

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:833

ANSWERED ON:28.11.2005

SYPHONING OF GROUND WATER

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to check the syphoning of ground water illegally to meet scarcity of water in urban areas of the States;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has identified such sensitive areas in the States;
- (c) if so, the total number of areas identified as over exploited and dark; and
- (d) the steps being taken to supply the water to such areas by the Government?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR HEAVY INDUSTRIES, PUBLIC ENTERPRISES AND WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV)

(a) to (d) "Water" being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to take steps to regulate the withdrawal of the ground water. The Union Ministry of Water Resources has circulated a Model Bill in the year 1970, which was re-circulated in 1992 and again in 1996 to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development. A revised Model Bill 2005 to regulate and control the development and management of ground water has been again circulated to all the States/UTs.

However, the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 is taking the following regulatory measures to check the over- exploitation of the ground water:-

(i) CGWA has notified 11 critical areas on consideration of over-exploitation of ground water resources and 32 over- exploited areas for registration of ground water structures.

(ii) CGWB is regulating withdrawal of ground water by industries/projects in over-exploited, critical and semi- critical areas. Proposals for setting up of new industries/projects are referred to CGWA by the State Pollution Control Boards and the Ministry of Environment & Forests for seeking clearance with regard to ground water withdrawal which are evaluated on case-to-case basis based on site-specific technical studies etc.

Water levels are periodically monitored by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), a subordinate office of the Ministry of Water Resources, as well as the States. As per assessment carried out, out of 5723 assessment units (blocks/mandals/talukas) in the country, 839 units have been categorized as "Over- exploited" i.e. annual ground water extraction exceeds the annual replenishable resource and significant decline in long term ground water level trend has been observed either in pre-monsoon or post-monsoon or both. In addition, 226 units are 'Critical' i.e. the stage of ground water development is between 90% and 100% of annual replenishable resource and significant decline is observed in the long term water level trend in both pre-monsoon and post-monsoon periods. There are 550 "Semi-critical" units, where the stage of ground water development is between 70% and 90% and significant decline in long term water level trend has been recorded in either pre-monsoon or post-monsoon.

Further, the Union Ministry of Urban Development is implementing a Centrally Sponsored "Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme" (AUWSP) under which financial assistance is provided to implement water supply in small towns having population less than 20000 as per 1991 census. Funding pattern is 50:50 between the Centre and the States, which includes 5% contribution from urban local bodies. Priority has been assigned to towns with special problems like very poor per capita supply, very distant and very deep water source, drought prone areas, excess salinity, fluoride & iron content in water source and high incidence of water borne diseases etc.