GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 535
ANSWERED ON 28.11.2024

IRON CONTENT IN DRINKING WATER

535. DR. RICKY ANDREW J SYNGKON:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to provide iron filters and installation of iron filtration systems to ensure access to potable water in the regions with high iron content in water particularly in the State of Meghalaya;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the manner in which the Government is likely to support the local Governments in maintaining and monitoring these filtration infrastructure especially in rural and hard-to-reach areas having high iron content in the drinking water; and

(d) whether the Government is collaborating with State authorities in Meghalaya to conduct regular testing of water sources to monitor iron levels and if so, the plan to allocate dedicated funding for this purpose?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) Since August 2019, Government of India in partnership with States is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – Har Ghar Jal to make provision of potable water to every rural household of the country, through functional tap water connection i.e. at a service level of 55 litre per capita per day (lpcd), of prescribed quality (BIS:10500), on regular and long-term basis.

Water being a State subject, planning, designing, implementation, approval and operation & maintenance is done by the concerned State. The Government of India provides technical and financial assistance.

Under JJM, while planning water supply schemes to provide tap water supply to households, priority is given to quality-affected habitations. While allocating the funds to States/ UTs in a particular financial year, 10% weightage is given to the population residing in habitations affected by chemical contaminants including iron affected habitations.

Moreover, in water quality affected habitations where planning, implementation and commissioning of piped water supply schemes based on a safe water source takes time, purely as an interim measure, States/ UTs have been advised to install community water purification plants (CWPPs) in such habitations, to provide potable water to every household at the rate of 8–10 litre per capita per day (lpcd) to meet their drinking and cooking requirements.

As on date, the State of Meghalaya has not reported any habitation with iron contaminant in drinking water sources beyond permissible limit.

(d) Under JJM, States/ UTs can utilize up to 2% of their annual allocation of funds for Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance (WQM&S) activities *inter alia* for setting up and strengthening of water quality testing laboratories, procurement of equipment, instruments, chemicals, glassware, consumables, hiring of skilled manpower, surveillance by community using field test kits (FTKs), awareness generation, educational programmes on water quality, accreditation/recognition of laboratories, etc. States/UTs have been advised to carry out testing of water quality on a regular basis at source level as well as delivery level and take the remedial action wherever necessary, to ensure that the water supplied to households is of prescribed quality.

In 2023-24, as reported by State Government on JJM-WQMIS portal, 51,836 water samples have been tested in water testing laboratories and 17,172 water samples tested using Field Testing Kits. Similarly, in 2024-25 (as on 25.11.2024), 27,610 samples in labs and 11,860 samples using FTKs have been tested so far.

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