

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2771

ANSWERED ON 12.12.2024

IMPACT OF NATIONAL WATER AWARDS

2771. SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL

SHRI ANUP SANJAY DHOTRE

SHRI RAMVIR SINGH BIDHURI

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) the impact of National Water Awards in development, conservation and efficient management of water as a national asset;
- (b) whether the said awards are creating awareness about the importance of water and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has distributed water resources fairly among the States facing water scarcity and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the reasons for the failure of the Government in checking the continuous decline of groundwater level despite the institution of National Water Awards?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) National Water Awards (NWAs) focus on the good work and efforts made by individuals and organisations across the country in attaining the government's vision of a '*Jal Samridh Bharat*'. The objective of these awards is to recognize exemplary work done by people in the water sector and to motivate more and more people to work towards water conservation and water management with a greater zeal. The NWAs encourage various stakeholders including the States, Districts, Schools, Civil Societies, Gram Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies, Water User Associations, Institutions, Corporate Sector, etc. to adopt holistic approach towards water resources management in the country. The National Water Awards not only celebrate achievements but also act as a catalyst for nationwide action in water conservation and making efficient water management an integral part of India's development narrative.

Since their inception in 2018, the NWAs have been instrumental in the propagation of the idea of water conservation, preservation and efficient management in general public. It has got reflected in generation of the mass movement through community level participation on a large scale in water conservation campaign of "Jal Shakti Abhiyan" of the Department. Under the Abhiyan, more than 1.05 crore water conservation related works have been completed, out of these nearly 34 lakh works are related to Water conservation and Rainwater Harvesting, 6.5 lakh works on renovation of traditional water bodies,

nearly 18.5 lakh related to Reuse and Recharge Structures and nearly 39 lakh works related to watershed development. Besides, NWAs have helped in successful mobilization of communities leading to significant improvements in the groundwater sector. From 2019 onwards, each year, the majority of groundwater monitoring wells (Range 52% to 70%) have shown rising water levels compared to their average levels from the past decade. This has resulted in significant decline of Over-exploited Assessment units from nearly 17% in the year 2017 to 11% in 2023. While various other factors like rainfall patterns, effective monitoring, support of respective States/UTs, etc have contributed to these achievements in water conservation and management, the contribution of NWAs has been in the form of the awareness generation for successful implementation.

(c) Water being a State Subject, decision for distribution of water resources has to be taken by respective States. Transfer of water from surplus water basins to deficit regions among different States depends on consensus among concerned States.

Government of India has formulated National Perspective Plan (NPP) in the year 1980 to transfer surplus water to water deficit regions. National Perspective Plan (NPP) has been formulated for providing storage and transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit regions to minimize the effects brought by droughts and also to mitigate the ravages of annually recurring floods.

(d) Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) monitors groundwater levels throughout the country on a regional scale, four times in every year. In order to assess the long term fluctuation in ground water level, the water level data collected by CGWB during November 2023 has been compared with the decadal mean of November water levels of ten years (2013-2022). Analysis of water level data indicates that about 51.7% of the wells monitored in the country have registered rise in ground water levels.

Water being a State subject, the aspects related to water resources including its conservation are studied, planned, funded and executed by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities. Role of Government of India is limited to being catalytic, providing technical support and, in some cases partial financial assistance in terms with the existing schemes being implemented by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
