

WATER HARVESTING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CAMPAIGN

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Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) monitors groundwater levels four times every year through a network of around 27,000 Monitoring Wells spread across the country. The results are brought out in the form of Bulletins after each round of monitoring and also as ground water yearbook, once in a year. Additionally, Digital Water Level Recorders (DWLRs) equipped with telemetry system, have also been installed throughout the country by this Ministry, which help in real time monitoring and analysis of ground water data.

Categorization of Assessment Units (which are generally Blocks/Tehsils/Talukas) in to 'Over-Exploited (OE)', 'Critical', 'Semi-Critical', 'Safe' etc. is done as per the Dynamic Groundwater Resources Assessment of the country being annually carried out by CGWB, in co-ordination with state governments. As per the assessment done in 2024 there are 751 Over-Exploited (formerly known as Dark Zones) AUs in the country where the 'Stage of Ground Water Extraction' is over 100%.

Despite Water being a State subject, the Union government has taken several important initiatives for sustainable management of ground water resources in the country, with special focus on improving ground water levels in water stressed areas.

Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA), the flagship campaign of the M/o Jal Shakti, wherein all the efforts and funds under various schemes and projects are converged and channelized to deliver water conservation and ground water recharge works on the ground, is being implemented in the country since 2019. Currently, JSA 2025 is underway with special focus on over-exploited and critical areas. Furthermore, MoJS are implementing the scheme, Atal Bhujal Yojana targeting 80 water-stressed districts of the country, focusing on the theme of community led sustainable ground water management by addressing demand side issues.

To further strengthen the momentum of Jal Shakti Abhiyan, Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB): A Community-Driven Path to Water Sustainability in India has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in September 2024, with a vision to make rain water harvesting a mass movement in the country. By promoting community ownership and responsibility, the initiative seeks to develop cost-effective, local solutions tailored to specific water challenges across different regions.

The Government has implemented extensive measures to promote the JSJB initiative in partnership with State Governments and local authorities to ensure its widespread reach and awareness. The initiative aims at forging partnership with Industry, NGOs, Trusts, Civil Societies and educational institutions to engage the broader community effectively. Several State Governments have been proactively participating in the campaigns. Awareness campaigns are conducted through social media platforms, public events and workshops. Jal Shakti Kendras (JSKs) set up in each district are also helping in expanding the outreach by disseminating ground water recharge related information. The awareness efforts also include fostering active community participation through Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). To facilitate easy understanding of recharge and rain water harvesting methods among the masses, a compilation of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and standard designs for artificial recharge structures has been brought out and shared with all stakeholders.

The National Water Mission (NWM) under the MoJS is the Nodal Central agency driving the campaign, which provides policy guidance and key technical support to the state governments, District administrations, NGOs, co-operatives and other participating organizations. Regular review meetings with state officials are being held for monitoring progress and addressing challenges. Forums like 'Dialogue with DMs' have been established for multi-faceted interaction. Best practices and successful models are regularly documented and shared with states/districts.

administrations for replication and scaling up. The Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Dashboard, a digital platform has been created to serve as a collective database which will help in effective monitoring as well. Further, Nodal Officers from the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the Central Water Commission (CWC) have been deputed to interact with the district administration and state line departments so as to ensure technical support, capacity building and regular monitoring at the grassroots level.

This information was provided by THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI SHRI **RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY** in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

MAM/SMP

(Lok Sabha US Q1933)

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