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City banks on groundwater to add 23MGD by April '25

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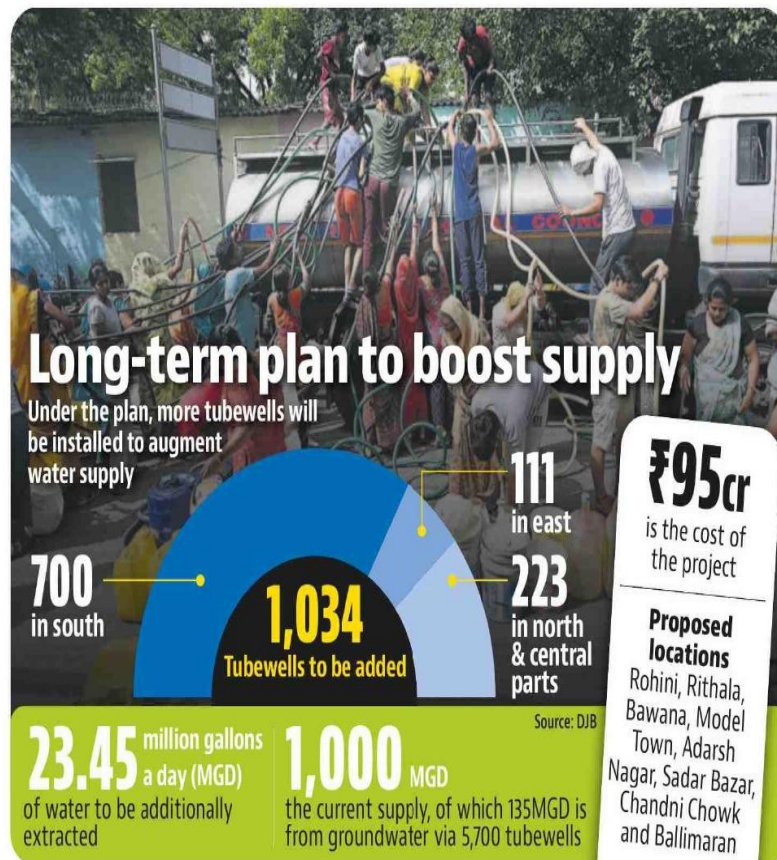
NEW DELHI: The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) plans to add 1,034 water extraction points and tubewells to extract 23.45 million gallons per day (MGD) of groundwater, in addition to the 135MGD currently being extracted, to meet Delhi's rising water demand in the long term, senior DJB officials said.

The agency said it will incur an expense of ₹94.7 crore to develop the array of groundwater extraction points along with flowmeters to measure the quantum of extraction.

"We plan to add over 1,000 additional tubewell sites to augment local water supply with maximum extraction points proposed in south Delhi. Water extraction will only be carried out in areas where water table is high so that extraction can be done in sustainable manner," an official, requesting anonymity, said.

In the absence of external addition to Delhi's water quota over the recent years, DJB, over the past five years, has been steadily increasing groundwater extraction, raising it from 86 MGD in 2020 to around 135 MGD in 2024, officials said.

A water-stressed city, Delhi primarily depends on neighbouring states to meet the bulk of its drinking water demand — through the Yamuna, the carrier



lined channel Munak, the Delhi sub-branch canals from Haryana, and through the Upper Ganga Canal via Muradnagar from Uttar Pradesh — with the water routed through nine water treatment plants. The remaining 13.5% of demand is met through internal water sources, primarily tubewells and Ranney wells.

To be sure, Delhi has a daily

water demand of 1,290MGD, of which the DJB currently produces 1,000MGD. While the tubewell plan will augment supply by another 23.5MGD in the long term, other plans are afoot to meet the rest of the demand, officials said. The economic survey tabled by the Delhi government in March said DJB is working on a "twin-pronged strategy", which

focuses on augmentation of groundwater and surface (river) water resources.

Upstream dam storage projects, especially the Renukaji, Lakhwar and Kishau dam projects, will form part of this.

DJB also plans to reuse treated wastewater to boost the city's water supply, by feeding them to water bodies under the

"city of lakes" project (waterbody revival project) and later extracting it through tubewells.

Action plan

The senior DJB official cited above said that chief secretary Naresh Kumar issued a series of directions on April 5, under which water augmentation plan was to be finalised for coming years. According to the DJB action plan, a copy of which has been seen by HT, 700 tubewells are to be installed in south Delhi, 111 in east Delhi and another 223 in central and north Delhi. DJB plans to spend ₹56 crore on south Delhi alone, augmenting its supply by 12 MGD.

Delhi groundwater status

The central groundwater board, in its "Dynamic Groundwater Resources of India 2023" report on December 1, 2023, noted that around 41.49% of Delhi's area of 1,487.61 square kilometres is considered "over-exploited" due to high levels of groundwater extraction, with only northwest Delhi considered "safe".

Diwan Singh, an environmental activist who led the Yamuna satyagraha for rejuvenating the river, said groundwater extraction should be regulated as per the ecological limit of an aquifer. "It is not sustainable to keep extracting groundwater, as, the deeper you go, the probability of contamination of aquifers keeps rising," he said.

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आदी ब्रदी बांध निर्माण को हिमाचल की झंडी का इंतजार

● सरस्वती बोर्ड के डिप्टी चेयरमैन के साथ हुई हिमाचल प्रदेश के वन विभाग के अधिकारियों की बैठक

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। चंडीगढ़

सरस्वती नदी को पुनर्जीवित करने के लिए प्रदेश सरकार पूरी तरह गंभीर है। हिमाचल में सोम नदी पर बांध बनाने की कवायद अंतिम चरण में पहुंच चुकी है। हरियाणा सरस्वती विरासत विकास बोर्ड के प्रयासों के चलते हिमाचल प्रदेश से फारेस्ट क्लीयरेंस को लेकर कार्य तेजी से

चल रहा है। वन विभाग से हरी झंडी मिलते ही बांध बनाने का काम शुरू होगा। जनवरी माह में हिमाचल प्रदेश और हरियाणा सरकार के बीच सोम नदी पर आदी ब्रदी बांध के निर्माण को लेकर एमओयू हो चुका है। इसी कड़ी में सरस्वती बोर्ड के डिप्टी चेयरमैन धुम्पन सिंह किरमिच ने सोमवार को सरस्वती नदी के पुनः प्रवाह की कवायद को आगे बढ़ाते हुए हिमाचल प्रदेश के अधिकारियों के साथ बैठक की। बैठक में फारेस्ट क्लीयरेंस के बिंदुओं पर चर्चा हुई। फारेस्ट क्लीयरेंस के लिए हिमाचल प्रदेश की ओर से नोडल अधिकारी संजय सूद व नाहन जिला डीएफओ मौजूद रहे, जिसमें वन विभाग एनओसी को लेकर आ रही अचड़नों पर विचार-विमर्श किया गया।