

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3348
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2006
DRILLING TO TAP UNDERGROUND FRESH WATER BY ONGC
Kharventhan Shri Salarapatty Kuppusamy

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is drilling deserts to tap underground fresh water;
- (b) if so, the areas identified, amount earmarked for the same and the present status thereof;
- (c) the mode of transport of water tapped through the project to scarcity areas; and
- (d) the steps taken by the oil companies to tap more water in addition to oil resources?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

- (a) Yes, Sir. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, has embarked upon a project entitled `Project Saraswati`, which is an initiative to contribute to the welfare of people in drought-prone areas of the country. The project is focused on identification of deeper aquifers, otherwise not tapped by agencies such as state groundwater departments and central ground water bodies.
- (b) The electrical resistivity survey has been completed in three pilot areas in Jaisalmer, Barmer and Bikaner districts and one well near Jaisalmer town is under drilling.
- (c) The mode of transport of water will be looked into in consultation with the State Government after the deeper groundwater resources are located and established.
- (d) ONGC under `Project Saraswati` is making focused efforts for identification of deeper aquifers upto depths of 1000 to 1200 metres in drought-prone arid/semiarid regions of north-western Rajasthan.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed on 24.1.2005, between ONGC and Central Ground Water Board for sharing of data for exploration of deeper aquifers in Ganga Basin.