

Regarding lack of availability of arsenic-free drinking water in Maldaha Dakshin Parliamentary constituency

SHRI ISHA KHAN CHOUDHURY (MALDAHA DAKSHIN): Sir, I would like to bring your kind notice to a matter of great concern of lack of availability of arsenic-free drinking water in my Maldaha Dakshin Lok Sabha Constituency of West Bengal.

This crisis has developed in my Lok Sabha Constituency during the last 15 years due to the fact that new drinking water connections have been allowed to all village homes, and also because the population has increased since the original mega water supply plants were built many decades ago. In many villages across several blocks, many PHE pipelines are fully dry or supply an insufficient amount of water. The lack of availability of arsenic-free drinking water has caused great hardship to lakhs of people in my constituency who are forced to suffer either with negative health side effects of drinking arsenic water or are forced to buy water from private owners.

A new Public Health Engineering Arsenic-Free Drinking Water plant in Maldaha Dakshin was originally planned in 2017, and finally received administrative approval in 2023 for an amount of Rs. 804 crore to be jointly borne by the Central and State Governments on a 50-50 cost-sharing basis under JJM. This project is designed to provide arsenic-free drinking water to an additional 2,77,000 households in Kaliachak-I, Kaliachak-II, Kaliachak-III, English Bazaar, and Manikchak Blocks. The construction of the water supply plant was started in 2023 at Manikchak Block. However, the project is stalled due to lack of funding from the Central Government.

Since August 2024, only 60 per cent of this arsenic-free water supply plant has been constructed. The project completion date, which was earlier announced as December 2025, has no completion date now. The payments of the contractor in this project are pending. The public of Maldaha Dakshin have been suffering, and demanding a solution for the past many decades.

So, I believe it is the moral responsibility of the Central Government to take immediate action. Therefore, I request the Jal Shakti Minister to immediately

intervene in order to expedite the release of Central funds under JJM for the arsenic-free drinking water plant project in Maldaha.

Thank you, Sir.

माननीय सभापति : माननीय श्री अभय कुमार सिन्हा जी ।