

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(2018-2019)

53

SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

*[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the
Forty-fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the
Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation]*

FIFTY THIRD REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation]

Presented to Lok Sabha on 31.12.2018

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 31.12.2018



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2018/Pausa, 1940 (Saka)

CRD No. 150

Price : Rs.

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Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (_____ Edition) and Printed by _____.

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2018-2019)

Dr. P. Venugopal -- *Chairperson*

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| 3. Smt. B. Visala | - | Additional Director |
| 4. Shri Satish Kumar | - | Senior Committee Assistant |

^ Vacant due to resignation of Shri Balka Suman from the Membership of Lok Sabha w.e.f. 17.12.2018

\$ Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 19.11.2018 vice Shri Javed Ali Khan

(iii)

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2018-2019) having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present the Fifty-third Report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-fifth Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (16th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.

2. The Forty-fifth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 06 March, 2018. Replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 06 July, 2018.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 27 December, 2018.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-fifth Report of the Committee (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) is given in **Appendix-II**.

NEW DELHI;
27 December, 2018
06 Pausa 1940 (Saka)

DR. P. VENUGOPAL
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Rural Development

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2018-19) deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in their Forty-fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation for the year 2018-2019.

2. The Forty-fifth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 06.03.2018 and was laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on the same date. The Report contained 13 Observations/Recommendations.

3. Action Taken Notes in respect of all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received from the Government. These have been examined and categorized as follows: -

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Serial Nos. 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

Total:10
Chapter-II

- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government:
Serial No. NIL

Total: NIL
Chapter-III

- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:
Serial Nos. 2, 3 and 5

Total: 03
Chapter-IV

- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:
Serial No. NIL

Total:00
Chapter-V

4. The Committee desire that replies to recommendations made in the Chapter-I of this Report may be furnished to the Committee expeditiously.

5. The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of their Observations/Recommendations that require reiteration or merit comments.

A. Sustainability and usability of the toilets constructed

[Recommendation Serial No. 2 (Para No. 2.2)]

6. With regard to sustainability and usability of the toilets, the Committee had recommended as under:-

"Toilets constructed under SBM are indeed a visionary exercise to make the country Open Defecation Free by 2nd October, 2019 and ultimately the dream of Swachh Bharat is realized to its full potential. The purpose behind the construction of toilets is not to discourage people from Open Defecation for a shorter period of time only but to inculcate a hygienic habit forever. To the utter dismay of the Committee, it has been observed that the many toilets already constructed under SBM have become defunct and non-usable due to various reasons pertaining to the quality of construction and scarcity of water. The Committee was disturbed while taking cognizance of this situation and feel that for the success of this vision, the constructed toilets needs to be safe and sustainable so that they can be utilized for a long period of time. In this regard, the Committee feel that assessment by the Ministry needs to be done regarding the number of such constructed toilets which have already become redundant and unusable. The data on the SBM portal which indicates that the beneficiaries has already been provided with a toilet creates a situation wherein, if the toilets so constructed were not of good quality and become defunct within a short span of time and as such are not being used are still counted as functional toilets. The beneficiaries are in no position to avail the re-allocation of construction of toilets and still go in the open. Thus, the Committee desires that the Ministry re-look upon the situation in the right earnest and henceforth, construct quality toilets with basic facilities."

7. The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as under :-

"Maintaining quality of the toilets is utmost priority of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) (SBM-G), besides bringing about a positive behavior change among people towards sanitation. SBM-G programme emphasizes on adopting safe sanitation technology depending on topography, ground water level, soil conditions etc. especially on twin leach pit toilets, which is successful in major parts of the country. The Ministry has already issued various guidelines, advisories on safe toilet technology to all the stakeholders and implementing agencies. Under SBM (G), incentive has been increased from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 12,000/- for providing water facilities in order to ensure sustainability.

Dysfunctional toilets are those which were constructed under earlier rural sanitation programme especially during Total Sanitation Campaign which incentive of Rs. 500/- to Rs. 3200/-. A Swachh Bharat Kosh (SBK) was set up by

Ministry of Finance for channelizing the contribution of corporates and individuals for meeting the goal of Swachh Bharat by 2019. Funds have been released to the States from SBK for construction of dysfunctional toilets. The Ministry also focuses behavior change of the people for self-construction of such dysfunctional toilets and capacity building of the field functionaries for retrofitting of such toilets. For ensuring continued usage of toilets, beneficiaries are also being advised to maintain the toilets on their own."

8. In their earlier recommendation, the Committee observed that many toilets already constructed have become defunct and non-usable due to various reasons are still counted as functional toilets on SBM portal. In this regard, the Committee felt that an assessment by the Ministry needs to be done regarding the number of such constructed toilets which have already become redundant and unusable. The Ministry in their action taken reply furnished that dysfunctional toilets are those which were constructed under earlier rural sanitation programme especially during Total Sanitation Campaign. The Ministry also informed that funds have been released to the States from Swachh Bharat Kosh (SBK) for construction of dysfunctional toilets and focuses behaviour change of the people for self-construction of such dysfunctional toilets but the Ministry reply is silent as to what action has been initiated to conduct the recommended survey for assessment of such toilets which have already become redundant and unusable. The Committee, therefore, strongly reiterate its recommendation and observe that till the time the problem of toilets becoming dysfunctional is not tackled seriously by the Ministry, the objective of full household sanitation coverage in the entire rural areas of the country by 2nd October, 2019 would remain a distant dream. The Committee would like to be apprised of the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry in this regard.

B. Incentive under Swachh Bharat Mission

[Recommendation Serial No. 3 (Para No. 2.3)]

9. With regard to incentives under Swachh Bharat Mission, the Committee had recommended as under:-

"The Committee find that there is an existing provision of incentives (Rs. 12,000/-) for Individual Household latrines (Rs. 7200/- and 4800/- respectively, by Centre and State for each toilet (Rs. 10800/- and Rs. 1200/- in case of North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir and Special category States) is given to BPL households and identified Above Poverty Line households after they construct and use toilets. On umpteen occasion, the Committee have been apprised of the demands for the hike in the incentives value for the beneficiaries. The rising cost of construction alongwith the collateral constructions required for toilet construction are cited as the reasons for such requests. It has been felt by the Committee also that in the present situation when the cost of every article is escalating, the demand for hike in incentives seems to be worthy of attention. Moreover, the Committee also feel that the challenges and cost factor for construction of toilet in hill areas are greater than those of plain areas. Equal amount of incentive of plain and hill areas is implausible. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend the Ministry to revisit the amount of incentives presently under SBM and look upon it to commensurate with the cost escalation, also hiking the incentives for the hilly area more than the plain area.

10. The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as under :-

"Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), there is a provision for providing an incentive of Rs.12,000 for the construction of Individual Household Latrine (IHHL) to all Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, weaker sections and to identified Above Poverty Line (APL) households (all SCs /STs, small and marginal farmers, landless labourers with homestead, physically handicapped and women-headed households). This Rs.12,000 per toilet is not a reimbursement of the cost of the toilet, which may be lower or higher than this incentive amount, depending upon several factors. This amount, rather, is an incentive amount to be paid to the household for stopping open defecation. State Government may give more incentive from their own resources."

11. Taking into consideration the terrain and geographical challenges for construction of toilets, the Committee felt that the incentive component under Swachh Bharat Mission needed to be reviewed and looked into with practical perspective. Thus, the Committee had recommended the Ministry to revisit the amount of incentives presently under SBM for construction of toilets in the hills separately. In their action taken reply, the Ministry have enumerated a slew of measures being taken by them to address the concerns for construction of toilets and informed that the amount of Rs. 12,000/- is an incentive amount to be paid to the household for stopping open defecation and the State Governments may give more incentive from their own resources.

Although, the Ministry have outlined various provisions and procedures for stopping open defecation, yet the Committee are not satisfied with the response of the Ministry for providing an incentive of only Rs. 12,000/- for construction of toilets to all. Thus, the Committee strongly reiterate its recommendation and feel that the Ministry should explore the feasibility of enhancement of incentives for the hilly areas more than the plain area for construction of toilets under the scheme and apprise the Committee at the earliest.

C. Coverage of Sanitation

[Recommendation Serial No. 5 (Para No. 2.5)]

12. With regard to sanitation coverage, the Committee had recommended as under:-

"The Committee observe that the performance under SBM (G) in some of the big States i.e. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir etc. are dismal. The Ministry informed that the Bihar is the only State which has the lowest coverage below 50 per cent. During the course of evidence, the Secretary also admitted that in these four States, traditionally, the coverage of sanitation has been low. In this context, the Ministry explained various reasons i.e. inadequate capacity at grass root level and lack of behavioural change and poor demand, inadequate prioritization of programmes by the State Government, fund availability and also outreach in some difficult to reach /LWE affected areas. The Committee feel that the efforts made by the Ministry in above States are not complete if the issue of awareness generation is left behind in this 'Demand Driven' programme. The Committee would be happy if the Ministry pay more attention towards awareness programme in these States on war footing. The Committee would like to be apprised of the follow up action taken by the Ministry in this regard."

13. The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as under :-

"Ministry has special focus on Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir. Regular review meetings and Video Conferences are organized with these States. "Satyagraha se Swachhagraha" campaign run in Bihar from 3rd April, 2018- 10th April, 2018. On April 10, 2018, the Hon'ble Prime Minister, addressed around 20,000 Swachhagrahis in Motihari, East Champaran district of Bihar. The impetus for this campaign began after the Hon'ble Prime Minister, took a video conference with District Collectors from the four focus States of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), namely, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir. At this video conference, the Prime Minister emphasized that there could be no greater inspiration for completing this task, than the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He urged for teams to be formed at the district level to monitor progress. Motivated by the Prime Minister's address, the districts of the four States showed unprecedented progress. Situation has improved since then and the sanitation coverage as on 7.6.2018 in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir have increased to 56.76%, 71.57%, 55.81% and 85.86% respectively."

14. Keeping in view the slow pace of rural sanitation coverage in States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir etc., the Committee felt that the efforts made by the Ministry in above States are not complete if the issue of awareness generation is left behind in this 'Demand Driven' programme and also urged the Ministry to pay more attention towards awareness programme in these States on war footing. In their action taken reply, the Ministry *inter alia* informed that various measures like regular review meetings and Video Conferences are organized with these States and the Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed around 20,000 Swachhagrahis in Motihari, East Champaran district of Bihar on 10 April, 2018. Hon'ble Prime Minister also took a video conference with District Collectors of these four States for improvement in sanitation coverage. The Committee have been further informed that after the Prime Minister's address, these States showed unprecedented progress and as on 7.6.2018, the sanitation coverage in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu & Kashmir has increased to 56.76 %, 71.57 %, 55.81 % and 85.86 % respectively.

It is observed that the Ministry have been consistently taking up this matter with the States through video conferencing, etc., to speed-up the sanitation coverage. However, the efforts do not seem to bear much fruit and the rate of improvement of sanitation coverage is very slow and with such a slow pace, a serious doubt arises about the achievement of ODF target by 2019. Keeping this in view, the Committee strongly reiterate its recommendation that the Ministry should pay more focus on these States which are lagging behind in the sanitation coverage by devising a time bound targeted approach in a Mission mode approach to achieve the goal of Open Defecation Free India by 2019.

D. Piped Water Supply to contaminated habitations

[Recommendation Serial No. 9 (Para No. 2.9)]

15. With regard to providing Piped Water Supply to quality affected habitations in the country, the Committee had recommended as under:-

"The Committee got itself acquainted of the various corrective measures being employed by the Ministry to check the problem of contamination in drinking water in affected habitations. Though, the efforts of Ministry are laudable still the Committee feel that much more effort and strategy is required to fight this problem. Mere exercises such as coloring the identified hand pumps having contaminated water, tapping deep aquifer, etc will not serve the long time purposes. Until and unless the habitations affected by contamination are provided with adequate Piped Water Supply, the habitations will keep on reeling under the adverse effects of contamination. The Committee took into note the callous approach of Ministry in its efforts to supply Piped Water to the contaminated habitations and, thus, with serious concern implores upon the Ministry to hasten its efforts in supplying piped quality water to the contaminated areas."

16. The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as under :-

"The Ministry has advised the States to tackle water quality affected habitations in rural areas by Piped Water Supply Schemes using safe water sources, preferably based on surface water as piped water supply schemes are most sustainable. However, since piped water supply schemes takes nearly 3-4 years to commission, the Ministry has also advised the States to install community water purification plants in identified arsenic, fluoride, heavy metals and pesticides /fertilizer affected rural habitations. Under NRDWP, the power to plan and sanction the schemes rests with the States. States are advised through Video Conferences, Convening meeting with the states for monitoring the progress of the schemes. Under National Water Quality Sub-mission, the Piped Water Schemes are examined by the Area officers of the Ministry prior to release of funds and thereafter its implementation are ensured by the Ministry through online reports with regard to physical and financial progress."

17. The Committee in their recommendation had specifically asked the Ministry to ensure that all the States provide Piped Water Supply to the contaminated habitations. In their action taken reply, the Ministry *inter alia* had informed the Committee that they have advised the States to tackle water quality affected habitations in rural areas by Piped Water Supply (PWS) Schemes using safe water sources. Since, PWS schemes take nearly 3 to 4 years to commission,

the Ministry has also advised the States to install Community Water Purification Plants in identified quality affected rural habitations.

While appreciating the steps taken by the Ministry, the Committee feel that the piped water supply is the only solution to tackle water quality issues and, therefore, a time bound plan is needed to be put in operation to achieve the target to supply clean water to the contaminated areas. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry must take up the matter with the State Governments that till the piped water supply reaches each household, arrangement should be made to provide alternate supply of clean water by way of installing Community Water Purification Plants in identified contaminated affected rural habitations on priority basis and also expedite the process of supply of piped water and apprise the Committee in this regard.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Serial No. 1, Para No. 2.1)

The vision to achieve an Open Defecation Free (ODF) and Swachh Bharat by 2nd October, 2019 marking the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi is indeed an extraordinary initiative meriting much appreciation. The Committee have taken into note the efforts undertaken by the Ministry in realizing the vision of creating ODF in the country. Laudable among the many steps are the construction of soak-pits alongwith toilets for their longevity. Going through the factual and ground realities prevalent in the country, the Committee is quite perplexed as to how ODF can be created without the availability of adequate water provisions. Needless to say that to eradicate Open Defecation and encourage the construction of toilets within the residential premises is not sufficient unless the toilets are connected with water supply. Merely, funding the scheme and completing the targets are not suffice and will defeat the real purpose of the scheme. The priority of Government should not be limited to the construction of infrastructure only but they should also be pragmatic enough to give priority to the essential needs for toilet usages. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation to priotize the provision of water availability along with the construction of toilets under SBM and apprise the Committee of actual figures of toilets constructed having water facilities.

Reply of the Government

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), the incentive for individual toilet has been increased from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 12,000, to provide for building a water tank next to the toilet for storing water for hand-washing and cleaning purposes. Furthermore, Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) and National Rural Drinking Water Programme(NRDWP) guidelines also provide for convergence towards implementation of the programmes of sanitation and water, and to maximize the availability of water for sanitation purposes. Open Defecation Free (ODF) declared villages are being prioritized for providing Piped Water Supply Schemes (PWS) under NRDWP. Also under SBM (G), rural pans are used which uses only 1-2 liters of water for flushing as against 10-15 liter by urban pans- Thereby reducing the requirement of water. Also, priority is also being given for utilization of Performance Based Incentive Grants under World Bank supported project, for the purpose of providing water for sanitation to ensure sustainability. As per Swachchata Status Report 2016 of National Sample Survey Office, 93.9 percentage of households were having access to water for use in toilets, out of the households having toilets.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Recommendation (Serial No. 4, Para No. 2.4)

Mere provision of toilets and water to the households will not be able to fulfill the goals of attaining the 'Swachhata' envisioned under the Swachh Bharat Mission. More basic infrastructure collateral with the needs of toilets and water like the proper drainage mechanism for the disposal of waste/used waters are also essentially required. The rural habitations are replete with unplanned disposal of waste waters from the households which are more often than not found to be spread in the villages causing numerous diseases. Even if the household is neat while the surroundings are full of dirty water infested with pollutants, the idea of cleanliness thought to be achieved under the scheme gets defeated. Moreover, the percolation of such dirty water pollutes the ground water also. The Committee, therefore, feel that there is an utmost necessity of proper drainage mechanism in the villages so that disposed waste water does not malign the existing habitations with furthermore complications. Therefore, the Ministry is urged to look at this problem scientifically and logically devise such mechanism which would include the construction of proper drain facilities in the rural households.

Reply of the Government

Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) is one of the integral components of SBM(G) and under Liquid Waste Management, activities like low cost drainage, soakage channels/ pits, waste stabilization ponds system, reuse of waste water etc. can be taken up. Depending upon the amount of waste water generated, the State can choose the type of liquid waste management facility they wish to create. Funds for Solid and Liquid Waste Management activities with a cap of Rs. 7/12/15/20 lakh are available for Gram Panchayats having upto 150/300/500/ more than 500 households.

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), measures are taken to prevent open defecation and to provide safe disposal of human excreta. This can be done through on-site toilet technologies such as twin-leach pit that do not require underground sewerage system and are much cheaper and equally effective. The choice of technology lies with the end-user, as long as it ensures safe disposal of human excreta.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Recommendation (Serial No. 6, Para No. 2.6)

The Committee observe that the financial viz-a-vis physical performance of NRDWP has not been encouraging during the year 2017-18. For the fiscal year 2017-18, the Ministry was allocated an amount of Rs. 7050 crore at RE stage in which the Ministry was able to utilize only a sum of Rs. 4911.50 crore upto 16.02.2018. Similarly, as far as the physical performance is concerned, the Committee find that there have been slippages in achievements both in partially covered and quality affected habitations. During the year 2017-18, out of 68770 habitations proposed to be covered, only 32778 were actually covered upto 06.02.2018. The Ministry also informed several factors to be affecting the achievement of targets like continuous depletion of ground water, continuous increase in contamination, shortage of surface water, pollution of surface water bodies, delay in obtaining statutory clearances such Forest, National Highways etc. and also delay of State share from their Finance Department in time,

could have been very well anticipated and managed in time by the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend the Ministry to take concrete steps at least now to overcome these factors by having better coordination with other Ministries and should vigorously pursue the matter with the State Governments so that targets vision of Government can be achieved on time.

Reply of the Government

The information provided to the Committee regarding financial and physical performance of NRDWP was for a date much before the completion of financial year. States normally tend to achieve the physical target at the end of financial year which is evident from the data entered by them on the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of the Ministry and is visible on IMIS by 15th April of the next financial year. The Ministry was able to utilize almost entire fund by releasing allocated amount to the States i.e. Rs 6989.66 crore by the end of financial year 2017-18.

Similarly, States were able to cover 53411 rural habitations against the target of 68770 habitation set by the Ministry at the end of financial year 2017-18. Moreover, Ministry is pursuing the issues / hurdle regarding the completion of target with the States during review meetings / Video Conferences and consequently directed States to expedite the completion of ongoing schemes on priority basis. Further, Ministry has asked the States to use the fund for the schemes which are physically complete but financially incomplete and then on the schemes which are in advance stage of physical progress so that to reduce ongoing schemes and faster pace of completion of ongoing schemes and in turn benefitting the population immediately. By this way, 31574 schemes got completed in 2017-18.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Recommendation (Serial No. 7, Para No. 2.7)

During the examination of the Demands for Grants (2018-19), among the various facts which surfaced before the Committee was that, only about 72205 drinking water quality affected habitations are reported by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in the country. Considering the geographical extent of the country and through various experiences of the Members of Parliament, the Committee finds this figure of 72205 habitations meagre and feel that this finding does not reflect the true status of quality affected habitations in the country. In view of the above existing situation, it was strongly felt by the Committee that in the absence of real facts and figures justice cannot be done with regard to the visions of the scheme. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommends the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation to conduct a precise and holistic survey covering the entire country to determine the exact number of water quality affected habitations on priority basis. A vigorous exercise has to be undertaken by the Government by way of having more labs adequately staffed to bring quality water at the doorsteps of the users.

Reply of the Government

Rural drinking water is a state subject. States are carrying out tests in the Laboratories and uploading the details of quality affected habitations into the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) of the Ministry. As per data uploaded by the States into the IMIS, as on 24 May 2018, 69,258 rural habitations with a population of 4,56,95,377 are affected with Fluoride, Arsenic, Iron, Salinity, Nitrate and Heavy metal. The break up is as follow:-

S.No.	Contamination	Quality affected Rural Habitation	Population
1	Fluoride	11,160	82,45,681
2	Arsenic	16,609	1,47,56,731
3	Iron	23,398	1,41,14,155
4	Salinity	13,964	40,57,752
5	Nitrate	1,749	17,55,044
6	Heavy metal.	2,378	27,66,014
	Total	69258	4,56,95,377

All the States have been advised to carry out regular testing of drinking water sources and uploading the data into the IMIS. A meeting was held in the Ministry on 27th April 2018 with the Chief Chemists and Director, WASO of the states wherein it has been concluded that Water Quality Testing Laboratory (WQTL) will be strengthened & ranked and State and District level WQTL will be got accredited from NABL.

States can utilize up to 5% of funds released under National Rural Drinking Water Programme to them for water quality monitoring and surveillance, which, inter alia, includes testing of drinking water sources at the Panchayat level by using simple field test kits, upgrading of existing water quality testing laboratories and setting up of new State/district/sub-district / mobile water quality testing laboratories wherever such facility is not available or needed.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Recommendation (Serial No. 8, Para No. 2.8)

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation have informed the Committee that there are 17785 habitations affected by arsenic contamination and 12345 habitations affected by Fluoride contamination along with efforts being undertaken by them to reduce the contamination of such areas under safer limits. However, a pertinent question still exists whether such number reported by the Ministry are on a reducing level or as has being observed in general that the number of habitations with contamination are increasing day by day. In such case, to ascertain the exact situation and the severity of contamination affected areas in the country a mechanism needs to be put in place wherein the fluctuations in the numbers may be precisely determined. Thus, the Committee feel that the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation should put in place a robust strategy to ascertain the exact number of arsenic and fluoride contaminated habitations in the country so that proper exercise on timely basis may be taken. Although, the Ministry have outlined few corrective measure being taken by them such as tapping deeper aquifer to arsenic free and JE/AES free water, establishment of Community Water Purification plants, still the Committee feel that the pace of work being done is extremely slow and the problem of contamination instead of being solved is gradually affecting more habitations. Therefore, the Committee are of view that the Ministry should take steps on war footing to deal with the menace of contamination of drinking water in the country.

Reply of the Government

Fluoride and Arsenic contamination in Ground Water is due to geo-genic activity in nature. The increase and decrease in quality affected rural habitations is depending on the geo-genic activity in nature. As per revised IS 10500 of Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) for Drinking Water, the permissible limit of arsenic in drinking water has been reduced from 0.05 mg/L to 0.01 mg/L which is also one of the reasons for increasing the number of quality affected habitations. A comprehensive mechanism to deal with the water quality issues has been provided in the Uniform Drinking Water Quality Protocol of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation published in 2013. The Ministry has decided to revise the protocol taking into consideration the various changes taken place with the passage of time in regard to technologies and contaminations. To this end, an Expert Committee has been constituted in the chairmanship of Director, National Institute of Environmental Engineering (NEERI), Nagpur in May 2018.

The rural drinking water is a state subject. The state is to plan, design and execute the schemes as per the requirement. Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation provides technical and financial support to the states under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP). The funds provided under National Rural Drinking Water Programme can be utilized for coverage and tackling drinking water quality problems with priority to arsenic and fluoride affected habitations. Further, 2% of the NRDWP funds are earmarked for Japanese Encephalitis/Acute Encephalitis Syndrome affected districts of the states (high priority districts).

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has launched National Water Quality Sub-Mission on 22nd March 2017 under NRDWP to provide safe drinking water to about 28,000 arsenic/fluoride affected habitations over a span of 4 years, subject to availability of funds. Total estimated expenditure for Sub-mission is Rs. 25,000 Crore, out of which Rs.12,500 crore will be provided by the Ministry as central share over a period of 4 years commencing from the financial year 2017-18. As on 24th May, 2018, central share of Rs. 2825.6968 crores has been released so far to 16 states under Sub-mission to deal with the problem of arsenic & fluoride.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Recommendation (Serial No. 9, Para No. 2.9)

The Committee got itself acquainted of the various corrective measures being employed by the Ministry to check the problem of contamination in drinking water in affected habitations. Though, the efforts of Ministry are laudable still the Committee feel that much more effort and strategy is required to fight this problem. Mere exercises such as coloring the identified hand pumps having contaminated water, tapping deep aquifer, etc will not serve the long time purposes. Until and unless the habitations affected by contamination are provided with adequate Piped Water Supply, the habitations will keep on reeling under the adverse effects of contamination. The Committee took into note the callous approach of Ministry in its efforts to supply Piped Water to the contaminated habitations and, thus, with serious concern implores upon the Ministry to hasten its efforts in supplying piped quality water to the contaminated areas.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry has advised the States to tackle water quality affected habitations in rural areas by Piped Water Supply Schemes using safe water sources, preferably based on surface water as piped water supply schemes are most sustainable. However, since piped water supply schemes takes nearly 3-4 years to commission, the Ministry has also advised the States to install community water purification plants in identified arsenic, fluoride, heavy metals and pesticides /fertilizer affected rural habitations. Under NRDWP, the power to plan and sanction the schemes rests with the States. States are advised through Video Conferences, Convening meeting with the states for monitoring the progress of the schemes. Under National Water Quality Sub-mission, the Piped Water Schemes are examined by the Area officers of the Ministry prior to release of funds and thereafter its implementation are ensured by the Ministry through online reports with regard to physical and financial progress.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 17 of Chapter I of the Report)

Chapter III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

-NIL-

Chapter IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Serial No. 2, Para No. 2.2)

Toilets constructed under SBM are indeed a visionary exercise to make the country Open Defecation Free by 2nd October, 2019 and ultimately the dream of Swachh Bharat is realized to its full potential. The purpose behind the construction of toilets is not to discourage people from Open Defecation for a shorter period of time only but to inculcate a hygienic habit forever. To the utter dismay of the Committee, it has been observed that the many toilets already constructed under SBM have become defunct and non-usable due to various reasons pertaining to the quality of construction and scarcity of water. The Committee was disturbed while taking cognizance of this situation and feel that for the success of this vision, the constructed toilets needs to be safe and sustainable so that they can be utilized for a long period of time. In this regard, the Committee feel that assessment by the Ministry needs to be done regarding the number of such constructed toilets which have already become redundant and unusable. The data on the SBM portal which indicates that the beneficiaries has already been provided with a toilet creates a situation wherein, if the toilets so constructed were not of good quality and become defunct within a short span of time and as such are not being used are still counted as functional toilets. The beneficiaries are in no position to avail the re-allocation of construction of toilets and still go in the open. Thus, the Committee desires that the Ministry re-look upon the situation in the right earnest and henceforth, construct quality toilets with basic facilities.

Reply of the Government

Maintaining quality of the toilets is utmost priority of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) (SBM-G), besides bringing about a positive behavior change among people towards sanitation. SBM-G programme emphasizes on adopting safe sanitation technology depending on topography, ground water level, soil conditions etc. especially on twin leach pit toilets, which is successful in major parts of the country. The Ministry has already issued various guidelines, advisories on safe toilet technology to all the stakeholders and implementing agencies. Under SBM (G), incentive has been increased from Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 12,000/- for providing water facilities in order to ensure sustainability. Dysfunctional toilets are those which were constructed under earlier rural sanitation programme especially during Total Sanitation Campaign which incentive of Rs. 500/- to Rs. 3200/-. A Swachh Bharat Kosh (SBK) was set up by Ministry of Finance for channelizing the contribution of corporates and individuals for meeting the goal of Swachh Bharat by 2019. Funds have been released to the States from SBK for construction of dysfunctional toilets. The Ministry also focuses behavior change of the people for self-construction of such dysfunctional toilets and capacity building of the field functionaries for retrofitting of such toilets. For ensuring continued usage of toilets, beneficiaries are also being advised to maintain the toilets on their own.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 8 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Serial No. 3, Para No. 2.3)

The Committee find that there is an existing provision of incentives (Rs. 12,000/-) for Individual Household latrines (Rs. 7200/- and 4800/- respectively, by Centre and State for each toilet (Rs. 10800/- and Rs. 1200/- in case of North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir and Special category States) is given to BPL households and identified Above Poverty Line households after they construct and use toilets. On umpteen occasion, the Committee have been apprised of the demands for the hike in the incentives value for the beneficiaries. The rising cost of construction alongwith the collateral constructions required for toilet construction are cited as the reasons for such requests. It has been felt by the Committee also that in the present situation when the cost of every article is escalating, the demand for hike in incentives seems to be worthy of attention. Moreover, the Committee also feel that the challenges and cost factor for construction of toilet in hill areas are greater than those of plain areas. Equal amount of incentive of plain and hill areas is implausible. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend the Ministry to revisit the amount of incentives presently under SBM and look upon it to commensurate with the cost escalation, also hiking the incentives for the hilly area more than the plain area.

Reply of the Government

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), there is a provision for providing an incentive of Rs.12,000 for the construction of Individual Household Latrine (IHHL) to all Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, weaker sections and to identified Above Poverty Line (APL) households (all SCs /STs, small and marginal farmers, landless labourers with homestead, physically handicapped and women-headed households). This Rs.12,000 per toilet is not a reimbursement of the cost of the toilet, which may be lower or higher than this incentive amount, depending upon several factors. This amount, rather, is an incentive amount to be paid to the household for stopping open defecation. State Government may give more incentive from their own resources.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 11 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Serial No. 5, Para No. 2.5)

The Committee observe that the performance under SBM (G) in some of the big States i.e. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir etc. are dismal. The Ministry informed that the Bihar is the only State which has the lowest coverage below 50 per cent. During the course of evidence, the Secretary also admitted that in these four States, traditionally, the coverage of sanitation has been low. In this context, the Ministry explained various reasons i.e. inadequate capacity at grass root level and lack of behavioural change and poor demand, inadequate prioritization of programmes by the State Government, fund availability and also outreach in some difficult to reach /LWE affected areas. The Committee feel that the efforts made by the Ministry in above States are not complete if the issue of awareness generation is left behind in this 'Demand Driven' programme. The Committee would be happy if the Ministry pay more attention towards awareness programme in these States on war footing. The Committee would like to be apprised of the follow up action taken by the Ministry in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Ministry has special focus on Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir. Regular review meetings and Video Conferences are organized with these States. “Satyagraha se Swachhagraha” campaign run in Bihar from 3rd April, 2018- 10th April, 2018. On April 10, 2018, the Hon’ble Prime Minister, addressed around 20,000 Swachhagrahis in Motihari, East Champaran district of Bihar. The impetus for this campaign began after the Hon’ble Prime Minister, took a video conference with District Collectors from the four focus States of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), namely, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir. At this video conference, the Prime Minister emphasized that there could be no greater inspiration for completing this task, than the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He urged for teams to be formed at the district level to monitor progress. Motivated by the Prime Minister’s address, the districts of the four States showed unprecedented progress. Situation has improved since then and the sanitation coverage as on 7.6.2018 in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir have increased to 56.76%, 71.57%, 55.81% and 85.86% respectively.

[O.M. No. H.11013(12)/13/2018-Coordination dated 03 July, 2018]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 14 of Chapter I of the Report)

Chapter V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

-NIL-

**NEW DELHI;
27 December, 2018
06 Pausa, 1940 (Saka)**

**DR. P. VENUGOPAL
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Rural Development**

COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2018-2019)

**MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY, THE 27 DECEMBER, 2018**

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1520 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

Dr. P. Venugopal - *Chairperson*

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Kirti Azad
3. Shri Vijay Kumar Hansdak
4. Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma
5. Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank"
6. Shri Prahlad Singh Patel
7. Dr. Yashwant Singh
8. Shri Ajay Misra (Teni)

RAJYA SABHA

9. Shri Ajay Pratap Singh
10. Shri Shamsher Singh Dullo
11. Shri Rathwa Naranbhai Jemlabhai
12. Shri A.K. Selvaraj
13. Shri Prashanta Nanda
14. Shri Lal Sinh Vadodia

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Abhijit Kumar - Additional Secretary
2. Shri Shilpi Chatterjee - Director
3. Smt. Emma C. Barwa - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened for consideration of four Draft Reports of the Committee on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained on Demands for Grants (2018-19) in respect of XXX XXX XXX Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation XXX XXX XXX XXX.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration the following Draft Reports:-

XXX XXX XXX

- (i) Draft Action taken on the recommendations contained in the Forty-Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation';
XXX XXX XXX

4. Draft Reports were taken up for consideration one-by-one and after discussions, the Committee adopted the Draft Reports at Sl. Nos. (i). The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the aforesaid Draft Reports and present the same to the Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX - II

[Vide Introduction of Report]

**ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE
RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE FORTY-FIFTH REPORT
(16TH LOK SABHA) OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

I.	Total number of recommendations:	13
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government :	
	Serial Nos. 1,4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12 and 13	
	Total:	10
	Percentage:	76.92 %
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies :	
	Serial No. - NIL -	
	Total:	00
	Percentage:	0.00 %
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:	
	Serial No. 2, 3 and 5	
	Total:	03
	Percentage:	23.08 %
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited :	
	Serial No. -NIL-	
	Total:	00
	Percentage:	0.00 %