

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3812
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.01.2019

Depleting Ground Water

3812. SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM:

Will the Minister of DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether 21 cities in India are expected to have zero ground water by year 2020;
- (b) the reasons for the rapid depletion of groundwater in the country;
- (c) the steps that have been taken/are being taken by the Government to protect groundwater in the country; and
- (d) the extent to which these steps been successful, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION
(SHRI RAMESH CHANDAPPA JIGAJINAGI)

(a) to (d) The issue of zero ground water / rapid depletion of groundwater is related to Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD & GR). As per the information furnished by them in this respect, reasons for depletion of ground water resources are mainly due to increased demand of fresh water for various uses, irregular Monsoon, growing population, urbanization and industrialization etc. Several steps have been taken to protect ground water in the country which has resulted in reduction in ground water utilization and number of 'Over-exploited' assessment units in several States. The various steps in this regard are as follows:

- The National Water Policy (2012) formulated by MoWR, RD & GR 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. The Policy has been forwarded to all States/UTs and concerned Ministries/Departments of Central Government for adoption.
- The 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, which includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 15 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the lines of Model Bill.
- Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has prepared a conceptual document titled "Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water – 2013" which provides information about area-specific artificial recharge techniques to augment ground water resources based on the availability of source water and capability of subsurface formations to accommodate it. The Master Plan envisages construction of about 1.11 crore artificial recharge/Rainwater harvesting structures in urban and rural areas. The Master Plan is available in public domain and has also been circulated to the State Governments for implementation.
- Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under Section 3 (3) of the "Environment (Protection) Act, 1986" for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the Country. So far, CGWA has notified 162 areas in the country where ground water withdrawal through new abstraction structures is not permitted, except for drinking and domestic uses. CGWA has issued directives to the Chief

Secretaries of all States as well as Administrators of all UTs to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water / rain water harvesting. It also grants No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for ground water abstraction to Industries, Infrastructure units and Mining projects with mandatory conditions aimed at conservation, augmentation and efficient use of ground water.

- CGWB regularly undertakes training programs and Information Education & Communication (IEC) activities for capacity building and awareness creation of stakeholders on the importance of water conservation and rainwater harvesting in augmenting the ground water resources.
- CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) programme from the XII Plan, under the scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation. Aquifer Mapping is aimed at delineating aquifer disposition and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/area specific ground water management plans.
- Model Building Bye Laws, 2016 circulated by Ministry of Urban Development include provisions for Rainwater Harvesting. As per these, water harvesting through storing of water runoff including rainwater in all new buildings on plots of 100 sq. m. and above will be mandatory. Barring the States/UT of Manipur, Sikkim, Mizoram and Lakshadweep, all the States/UTs have incorporated these provisions in their respective building byelaws. Building plans submitted to the local bodies shall indicate the system of stormwater drainage along with points of collection of rainwater in surface reservoirs or in recharge wells. Further, all buildings having a minimum discharge of 10,000 litre and above per day shall have mandatory wastewater recycling systems. The recycled water shall be used for horticultural purposes.
- Department of Land Resources is currently implementing 8214 watershed development projects in 28 States covering an area of about 39.07 million ha. under the Watershed Development Component (WDC) of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), primarily for development of rainfed portions of net cultivated area and culturable wastelands. Major activities taken up under the WDC-PMKSY inter-alia include ridge area treatment, drainage line afforestation, soil and moisture conservation, rain water harvesting, horticulture, pasture development etc.
- The Ministry of Rural Development, in consultation and agreement with the MoWR, RD & GR and the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has developed an actionable framework titled "Mission Water Conservation" for Natural Resources Management (NRM) to ensure gainful utilization of funds. The Framework strives to ensure synergies in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), PMKSY, Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) and Command Area Development & Water Management (CAD&WM) Programme, given their common objectives. Common works undertaken under these programmes/schemes include water conservation and management, water harvesting, soil and moisture conservation, groundwater recharge, flood protection, land development, Command area development and watershed management.
- Ground water resources are dynamic and depends on rainfall, runoff, aquifer characteristics and drawal of water from various purposes, inter-alia agriculture, which is the major user of ground water.