWB, special attention is being given to the aspect of ground water quality. In Punjab, NAQUIM 2.0 studies were taken up in priority areas of Ludhiana and Sangrur districts under poor quality and over-exploited area category respectively in Punjab to obtain information in higher granularity to provide issue based scientific inputs for groundwater management.
4. Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for regulation of its development. So far, 21 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation including Punjab.
5. Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has released Model Building Bye-laws, 2016 which recommends Rainwater Harvesting for all types of Building with plot size 100 sq.m or more. So far, 35 States/UTs, including Punjab, have incorporated the provisions in their respective building bye laws.
