



Shri Bharatsinh Solanki
Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge)
Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
Government of India

at the

**NATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE ON
DRINKING WATER, SANITATION, MUNICIPAL &
INDUSTRIAL WASTE WATER TREATMENT & MANAGEMENT**

Water Tech Expo and Conference
Supported by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
Government of India

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सत्यमेव जयते

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
Government of India

Secretaries and officials of State Governments dealing with Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, Officials from Government of India, representatives of Industry, Multilateral agencies, Research and Development Organisations and Institutes, Non-governmental Organisations, Friends from Print & Electronic Media, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Provision of adequate and safe drinking water supply in rural areas is one of the fundamental responsibilities of Governments, both at the State as well as the Central levels.

We have achieved significant success in providing drinking water supply to a large majority of our vast population. The Census 2011 figures have indicated that about 85% of the rural population get drinking water from safe sources like hand pumps and tap water. We have also been able to provide potable water to many habitations where water quality was a problem.

However, 15% of rural households depend on uncovered wells and other unimproved sources like rivers, springs, ponds etc. As of today, only about 38% of rural households have access to tap water, and about 14% with household connections.

As of today, 85% of all drinking water sources in the rural areas of the country are based on underground sources. In many areas, cases of chemical contamination of drinking water supply with contaminants like Arsenic, Fluoride and Uranium and in recent times, man-made pollution with heavy metals and pesticides is coming to the fore. Out of 16.90 lakh rural habitations in the country, about 85000 habitations have some of their drinking water sources contaminated with chemical contamination. Further unmanaged waste water and solid waste from domestic and industrial sources in rural areas are causing significant health consequences. These are challenges that we have to tackle at the earliest.

In the 12th Five Year Plan, we have to give emphasis on ensuring satisfactory service delivery. Though there have been large investments in the sector, and many water supply schemes set up, we have to ensure that commissioned schemes do not slip back to nonfunctional status. This often happens due to inappropriateness of the

technology used, poor Operation and Maintenance of water supply systems, non-availability of affordable and dependable power supply.

India is fast becoming a water stressed country. It is the need of the hour to focus on improving water use efficiency in all sectors including in drinking water sector. Development and use of bulk and individual water meters and water efficient fixtures is essential.

Over the past decade, we have had increased investment in the drinking water supply sector. For rural areas, from about Rs. 2000 crore in 2002-03, the investment has increased in the Bharat Nirman period to Rs.11,000 crore in 2013-14. Under the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), the Central Government gives financial and technical assistance to the States, for providing adequate and safe drinking water to the population in rural areas.

To address the growing need for Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) in rural areas, in 2012, the erstwhile Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) was reformulated into the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA), with specific financial provisions. Assistance is now available on the basis of total number of households in each Gram Panchayat (GP), of up to Rs.7 lakh for a GP having up to 150 households, Rs.12 lakh up to 300 households, Rs.15 lakh up to 500 households and Rs.20 lakh for GPs having more than 500 households. It is necessary to develop suitable technologies to utilise these provisions to quickly provide effective sanitation services to the rural areas.

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has been supporting the implementation of the NRDWP and the NBA in Gujarat. Under the Rural Water Supply programme (NRDWP), in 2012-13, the State was provided Rs. 717.47 crore, which included an additional release of Rs. 150 crore as compared to its original allocation. In 2013-14, Rs 526.96 crore has been initially allocated to the State.

The Government of India has brought about a major paradigm shift in the National Rural Drinking Water Programme in the XIIth. Five Year plan period, to fulfill the rising expectations of the rural population by firstly, increasing the service levels of providing drinking water supply to rural areas from 40 litres per capita per

day (lpcd) to 55 lpcd. Secondly, looking at the fact that there is over extraction of ground water, we have decided in principle to shift the focus away from ground water to surface water. We hope that more surface water sources will be tapped to ensure sustainable water supply in water stressed and quality affected areas. Suitable Technologies for this has to be developed.

I urge Industry and Research Institutions to focus their efforts in providing solutions to the challenges that we face. My Ministry has identified Key Resource Centres (KRCs) to provide Capacity Building and trainings to the various Stakeholders on various aspects of rural drinking water sector. These KRCs can be utilised to make sure that the Innovations and technology is disseminated at the field level.

I congratulate the Organisers of this Water Tech Expo and Conference for organizing the *National Exhibition and Conference On Drinking Water Municipal and Industrial Waste Water Treatment and Management*, and hope that the deliberations held and ideas exchanged shall be useful for taking forward the tasks of providing drinking water and sanitation services to our population.

Thank You