

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI  
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO – 1740**  
ANSWERED ON 01/08/2024

**SHORTAGE OF POTABLE WATER**

†1740. SHRI ABHAY KUMAR SINHA:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Aurangabad and Gaya districts of Bihar are facing an acute shortage of potable water and the ground water table has depleted below 200 to 300 feet;
- (b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check further depletion of ground water table and to make arrangements for availability of potable water;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to dig deep bore-wells in the above districts;
- (d) if so, the time by which bore well would be dug and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to send a Central Assessment Team to Aurangabad and Gaya districts in this regard; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI  
(SHRI V. SOMANNA)

(a) to (f) Government of India is committed to the provision of safe & potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on a regular & long-term basis to all rural households in the country. Towards this end, the Government of India launched the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), to be implemented in partnership with states including Bihar, in August 2019. Drinking Water is a state subject, and hence, the responsibility of planning, approval, implementation, operation, and maintenance of drinking water supply schemes lies with State/UT Governments. The Government of India supports the States by providing technical and financial assistance.

Significant progress has been made in the country since the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, towards enhancing access to tap water for rural households. At the time of announcement of JJM, 3.23 Crore rural households in the country were reported to have tap water connections. Since then, additional 11.80 Crore rural households have been provided tap water connections. Thus, as on 30.07.2024, out of 19.32 Crore rural households in the country, provision of tap water supply has been made to 15.03 Crore (77.81%) households. Similarly, in Bihar, 3.16 Lakhs rural households were reported to have tap water connections. Since announcement of JJM, additional 1.57 Crore rural households have been provided tap water connections. Thus, as on 30.07.2024, provision of tap water supply has been made to 1.60 Crore (96.08%) households in the State. In Aurangabad and Gaya districts of Bihar, 3.81 lakh (97.75%) & 5.77 lakh (99.29%) rural households have been provided tap connections.

Development of reliable drinking water sources and/ or augmentation of existing sources to provide long-term sustainability of water supply system in villages, is an integral part of Jal Jeevan Mission. Provision has been made for the preparation of Village Action Plan (VAP) by village community, which inter alia includes strengthening of drinking water sources in convergence with other schemes such as MGNREGS, Finance Commission grants to rural local bodies/ PRIs, MP & MLA's Local Area Development Fund, District Mineral Development Fund, CSR fund, etc.

In the State of Bihar, assessment of groundwater resources is carried out jointly by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and State Nodal/Ground Water Department. The Ground Water Resource Assessment of Aurangabad & Gaya districts has been carried out in 2022 and 2023 and findings are given below:

<b>District</b>	<b>Asses sment Year</b>	<b>Total Annual Ground Water (Hectare meter/Ha m) Recharge</b>	<b>Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource (Ham)</b>	<b>Total Extractio n (Ham)</b>	<b>Stage of Ground Water Extraction (%)</b>	<b>Categorizat ion</b>
Aurangabad	2022	127742.95	116611.55	28611.84	24.54	Safe
	2023	136333.38	122821.2	30864.03	25.13	Safe
Gaya	2022	132061.37	119291.66	49295.82	41.32	Safe
	2023	124358.54	112408.56	54043.27	48.08	Safe

It indicates that in the year 2022 and 2023, the stage of extraction for both the districts has increased owing to either reduction in recharge or increase in draft. In both 2022 and 2023, Aurangabad and Gaya have been categorised as Safe.

CGWB monitors groundwater levels throughout the country on a regional scale including Aurangabad and Gaya districts of Bihar, four times in every year during the months of March/April/May, August, November and January through a network of its Monitoring Wells. During May 2024, the water level in Aurangabad and Gaya districts ranges between 0-20 mbgl and 2-10 mbgl respectively.

In order to assess the long term fluctuation in ground water level, the water level data collected by CGWB during May 2024 has been compared with the mean of May (2014-2023). Analysis of water level data indicates that about 50% of the wells monitored have registered rise in ground water levels, mostly in the range of 0.0 – 2.0 metre. Further, fall in groundwater levels have also been observed in 50% analysed wells which is mostly in the range of 0.0-2.0 metre. District-wise Decadal Water Level Fluctuation with Mean (Pre-Monsoon 2014 to 2023) and Pre-monsoon 2024 in respect of these districts is presented in Annexure.

Water being a State subject, the aspects related to water resources including its conservation are studied, planned, funded and executed by the State Governments. Government of India provides technical support and, in some cases financial assistance through schemes being implemented by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga

Rejuvenation. However, following steps have been taken to check depletion of groundwater table:

(i) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has completed the National Aquifer Mapping (NAQUIM) Project in the entire mappable area of about 25 Lakh sq. km including the entire mappable area of Aurangabad and Gaya districts of Bihar. The Aquifer maps and management plans have been prepared and shared with the respective State agencies for implementation. The management plans include various water conservation measures through recharge structures. Building on the experience of the NAQUIM, CGWB has initiated the NAQUIM 2.0 activities in Madanpur and Rafiganj blocks of Aurangabad districts and in Mohanpur and Fatehpur blocks of Gaya district

(ii) CGWB has prepared a Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater- 2020 in consultation with States/UTs which is a macro level plan indicating various structures for the different terrain conditions of the country including estimated cost. The Master Plan envisages construction of about 3.5 thousand in Aurangabad district and 13 thousand structures in Gaya districts of Bihar. The Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater- 2020 has been circulated to all the States/UTs. Implementation is by State Government.

(iii) Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and development of ground water. So far, 21 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the legislation including state of Bihar. The model bill envisages that in urban areas, rain water available from roof tops of buildings and other open areas can be utilized gainfully for ground water recharge. Rain water harvesting structures feasible in urban areas include recharge pits, trench, existing tube wells or open wells etc.

(iv) National Water Policy (2012) formulated by Department of Water Resources, RD & GR, inter-alia advocates rainwater harvesting and conservation of water and highlights the need for augmenting the availability of water through direct use of rainfall. It also inter-alia, advocates that conservation of river, river bodies and infrastructure should be undertaken in a scientifically planned manner through community participation. Further, encroachment and diversion of water bodies and drainage channels must not be allowed and wherever it has taken place, it should be restored to the extent feasible and maintained properly.

(v) 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 including state of Bihar have incorporated the provisions in their respective building bye laws.

At present, CGWB has no proposal for digging deep bore wells in these two districts. However, CGWB is going to construct 100m depth piezometers, 03 in Aurangabad and 05 in Gaya districts for monitoring of water level by installing DWLR with telemetry.

There is no proposal under consideration of Ministry of Jal Shakti to send a Central Assessment Team to check further depletion of ground water table in Aurangabad Gaya Districts.

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**Decadal Water Level Fluctuation with Mean (Pre-Monsoon 2014 to 2023) and Pre-Monsoon 2024**

District Name	No of wells analysed	No. of wells in different depth range												Total No. of wells			
		Rise						Fall						Rise (No.)	Rise (%)	Fall (No.)	Fall (%)
		0 to 2	%	2 to 4	%	> 4	%	0 to 2	%	2 to 4	%	> 4	%				
Aurangabad	10	4	40.0	2	20.0	0	0.0	3	30.0	1	10.0	0	0.0	6	60.0	4	40.0
Gaya	6	2	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	50.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	2	33.3	4	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50.0</b>