

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2507

ANSWERED ON 13.03.2025

BOREWELL DEATHS

2507. DR. D RAVI KUMAR

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

- (a) whether the Government has any data on the borewell deaths occurred in the country during the last five years (2020-2025);
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the measures taken/being taken by the Government to strictly maintain and oversee the safety guidelines rolled out by the Supreme Court in the Orders dated 11.02.2010 and 06.08.2010;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to enact a law to prevent borewell accidents and deaths, taking inspiration from Karnataka's newly enacted (Regulation and Control of Development and Management) (Amendment) Bill; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) M/o Jal Shakti does not maintain any data on borewell accidents/deaths occurring in the country. However, as per the information received from the M/o Home Affairs, between the years 2020 and 2025, the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) has carried out total 37 operations in the country for borewell rescue, out of which 17 were successful.

(c) In order to propagate the safety guidelines framed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its Order dated 11.02.2010 and 06.08.2010, the Ministry of Jal Shakti has written multiple letters to all the Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/UTs, to take strict action for implementation of the guidelines and also to make all the District Collectors/Magistrates responsible for effective compliance. Further Ministry has requested for constitution of a suitable Nodal Agency/ Department and Nodal Officer at each administrative level (from State level to Gram Panchayat level) in every state who shall be responsible for ensuring effective implementation of the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court. So far, 12 States/UTs have responded and intimated regarding constitution of such Nodal agency in their respective state.

In addition to the above, the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), under the M/o Jal Shakti, has issued Public Notices/Advisories dated 13.07.2021 and 21.01.2025 reiterating the Guidelines issued by Hon'ble Supreme Court for strict compliance.

(d) & (e) Water being a State subject, the responsibility of effective regulation of ground water extraction and associated activities like drilling of borewells and their maintenance, is primarily the responsibility of the state governments. The Central Government largely plays an advisory role and extends necessary guidance to the states as and when required.

The M/o Jal Shakti had circulated a 'Model Bill to Regulate and Control the Development and Management of Ground Water' in the year 2005, to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for regulation of its development. The Bill included the provisions like Grant of permit for sinking a new borewell; Registration of existing borewell-owners; Registration of Drilling Agencies; Restrictions of the depth and diameter of bore wells; Restriction on purpose of use of ground water etc. which are meant for effective compliance management on the part of borewell drillers as well as owners leading to prevention of unfortunate borewell accidents. So far, 21 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation, Karnataka being one of them.

Additionally, the Guidelines dated 24.09.2020 issued by CGWA for ground water regulation also prescribe that it shall be the responsibility of State / UT Governments for registering drilling rigs operating within their jurisdiction and for maintaining the database of wells drilled by them. Going further ahead, CGWA Guidelines impose a mandatory condition on the projects seeking NOC for ground water extraction, that in case of failure of well, such defunct well shall be properly sealed and documentary proof in this regard shall be submitted.
