GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:881
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2006
RECHARGING OF WATER TABLE
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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of rain water being harvested, as on date, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to conserve and use more rain/flood water;

(c) whether the Government proposes to formulate a national scheme for recharging surface water to increase the diminishing water table in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) Rain water is harvested through creating surface storages and recharge to ground water by various artificial recharge structures. The percentage of rainfall recharging ground water varies from State to State depending upon the local hydrogeological conditions. The rain water harvested in each State through artificial recharge structures cannot be quantified.

(b) 'Water' being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments to take steps to conserve and use more rain/flood water. However, Union Government have also taken following steps in this regard:-

(i) Circulation of Manual/Guidelines on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to the States/Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to conserve and use rain water

(ii) Circulation of a Model Bill to all the States/Union Territories to enable them to enact suitable legislation to regulate and control the development and management of ground water.

(iii) Central Ministries/Departments of Railways, Defence, Posts, Telecommunications, Central Public Works Department and National Highways Authority of India have been requested to provide roof top rain water harvesting structures in the buildings under their control.

(iv) Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has 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 meters from ground surface, to adopt rain water harvesting system.

(v) CGWB has provided technical guidance on rain water harvesting to more than 2500 agencies, including State Government agencies, educational institutions, private entrepreneurs and individuals.

(vi) With a view to bring rain water harvesting schemes closer to common people, films on rain water harvesting in urban areas and rural areas have been produced for wide publicity among masses. Mass awareness programmes and training courses on rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water have been organized throughout the country involving Central / State Governments / Non-Government Organizations / Voluntary Organizations / Resident Welfare Associations / Educational Institutions/ Industries and Individuals.

(vii) Rain Water Harvesting campaign has also been launched keeping in view the various target groups. Publicity through print media, telecasting of spots on the television, broadcasting messages on radio, holding of seminars, workshops, conferences etc., have also been undertaken.

(viii) The Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Government of India have amended Building Bye-laws, 1983, making provision for water harvesting through storing of water run-off including rain water in all new buildings on plots of 100 square meters and above in Delhi mandatory. Similarly, State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan and Kerala have made roof top rain water harvesting mandatory in specified cases.

(ix) An activity namely, "Demonstration of Rain Water Harvesting from Roof Tops and two toilets in Government schools in rural areas in various States through Community Based Organizations (CBOs)" was taken up during Fresh Water Year, 2003-04. Based on its success, more girls rural Government schools have been covered with roof top rain water harvesting projects, during 2005-07.

(x) A demonstrative scheme on "Rain Water Harvesting and Artificial Recharge to Ground Water" is being implemented in 13 identified areas of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu at a total cost of Rs. 12 crores during the year 2006-07.

(xi) A storage capacity of 213 BCM has been built up in various major and medium dams. In addition, rain water harvesting through small check dams is also being encouraged.

(c)&(d) Based on various studies carried out by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) to demarcate the areas where decline of ground water level is on continuous basis and identify areas feasible for recharge, a concept report titled 'Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water' has been prepared. A total of 4.5 lakh sq.km. area has been identified in the country which needs artificial recharge of ground water. It has been estimated that annually about 36 Billion Cubic Meter(BCM) of surplus monsoon runoff can be recharged to augment ground water.

A concept note on Artificial Recharge to Ground Water and Rain Water Harvesting at an estimated cost of Rs. 1380 crores for implementation under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) has also been prepared. The concept note envisages construction of 22395 rain water harvesting and artificial recharge structures through Panchayati Raj Institutions in 17 most backward districts in the country having high stage of ground water development, in a period of 5 years commencing from 2005-06. This concept note has been sent by the Ministry of Water Resources to the Ministry of Rural Development, who has circulated it to the concerned State Governments for implementation under the NREGS. Besides, Government has also constituted an 'Artificial Recharge of Ground Water Advisory Council' with an objective to popularize the concept of artificial recharge among all stakeholders and its adoption.