

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:992

ANSWERED ON:10.07.2009

CONTAMINATED DRINKING WATER

Pratapsinh Shri Chauhan Prabhatsinh;Siddeswara Shri Gowdar Mallikarjunappa

**Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Government has conducted any survey to identify the villages affected with various chemical contaminations in the drinking water sources in the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken proposed to be taken by the Government to tackle water quality problems in the rural areas of the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MS. AGATHA SANGMA)

(a)&(b): As per survey conducted by the States/ UTs, as on 1.4.2005, there were 2,16,968 rural habitations in the country reported to be affected with chemical contamination in drinking water sources, viz. Arsenic, Fluoride, Iron, nitrate, salinity, etc. Contamination-wise number of rural habitations affected with these water quality problems in different states/ UTs is at Annex-I. Since most of the rural drinking water supply systems are based on ground water, level of contamination in such sources keeps on changing.

(c): Government of India assists the States in their endeavour to provide safe drinking water which inter alia includes addressing water quality problems, through a centrally sponsored Rural Water Supply Programme which has been renamed as National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). Under the programme, powers to plan, approve and implement the water supply schemes have been delegated to the states. Under Bharat Nirman-rural drinking water component which inter alia includes addressal of water quality problems in rural areas, states have approved water supply projects/ schemes to address the water quality problems in 2,65,994 quality-affected habitations and have since completed schemes/ projects to provide safe water in 46,344 habitations. State-wise details are at Annex-II. Under the new NRDWP guidelines, states can utilize upto 20% of the total allocation to address the water quality problems in their states. Further, upto 20% of the NRDWP funds can also be utilized by the states for ensuring of sustainability of sources and systems on 100% grant-in-basis, which helps in tackling water quality problems also.

In 2006, Government of India has also started National Rural Drinking Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance programme. Under this programme, 5 persons from each Gram Panchayat are trained in simple water quality testing methods for testing the village water samples. For this purpose chemical and bacteriological water testing kits are also supplied to the village panchayats.

To provide safe and clean drinking water to children in rural schools, in 2008-09, Government has also launched Jalmani programme under which 100% financial assistance has been provided for installation of standalone water purification systems in rural schools.