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Title: Need for a multi-pronged approach to conserve water in Punjab and other parts of the country - Laid.

SHRIMATI SANTOSH CHOWDHARY (PHILLAUR): A few days ago, eminent farm scientist M.S. Swaminathan, warned that Punjab along with Rajasthan, Orissa, Maharashtra is heading for serious water crisis in 2003. This is a warning bell based on ground reality. The study says as against the requirement of some 4.90 million hectare metres of good quality water, only 3.12 million hectare metre water is available. In the past four decades, there has been a 76% increase in the State's water requirement for agriculture due to the water-intensive crops like paddy.

To tackle the impending water crisis, I request the Government to take a multi-pronged approach and protect the existing water sources. To arrest the decline in the ground water table, it is necessary to undertake water harvesting measures to conserve rain-water.