OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Minutes of the meeting held on 04th July, 2016 under the Chairmanship of JS (W) to discuss the long term and short term measures being taken by the Arsenic affected State Governments.

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith the Minutes of Special Review Meeting on Arsenic Mitigation with officials from Arsenic affected States, held under the chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Water), Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation on 4th July, 2016 in meeting hall of JS (W), 4th Floor, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi for kind information and necessary action/compliance by all the concerned.

Encl: as above

(K. Narayana Reddy)
Under Secretary (WQ)
Tel No: 011-24368562

To
All officers who attended the meeting
(As per the list in the Annexure)

Copy to: (for uploading minutes on to website)
Shri. Shiv Kumar, Programmer, NIC Cell.
Minutes of the meeting held on 04th July, 2016 under the Chairmanship of JS (W) to discuss the long term and short term measures being taken by the Arsenic affected State Governments

The meeting was held on 4th July, 2016 in Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Water) to review the short term and long term measures being adopted by the Arsenic affected States to tackle Arsenic contamination in drinking water. The list of participants is given in Annexure-A.

At the outset, JS (W) welcomed all the officials present in the chamber. Thereafter, DA (WQ) briefed about the purpose of the meeting and informed that this meeting has been called for analyzing the progress of short term measures that are being taken by the arsenic affected States in utilizing the funds of NITI Ayog and to review the State Governments plan to tackle the issue in the long term (in a phased manner) and the requirement of funds.

In this regard JS informed that Arsenic contamination is the burning issue these days. The issue has been raised at various platforms. Recently it was discussed in inter-ministerial meetings. National Human Right Commission (NHRC) has also enquired about arsenic contamination details from the States. The issues of water contamination with arsenic and fluoride have also been placed before National Green Tribunal by many agencies. JS (Water) informed that it may be ensured that the targets of installation of community water purification plants must be completed by the end of Mar 2017 so that the target of Niti Aayog for mitigation of arsenic could be achieved.

JS also stressed that the States should report the number of arsenic affected habitations accurately in order to know the real extent of the arsenic contamination in the country and citizens should be informed about it. After that JS has asked the State Governments official to give presentation on Arsenic Mitigation measures being taken.

WEST BENGAL:

Director WSSO, PHED from West Bengal gave the presentation. He informed the chair that as on 01/03/2016 before YDU there were 778 Arsenic affected habitations. They were increased to 1250 as on 01/04/2016 after YDU. The state AAP targets 555 habitations. JS has pointed out that this is not in agreement with earlier targets agreed to by the State Government while releasing NITIAayog one time assistance. The State Government has agreed with target of 784 arsenic affected habitations with NITI Aayog funds.
In this context, JS (Water) reiterated to all the officials of State Governments that the figure freeze by Niti Aayog for arsenic and fluoride affected habitations while releasing the funds will be strictly adhered to. It has been made clear to the officials of states that funds cannot be utilized for any other work.

In regard to increase in the arsenic and fluoride affected habitations, JS (Water) has advised the States to get the data validated from Central Government officials or from the NEERI Nagpur incurring expenditure may be paid from the NRDWP funds. After validation, the remaining arsenic and fluoride habitations of West Bengal may be covered under the funds of NRDWP/State/District Mining Fund/ or any other funds available with the States. JS (Water) emphasized on adhering the timelines of NITI Aayog for the funds of Rs.100.00 crores provided for last mile connectivity for piped water supply schemes to provide safe drinking water in arsenic affected habitations.

**Decision:** After deliberation, it was decided that a letter will be addressed to the Principal Secretary, (PHED) West Bengal conveying that the funds of Niti Aayog will be utilized only for 784 arsenic affected habitations which were targeted by Niti Aayog at the time of release of funds.

**ASSAM:**

Chief Engineer (PHE) and Asst. Engineer & IMIS Nodal Officer from Assam gave the presentation. It was informed by Mr Kamal Swt that, there were 2604 habitations in Assam State were affected by Arsenic. As on 01 Apr 2016, 2320 habitation have been mitigated and the remaining 284 are to be mitigated for which action is being taken. It was also informed that State level Water Quality Task Force is working in collaboration with Central & State Govt. Line Departments Academia & Research Institutes like IIT, Guwahati etc. and presently Water Quality Task Force is monitoring the Arsenic Mitigation activities.

Mr Kamal Swt informed the Chair that a plan has been chalked out to ensure the supply of safe drinking water in 284 arsenic affected habitations of Assam State by Mar 2017 which is as follows:-

- By setting up Community Water Purification Plant with Nano Technology for 96 habitations under NITI Ayog one time Central assistance as a short term measure.
- By commissioning Community Water Purification Plant with Nano Technology for 88 habitations under NRDWP (short term measure)
- By commissioning 2 nos. Mega PWSS for 100 habitations as (long term measure).
JS (W) has appreciated the presentation as long terms measures for being clear and to the point. However, the implementation of schemes for the utilization of Niti Aayog funds is very slow which needs to be escalated. Mr Kamal Swt informed that, since the Niti Aayog funds have not been provisioned in the State Budget, the tendering process has been withhold pending approval of budget. JS (W) had made it clear to the state officials that, the funds has already been transferred to State Government by Ministry of Finance, the tendering process may be initiated pending budget approval of state so that the target of Niti Aayog for completion of projects by Mar 2017 could be met.

Decision:JS (Water) has taken a serious note on it. The procedural delay will affect the schedule of the commissioning of community water purification plants. Therefore, it has been decided to address a communication to Principal Secretary to initiate the tendering process immediately pending budget approval from the State as the funds has already been released by Ministry of Finance on the recommendation of Niti Aayog.

PUNJAB

Executive Engineer, WQ and Superintendent Engineer from Punjab explained the status of Arsenic Mitigation in the State. They informed that Punjab has received 39.35 crores one time assistance from NITI Aayog to target 175 arsenic affected habitations and 254 fluoride affected habitations as reported on 13/12/2015.

They informed that, PHED is supplying 70 lpcd water to households through PWS schemes in all the 175 arsenic affected habitations. But it is contaminated. As per NITI Ayog guidelines the community water purification plants is to be installed for providing 8 to 10 lpcd. However, the official of Punjab State explained that if they install additional Arsenic Removal units to the existing system, they will be able to provide 70 lpcd to the arsenic affected habitations instead of 8 to 10 lpcd. JS (Water) pointed out that the funds of the NITI Aayog are to be expended as per the specific guidelines issued. Keeping in view the viable suggestion of Punjab State officials, JS(W) advised to come up with a concrete proposal to consider the request.

Research Officer from NITI has informed the Chair that, the State Governments have not submitted their Action Plan for utilization of the funds released to the States as one-time Central assistance to combat the arsenic and fluoride affected habitations. The officials of States attended the meeting was agreed to submit it shortly.

Decision: The view of Punjab State officials was considered convincing and decided that Punjab Government will submit a concrete proposal within a week for obtaining clearance from Niti Aayog so that the funds could be utilized by the targeted date i.e Mar 2017.
JHARKHAND

Chief Engineer from Jharkhand explained the status of Arsenic Mitigation in the State. It was informed to Chair that as per IMIS data there are 121 arsenic affected habitations in the state as on 1/4/2016 and this figure has further increased to approx 150 habitations which are yet to be reported in IMIS. It was also informed that the State is mainly using the water from Ganga River in its long term contamination mitigation projects. JS (W) advised the State officialsof Jharkhand that accurate figures should be uploaded in IMIS and the random verification in regard to increase in the arsenic and fluoride affected habitations may be got validated from Central Government officials or from the NEERI Nagpur and the payment may be made from NRDWP funds. After validation, the arsenic and fluoride habitations of Jharkhand may be covered under the funds of NRDWP/State/District Mining Fund/ or any other funds available with the States.

UTTAR PRADESH

Superintendent Engineer of Uttar Pradesh informed the Chair that there are 57 Arsenic affected habitations in UP as on 01.04.2016. In order to supply safe drinking water in these habitations, there is a need for setting up 115 nos. community water treatment plants. It was also informed by State officials that, 37 Community Water Purification Plants will be set up utilizing NITI Aayog one-time Central assistance and 78 by utilizing NRDWP funds. To this end, funds amounting to Rs. 13.39 Crores from the Niti Aayog one-time Central assistance has been approved by SLSSC for setting up Community Treatment Plants in Arsenic/ Fluoride affected habitations and the work will be completed by 31.12.2016.

GENERAL POINT

During the discussions, it was brought out that the BIS has amended the standard for drinking water specification IS 10500:2012 in June, 2015. The amended permissible limit with respect to Arsenic in drinking water is 0.01 mg/l. The IMIS data is being updated taking into consideration the old standard i.e. 0.05 mg/l. Joint Secretary (W) has directed to obtain a copy of amendment from the BIS and to take necessary follow up action.

Decision: A communication will be addressed by DA(WQ) to BIS for obtaining a copy of amendment of BIS Standard for drinking water specification IS 10500:2012 for follow up action.

The meeting ended with Vote of Thanks from and to the Chair.
Annexure-A

(Minutes of the meeting held on 04th July, 2016
Under the Chairmanship of JS (W))

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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<th>S. No</th>
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