

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1982

ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026

IMPLEMENTATION OF ABY IN TAMIL NADU

1982. Shri MALAIYARASAN D:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of implementation of Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) in Tamil Nadu including the number of districts, blocks and Gram Panchayats covered thereunder, particularly in Kallakurichi Lok Sabha Constituency;**
- (b) the details of the funds allocated, released and utilised under ABY for groundwater management and conservation activities in Tamil Nadu during the last five years;**
- (c) whether the Government has assessed the impact of ABY on groundwater levels, water conservation practices and community participation in the identified areas and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) whether the Government has identified over-exploited and critical groundwater blocks in Tamil Nadu requiring urgent intervention and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (e) the steps being taken by the Government to promote groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting, efficient water use and sustainable groundwater management in water-stressed regions of Tamil Nadu?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI
(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) Atal Bhujal Yojana was a pilot scheme with a fixed duration and outlay, implemented across 8,203 water-stressed Gram Panchayats in seven States, namely, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The Scheme has now ended after successfully demonstrating the efficacy of community-led participatory groundwater management and providing a replicable model which can be taken up for implementation by other States also. The scheme was not implemented in the State of Tamil Nadu during the pilot stage.

(c) An Overall Impact Assessment Study of Atal Bhujal Yojana has been conducted by the Quality Council of India (QCI). Based on detailed field surveys conducted in the Scheme implementation areas and interactions with local communities, the study has recognized important changes brought about by the scheme, like enhanced community awareness on groundwater issues through capacity-building and IEC activities, women's participation in leadership and decision-making in groundwater management, social inclusivity and an overall knowledge enhancement and willingness of the community to partake in groundwater conservation and water management. A copy of this Report is available on the website of Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation at the following web-link:

<https://www.jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/static/uploads/2026/07/597fd8727a8d10641bd33d7d22ce0459.pdf>

(d) Dynamic Ground Water Resources of the country, including those of the State of Tamil Nadu, are being assessed annually from 2022 jointly by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the respective State Governments. The assessment estimates Annual Groundwater Recharge, Annual Extractable Groundwater Resource, Annual Groundwater Extraction, and the Stage of Groundwater Extraction, and categorizes assessment units as Safe, Semi-Critical, Critical, Over-exploited (OCS), and Saline. The assessment is utilized

to identify groundwater-stressed areas and provides a scientific basis for planning sustainable groundwater management measures, including artificial recharge, rainwater harvesting, aquifer management and regulation of groundwater extraction. The block-wise Ground Water Resources and OCS categorization for the State of Tamil Nadu (2025) are available on the website of the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation at the following web-link:

<https://www.jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/static/uploads/2026/07/5f94f781426143f043e1a63f58f95487.pdf>

(e) Water being a State subject, the responsibility of addressing the groundwater related issues lies primarily with the concerned State Governments. However, the Central Government facilitates the efforts of the State Governments by way of technical and financial assistance through its various schemes and projects. The important steps taken by the Government for groundwater conservation and replenishment through rainwater harvesting, artificial recharge, and regulation of groundwater extraction in the country, including in Tamil Nadu, are given below:-

- i. Under Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA), an annual mission mode programme for taking up water harvesting and artificial recharge activities, more than 2.0 crore water conservation and artificial recharge works have been taken up through convergence in the country so far, with more than 18.55 lakh works in Tamil Nadu. This has played a key role in enhancing the sustainability of ground water resources, particularly in water-stressed districts.**
- ii. Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) initiative has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in 2024 with a vision to make rainwater harvesting a mass movement in the country. By promoting community ownership and responsibility, the initiative seeks to develop cost-**

effective, local solutions tailored to specific water challenges across districts. By 31st May 2026, more than 1.55 crore artificial groundwater recharge and storage works have been reported to be constructed across the country under this initiative, with around 3.15 lakh such structures in Tamil Nadu.

- iii. On 01 June 2026 JSJB-Catch the Rain (CTR) has been launched nation-wide with a special focus on accelerating groundwater recharge in over-exploited and critical districts through low-cost, hyper-local interventions. JSJB: CTR is driven by Jan Bhagidari, mobilizing Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Local Bodies, women's groups, youth, educational institutions, civil society organizations, and local communities to actively participate in water conservation efforts.**
- iv. Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched in 2022 by the Government of India, which aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country, including Tamil Nadu. As an outcome, nearly 69,000 Amrit Sarovars have been constructed/ rejuvenated in the country, with 2,484 in Tamil Nadu.**
- v. From 01.04.2025 till 30.06.2026, 15,08,921 water related works have been completed in the Country, including 1,09,479 works in the State of Tamil Nadu, under MGNREGS. The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act 2025 has been implemented with effect from 01.07.2026. Water security is one of the key features of the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025.**
- vi. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has circulated the Model Building Bye-laws, 2016, which recommend the adoption of rainwater harvesting systems in all buildings having a plot size of 100 sq. metres or more. So far, 35 States / UTs, including Tamil Nadu, have incorporated these provisions in their respective building bye-laws.**

- vii. The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) was launched during the year 2015-16, with the aim to enhance physical access of water on farm and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve on-farm water use efficiency, introduce sustainable water conservation practices, etc. Under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme and Command Area Development & Water Management components of PMKSY., 30.66 lakh hectare irrigation potential has been created, with pari passu development of 23.42 lakh hectare command area has been achieved. Under the PMKSY-Har Khet Ko Pani (HKPP), Repair, Renovation & Restoration (RRR) of water bodies, works of 645 water bodies/tanks in various districts of Tamil Nadu have been taken up, out of which restoration works of 571 water bodies/tanks have been completed up to March, 2026.**
- viii. CGWB has completed the National Aquifer Mapping (NAQUIM) 1.0 covering the country's mappable area of about 25 lakh sq. kms, including entire mappable area of about 1,05,742 sq. km spread across all 38 districts of Tamil Nadu. Aquifer maps and groundwater management plans, including both demand-side and supply-side interventions for sustainable groundwater management, have been prepared and shared with the concerned State agencies for implementation. Under NAQUIM 2.0 state-of-the-art technologies are harnessed for generating highly detailed scientific data, for making informed decisions about sustainable groundwater management.**
- ix. CGWB has prepared the Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater-2020 for the entire country and shared with States / UTs. The Master Plan serves as a technical guide for planning and implementation of rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge structures in districts based on local hydrogeological conditions.**

- x. CGWB conducts various outreach and awareness programmes, including Public Interaction Programmes, Mass Awareness Programmes, Tier-II and Tier-III trainings on local groundwater issues, to create awareness regarding rainwater harvesting techniques and the conservation of water harvesting structures.**
- xi. The Ministry of Jal Shakti has notified Guidelines dated 24.09.2020 and subsequent amendments dated 29.03.2023 for the regulation of groundwater extraction by industries, infrastructure and mining projects. States/UTs are being encouraged to adopt or align their existing regulations accordingly. CGWA also issues directions to States/UTs for adopting rooftop rainwater harvesting in all Critical and Over-Exploited assessment units across the country and in Government buildings under their jurisdiction.**
- xii. The Ministry of Jal Shakti has circulated a Model Bill to all States/UTs to facilitate the enactment of groundwater legislation for regulating groundwater development, including provision for rainwater harvesting. So far, 21 States/UTs have adopted and implemented such legislation. In Tamil Nadu, groundwater regulation is presently being carried out through Government Orders.**
- xiii. The Directorate of Town Panchayats, Govt. of Tamil Nadu is actively engaged in the construction of rooftop rainwater harvesting structures on all government, commercial and residential buildings. Further, under various state government projects like Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization Project (TNIAMP), Mission on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture (MSDA), Chief Minister's Dryland Development Mission (CMDDM) etc. large-scale construction of farm ponds and check dams has been taken up across the state.**
