

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3748
ANSWERED ON 03.01.2019

WATER CRISIS

3748. DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA

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

- (a) whether it is true that India is suffering from the worst water crisis;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) whether it is true that huge number of people die every year due to inadequate access to safe water;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action being taken by the Government to cope up with the water crisis in the country?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION & PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (d) The average annual water availability of any region or country is largely dependent upon hydro-meteorological and geological factors and is generally constant. However, water availability per person is dependent on population of the country and for India, per capita water availability in the country is reducing progressively due to increase in population. The average annual per capita water availability in the years 2001 and 2011 was assessed as 1816 cubic meters and 1545 cubic meters respectively which may reduce further to 1340 and 1140 in the years 2025 and 2050 respectively. Annual per-capita water availability of less than 1700 cubic meters is considered as water stressed condition, whereas annual per-capita water availability below 1000 cubic meters is considered as a water scarcity condition. Due to high temporal and spatial variation of precipitation, the water availability of many regions of the country is much below the national average and can be considered as water stressed / water scarce.

The average annual water potential in the country has been assessed as 1869 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM). Due to topographical and other factors, the utilizable water availability is limited to 1137 BCM per annum, comprising of 690 BCM of surface water and 447 BCM of replenishable ground water. Further, National Commission on Integrated Water Resources

Development (NCIWRD) have mentioned in their report that taking into account the water availability and the requirements in India, which has been assessed as 843 BCM in the year 2025 and 1180 BCM in 2050, there is no need to take an alarmist view.

The report titled “Composite Water Management Index” published by NITI Aayog referred to estimates of the Global Health Observatory Data Repository of World Health Organization which states that nearly 2 lakh people die every year due to inadequate/unsafe water in India.

(e) Water being a State subject, steps for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources including tackling of water crisis are primarily undertaken by the respective State Governments. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to them through various schemes and programmes. Central Government has taken various steps to tackle water crisis in the country.

Central Government has formulated a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Water Resources Development which envisages transfer of water from water surplus basins to water deficit basins to improve availability of water.

Central Government has launched Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) in 2015-16 which aims to enhance physical access of water on farm and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve farm water use efficiency, introduce sustainable water conservation practices, etc. During 2016-17, 99 on-going Major/Medium irrigation projects under PMKSY-Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) having ultimate irrigation potential of 76.03 lakh hectares have been prioritized in consultation with States, for completion in phases up to December, 2019.

Some initiatives/measures taken by the Central Government for conservation and improvement of availability of ground water are available at the URL: http://mowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/MeasuresForGW-Depletion_1.pdf
