GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 366
ANSWERED ON 17.11.2016

CONSERVATION OF WATER

366. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to preserve the water resources so as to provide perennial drinking water sources, if so, the details thereof along with the action taken so as to ensure the availability of water both for irrigation and drinking purpose during the drought situation in the country;

(b) whether the Government has conducted any study regarding the decrease in rainfall and its effect on availability of water, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to introduce new schemes for water conservation to tackle the situation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION
(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) Water being a State subject, several steps are taken by the concerned State Governments for preserving the water resources which inter-alia include conservation of water resources in reservoirs and traditional water bodies, rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge of groundwater. Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation provides technical and financial assistance to the State Governments through various schemes and programmes namely: Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY); Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP); scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of water bodies etc. In addition, several measures have been taken up by the Central Government to replenish ground water in the country.

- The National Water Policy (2012) formulated by Ministry of Water Resources, RD &GR , inter-alia, advocates conservation, promotion and protection of water and highlights the need for augmenting the availability of water through rain water harvesting, direct use of rainfall and other management measures.
- This Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/ UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for its regulation and development which includes provision of rain water harvesting . So far, 15 states/ UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the line of Model bill.
- CGWB has also prepared a conceptual document entitled “Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water in India” during the year 2013, involving ground water scientists/ experts.

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The Master Plan envisaging construction of 1.11 crore Rainwater Harvesting and Artificial Recharge structures in the country at an estimated cost of Rs.79,178 Crores to harness 85 BCM (billion Cubic Meters) of water. The augmented ground water resources will enhance the availability of water for drinking, domestic, industrial and irrigation purposes. The Master Plan has been circulated to all State Governments for implementation.

- Special focus is given through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for water conservation and water harvesting structures to augment ground water. In addition, priority has been given for construction of farm ponds in the year 2016-17 to harvest rain water.
- Besides , Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has issued advisories to the States and UTs to take measures to promote/ adopt artificial recharge to ground water/ rain water harvesting . 30 States/ UTs have made rain water harvesting mandatory by enacting laws or by formulating rules & regulations or by including provisions in Building bye-laws or through suitable Government Orders.
- CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management programme during XII Plan, under the scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation. The Aquifer Mapping is aimed to delineate aquifer disposition and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/ area specific ground water management plans with community participation.
- CGWB has been organizing mass awareness programmes in the country to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.

(b) No specific study regarding decrease in rainfall and its effect on availability of water has been carried out. The Central Water Commission (CWC) monitors live storage status of 91 reservoirs of the country on a weekly basis and issues weekly bulletin on every Thursday. A comparison of Region wise Storage Status of Major reservoirs at the end of monsoon season (September end) during last three years shows that due to reduced rainfall the storage in 2015 was much less than that of 2014 in all the regions except in the northern region. During 2016, the storage is much less than 2014 in the south and north; it has improved in the central region while it remains almost the same in eastern and western regions.

(c) & (d) Government of India has launched Pradhan Mantri Krishi SinchaiYojana (PMKSY) with the vision of extending the coverage of irrigation ‘Har Khet ko Pani’ and improving water use efficiency ‘More crop per drop’ in a focused manner with end to end solution on source creation, distribution, management, field application and extension activities. Under the scheme, it is proposed to complete 99 ongoing AIBP schemes under PMKSY, to create an irrigation potential of 7.6 millino ha. at a cost of Rs. 77,595 crores through NABARD funding.

The MoWR,RD &GR has also launched Jal Kranti Abhiyan (2015-16 to 2017-18) in order to consolidate water conservation and management in the country through a holistic and integrated approach involving all stakeholders, making it a mass movement. ‘Jal Gram Yojana’ component of Jal Kranti Abhiyan envisages selection of two villages in every district, preferably ‘over-exploited ‘ or facing acute water scarcity, as ‘Jal Grams’ to ensure optimum and sustainable utilization of water.

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