GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2370

ANSWERED ON 13.03.2025

DECLINE IN ANNUAL GROUNDWATER RECHARGE

2370. SHRI ADITYA YADAV

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

(a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the fact that the total annual groundwater recharge in the country marginally declined in 2024 as compared to 2023 and so did water availability due to higher groundwater extraction last year, with northwest India including parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh, being the bigger culprits; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the preventive steps proposed to be taken by the Government keeping in mind that groundwater extraction for cultivating water-guzzling paddy in Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh is one of the key reasons behind over exploitation in the region?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY**)**

(a) & (b) As per the Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment conducted by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) for the years 2023 and 2024, it is seen that total annual ground water recharge for the country as a whole has slightly decreased from 449 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) to 446.9 BCM between the period and total annual ground water extraction for all purposes has slightly increased from 241 BCM to 245.64 BCM. However, in order to gain a correct perspective, the long term data between the years 2017 and 2024 may be compared, which shows that the annual ground water recharge has increased from 432 BCM to 446.9 BCM and annual ground water extraction has reduced from 249 BCM to 245.64 BCM during the subject period, showing overall improvement.

With regard to the north-western states of Punjab, Delhi Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, figures largely indicate towards *status quo* between 2023 and 2024, whereas in Punjab there is slight improvement in terms of both recharge as well as extraction. However, the overall ground water situation in the said states is below par when compared to national average.

Water being a State subject, sustainable development and management of groundwater resources is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. However, the Central Government facilitates the efforts of the State Governments by way of technical and financial assistance through its various schemes and projects. In this direction, the important steps taken by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and other central ministries

for sustainable development of ground water resources in the country, including in the north-western part, are given below:-

i. The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing Crop Diversification Programme (CDP) under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana - Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sectors Rejuvenation (RKVY-RAFTAAR), in Original Green Revolution States viz., Haryana, Punjab and Western Uttar Pradesh to divert the area of water intensive paddy crop to alternative crops like pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals, nutri cereals and cotton etc. Under CDP assistance is given for alternative crops demonstration, farm mechanization and value addition, site specific activities and contingency for awareness & capacity building etc.

ii. Further, Government of India supplements the efforts of state governments to encourage diversified production of crops such as pulses, coarse cereals, nutri cereals & cotton under National Food Security Mission (NFSM).

iii. Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare (DA & FW), GoI, is also implementing Per Drop More Crop Scheme in the country since 2015-16, which focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level through Micro Irrigation and better on-farm water management practices to optimize the use of available water resources.

iv. The Central Government is implementing Atal Bhujal Yojana in 80 water stressed districts in the states of Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The primary aim of the scheme is demand side management through scientific means based on water budgeting of the area involving the local communities at village levels leading to sustainable groundwater management in the targeted areas. Promoting water efficient irrigation practices and incentivizing the farmers to switch over to less water intensive crops are major focus areas under Atal Jal Scheme. Shifting from flood irrigation to Directly Seeded Rice (DSR) technique is also being popularized through trainings and IEC activities.

v. M/o Jal Shakti is promoting conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater and to reduce dependence on groundwater, surface water based Major and Medium irrigation projects have been taken up in the country under PMKSY-AIBP scheme in collaboration with States/UTs.

vi. MoJS has issued advisories to States/UTs to review their free/subsidized electricity policy to farmers, bring suitable water pricing policy and to work further towards crop rotation/diversification/other initiatives to reduce over-dependence on groundwater. States like Punjab and Haryana have informed about working on the said advisories so as to limit their ground water extraction.

vii. The Government is implementing Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in the country since 2019 which is a mission mode and time bound programme for harvesting the rainfall and taking up water conservation activities. Currently, JSA 2024 is being implemented in the country with special focus on 151 water stressed districts of the country. JSA is an umbrella campaign under which various ground water recharge and conservation related works are being taken up in convergence with various central and state schemes.

viii. Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched by the Government of India which aimed at developing and rejuvenating at least 75 water bodies in each district of the country with a view to increase water storage and enhance ground water recharge. As an outcome nearly 69,000 Amrit Sarovars have been constructed/rejuvenated in the country.

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