

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

STARRED QUESTION NO. *161

ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026

SHRINKING OR VANISHING LAKES

***161. Shri CHAMALA KIRAN KUMAR REDDY:**

Shri EATALA RAJENDER:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain recent findings have pointed out that numerous lakes across the country are shrinking or vanishing due to rapid urbanisation, encroachment and poor governance highlighting severe losses in Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether the key findings include a Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report noting that 518 out of 697 lakes in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have disappeared or reduced in size and similar widespread degradation has been reported in major metropolitan water bodies as compared to the position since 2004 onwards;

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor, State/UT-wise including Telangana; and

(d) the remedial steps taken by the Government to improve the situation?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI C R PATIL)

(a) to (d) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. *161 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING “SHRINKING OR VANISHING LAKES”

(a) to (d) Water being a state subject, protection, conservation and management of wetlands, including lakes, is undertaken by the respective State Governments/UT Administrations in accordance with the applicable statutory provisions. The Central Government supplements the measures and efforts being taken up by the State Governments/UT Administrations. Ministry of Jal Shakti has conducted 1st Census of Water Bodies in 33 States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme “Irrigation Census” with 100% Central Assistance (reference year 2017-18). The objective of the Census is to develop a national database for all water bodies by collecting information on all important aspects of the subject including their size, condition, status of encroachment, use, storage capacity, status of filling up of storage etc.

While the Central and State Governments take all possible steps for the conservation and management of wetlands (includes lakes), developmental activities and anthropogenic pressures do impact wetlands.

The assessments in the CAG report are based on an inventory of water bodies prepared by the Department of Environment & Remote Sensing, Jammu & Kashmir using LISS-III satellite imagery having an approximate spatial resolution of 23 meters. Such datasets provide preliminary technical information for administrators and researchers and are indicative in nature. They do not constitute conclusive evidence of permanent disappearance, shrinkage, encroachment or unlawful conversion of wetlands. Remote sensing data indicates changes in water spread or land cover of the wetland but cannot independently establish substantial changes. Such conclusions require correlation with land records, cadastral maps, notified wetland boundaries, field inspections and records maintained by the competent custodial and enforcement authorities. Subsequently, J&K Government has undertaken a comprehensive revision and expansion of the inventory using very-high-

resolution satellite imagery, grid-based analysis, field verification and jurisdictional refinement. As a result, the inventory has been updated to 1,793 wetlands and water bodies. The revised inventory of water bodies is shown at Annexure-I.

Further, the Government has taken various measures for conservation and management of wetlands, including lakes. These include policy, regulatory and programme interventions by the Central Government as well as conservation and management measures undertaken by the concerned State Governments/UTs. The major initiatives are as follows:

- i. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified the Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 which, inter-alia, prohibit conversion for non-wetland uses including encroachment of any kind, solid waste dumping, discharge of untreated wastes and effluents from industries, cities, towns, villages and other human settlements and any construction of a permanent nature. Also, the State/UT Wetlands Authorities have been constituted as the nodal authorities responsible for conservation and management of wetlands.**
- ii. MoEF&CC is currently implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely, the 'National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA)' for conservation and management of wetlands in the country on cost sharing basis between Central Government and respective State Governments. The scheme covers various activities such as interception, diversion and treatment of wastewater, shoreline protection, lake front development, in-situ cleaning i.e., desilting & dewatering, storm water management, bioremediation, catchment area treatment, lake beautification, survey & demarcation, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, education and awareness creation, community participation, etc. Under the NPCA scheme, MoEF&CC has provided financial assistance of about Rs. 1170 crores as**

Central share to the States/UTs for about 172 wetlands across the country.

- iii. The other steps taken by MoEF&CC for conservation and management of wetlands across the country include, implementation of Ramsar Convention on wetlands, Mission Sahbhagita and Save Wetlands Campaign for peoples and stakeholders' participation in the wetlands conservation and management, Amrit Dharohar initiative to promote unique conservation values of Ramsar sites.**
- iv. "Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari" (JSJB) initiative was launched in Surat, Gujarat on 6 September 2024. In June 2025, JSJB 2.0 was launched. The implementation cycle for JSJB 2.0 commenced on 1 June 2025 and concluded on 31 May 2026. The initiative leverages community funds, individual donations, Corporate Social Responsibility Funds and others for construction of low-cost structures like borewells, recharge shafts, recharge pits, using locally available material, to harvest rainwater, to boost ground water level and provide local tailor-made solution to water issues. The initiative also emphasizes convergent financing from various schemes of the Central, State and local bodies like Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G), Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), Per Drop More Crop, Repair, Renovation and Restoration Components under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) and Finance Commission grants.**
- v. State wise details of the remedial measures as reported by the State Governments of J&K, Goa, Karnataka and Telangana are at Annexure-II.**

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) & (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *161 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026 REGARDING “SHRINKING OR VANISHING LAKES”

The revised inventory of water bodies is as follows:

Category	Number	Jurisdictional breakup
Wetlands below one hectare and additional wetland-like features	1,499	Forest/Wildlife jurisdiction: 574; Outside Forest: 925
Wetlands above one hectare found present	294	Inside Forest: 113; Protected Areas: 54; LCMA/WUCMA: 3; Outside Forest: 124
Total revised inventory	1793	—

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *161 TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026 REGARDING “SHRINKING OR VANISHING LAKES”

STATE	REMEDIAL MEASURES
Jammu & Kashmir	i. Constitution of the Union Territory Wetland Authority, chaired by the Chief Secretary, and establishment of District Wetland Management Units for coordinated planning, monitoring and conservation of water bodies at district level. ii. Conservation and management of Wular Lake by the Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA). iii. Management of Dal and Nigeen Lakes by the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA). iv. Management of Manasbal Lake by the Wular-Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA). v. Protection and management of ecologically significant wetlands, including Hokersar, Haigam, Shallabugh, Surinsar-Mansar and Gharana Wetlands, by the Wildlife Protection Department. vi. Protection of wetlands located within Reserve Forests and other forest lands by the Forest Department through regular surveillance and habitat conservation measures. vii. Periodic wetland inventory, mapping and monitoring using remote sensing supported by field verification, along with restoration and catchment conservation measures wherever required. viii. Preparation and implementation of site-specific Management Plans; ix. Selective de-siltation of critically silted areas; x. Deepening and restoration of natural streams/nallahs; xi. Creation and maintenance of pools and navigational channels; xii. Selective de-weeding; xiii. Development of roosting and nesting sites for waterbirds; xiv. Construction of watch towers and strengthening surveillance through antipoaching and anti-encroachment measures; xv. Solid waste collection and scientific disposal; xvi. Maintenance of optimum water levels during high and low flow periods through hydrological management; and xvii. Annual waterbird population estimation and biodiversity monitoring. These measures are aimed at maintaining the ecological integrity and ecosystem services of the wetlands.
Goa	i. Identification and restoration of water bodies: Lakes and water bodies have been identified for rejuvenation under State schemes and the Amrit Sarovar Mission. ii. Desiltation and cleaning: Removal of accumulated silt, weeds and debris to improve storage capacity and water quality. iii. Strengthening of bunds and feeder channels: Repair and maintenance works are undertaken to restore natural inflows and retain water. iv. Protection against encroachment: Lake boundaries and adjoining areas are monitored in coordination with Revenue Department (District Collector), Panchayat/Municipal and other concerned authorities. v. Pollution control: Coordination is maintained with local bodies and concerned Departments to prevent discharge of waste into water bodies. vi. Community participation: Local communities and stakeholders are encouraged to participate in conservation and maintenance activities. vii. Monitoring: Periodic inspection and assessment of important water bodies is undertaken for timely intervention.
Karnataka	i. In Karnataka there are 41849 lakes under various departments. Out of this, 15854 tanks found to be encroached and among them, encroachment has been removed in 10155 tanks. ii. State of Karnataka at the government level apex committee under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary revenue have been formed to oversee the above process and district level committee under the chairmanship of deputy commissioner of each district to enforce the same.
Telangana	The Govt of Telangana has designated the Telangana Forest Department as the nodal agency for implementation of Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. Telangana Forest Department is coordination with the other department in identification and boundary demarcation for notifying them under the said rules. 28 proposals have been submitted to the Telangana State Govt for notification under Wetlands Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. Further, proposals have also been submitted to the Govt of India for designating Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary as Ramsar site.
