

KURUKSHETRA MAGAZINE: JUNE 2019

ENSURING SAFE AND ADEQUATE DRINKING WATER

- Article 47 of the constitution mandates states to provide safe drinking water to improve public health. The provision of clean drinking water reduces the incidences of diseases and fatalities and helps in improving the overall standard of living. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has rightly themed this year's Water Day as 'leaving no one behind'. The Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030, include Goal 6 for clean water and sanitation for ensuring their availability and sustainable management by 2030.
- In India, due to a 3-fold increase in population during 1951-2010, the per capita availability of water in the country as a whole decreased from 5,177 m³ / year in 1951 to 1,588 m³ / year in 2010.

WATER AVAILABILITY IN THE RURAL AREAS

- According to the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) (2011-12), 46.1 per cent of the rural households do not have drinking water facilities within their premises. India loses 73 million working days due to water-borne diseases.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

- The task of providing safe drinking water in rural areas is through the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) which aims at assisting States in providing adequate and safe drinking water to the rural population in the country. In 2018-19, the scheme was allocated Rs. 7,000 crore and the Ministry is aspiring to achieve 'Har Ghar Jal' by 2030.

Drinking Water Coverage Status of Rural Habitations				
Year	Fully Covered	Partially Covered	Quality Affected	Total
1	2	3	4	5
2018-19 till (Feb 2019)	13,85,853 (80.6 per cent)	2,72,147 (15.8 per cent)	61,309 (3.6 per cent)	17,19,309 (100 per cent)

- Fully covered habitations [i.e. More than 40 litre per capita per day or more safe drinking water], partially covered habitations [i.e. less than 40 litre per capita per day] and quality affected habitations [i.e. Water with chemical contaminant].
- National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP): It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in April, 2009 aimed at providing every person in rural India with adequate safe water for drinking, cooking and other domestic basic needs on a sustainable basis. As per the Integrated Management Information System (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation), more than 80 per cent of the rural habitations have reached Fully Covered status that means they are receiving 40 litres per capita per day.
- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation launched SWAJAL, which is a community demand, decentralized, single village, preferably solar powered, mini Piped water supply programme for the 112 aspirational districts in 27 States identified by NITI Aayog. Thus, there is a large scope for expansion of Piped Water Supply (PWS) through Swajal in these districts.

- The Central Government has also come up with a Rs. 6000-crore World Bank-aided Atal Bhujal Yojana with community participation to ensure sustained groundwater management in overexploited and ground water-stressed areas in seven states.
- In March 2017, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation started a new sub-programme under NRDWP known as the National Water Quality Sub-Mission (NWQSM). The sub-programme aims to address the urgent need for providing clean drinking water in already identified 28,000 arsenic and fluoride affected habitations.
- To further strengthen community participation in the drinking water sector for sustainability, National Rural Drinking Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance Programme has been launched in February, 2006 under which 5 persons in each Gram Panchayat are to be trained to carry out regular surveillance of drinking water sources.

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS FOR SAFE DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

- Central Water Commission (CWC) regulates the use of water to irrigate surface waters, the industry and potable water. It also mediates in disputes related to the inter-state water allocation. Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) monitors groundwater levels and rates of depletion and the production of water resource inventories and maps. National Rivers Conservation Directorate (NRCD) oversees the implementation of Action Plans to improve the quality of the rivers in India. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) promotes basin-wide pollution control strategies.

ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER AND PUBLIC HEALTH

- The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) report, 'WASH in Health Care Facilities', is a comprehensive global assessment of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in health care facilities. It finds that 1 in 8 health care facilities has no water service and 1 in 5 has no sanitation service- impacting close to 900 million and more than 1.5 billion people, respectively.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY JUNE 5, 2019

- World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated on the 5th of June every year. WED was established in 1972 during the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which led to the creation of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**. Its aims is "*encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment*".
- Every World Environment Day has a different global host country, where the official celebrations take place.
- In 2018, India was the host for World Environment Day and the theme was focused on **Plastic Pollution**, which is one of the most challenging environmental concerns today.
- In 2019, China is the host for World Environment Day celebrations on the theme, '**Air Pollution**'.
- UNESCO chose April 23, 2019 as the World Book Day to be celebrated every year.

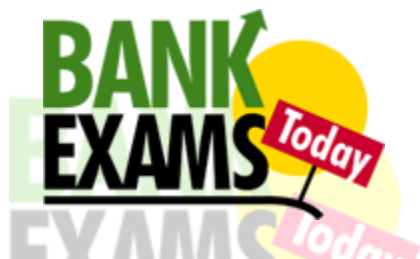
RURAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE: MONITORING, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

WATER APP FOR MONITORING WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES

- The RWS mobile App has been developed by the Ministry in technical collaboration with NIC for monitoring of schemes on state/ district/ block/ panchayat/ village level and description of those schemes are available through this mobile application. Using this App, the user can upload the photographs of beneficiaries /Source /Delivery Points using a Smartphone. While capturing the photograph, latitude and longitude of the location as well as date- time stamp is recorded automatically and gets uploaded on the central server of the Mission which is housed in the National Data Centre. One can register for using the RWS App through registration form which is available on the website <http://indiawater.gov.in>.

CONCLUSION

- No doubt, more than 80% of rural habitations have been provided rural drinking water supply infrastructure due to which 40 litres of water per day person is ensured. The monitoring tools such as Water APP and Drinking Water Quality Testing are ensuring sustainable safe drinking water to the rural people. Further, the field studies have revealed that a good number of villages in the country are maintaining O&M with the active participation of communities, specifically women resulting in 24×7 safe drinking water supply on a sustainable manner. This is one of the contributing factors for preventing water borne diseases in achieving health for all.



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