

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1660
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2006
VERDICT ON GROUND WATR TABLE
Mahato Shri Bir Sing;Patel Shri Jivabhai Ambalal

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Supreme Court has given any verdict with regard to ground water table;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken by the Government in this regard alongwith the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ)

(a) & (b) Taking cognizance of a news-item brought to the notice by Advocate Sh. M.C. Mehta through Interlocutory Application No.32, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 20th March, 1996, took up the matter of falling ground water levels. On 10th December, 1996, the Hon'ble Supreme Court passed its order directing the Central Government in the Ministry of Environment & Forests to constitute the Central Ground Water Board as an Authority under Section 3(3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986). The Hon'ble Court further directed that the Authority so constituted shall exercise all the powers under the Act necessary for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water management and development.

(c) Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, issued a Notification on 14th January, 1997 and constituted Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) as Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) for the purposes of regulation and control of ground water management and development. The CGWA so constituted has taken steps to regulate development of ground water, which includes notification of 20 severely critical/over-exploited areas in which installation of new ground water abstraction structures is subject to prior approval by the Authority. In addition, 32 critical areas which showed a very steep decline in ground water levels and required action for regulation have been notified for registration of existing water abstraction structures. The Authority has also issued directions to Group Housing Societies, Institutes, Hotels, Industries, Farm Houses, etc., in the notified areas of Delhi, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Ghaziabad and other areas of NCT Delhi where ground water table is below 8 metres from ground surface, to adopt rain water harvesting system. It is also regulates ground water withdrawal by industries in over-exploited, critical and semi-critical areas in the country. It has organized mass awareness and training programmes in various parts of the country which have helped in educating the people about prevailing situation of ground water and need for rain water harvesting and have helped in generating resource persons for designing rain water harvesting structures to augment ground water in different terrains and diverse hydrogeological conditions.