



Jal Jeevan Mission

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Why in News

Recently, the **Jal Shakti Ministry** has announced that the labourers returning to their home states due to **covid-19**, will be deployed for the **Jal Jeevan Mission**.

- The Jal Jeevan Mission aims for providing **piped drinking water to all rural households by 2024**.
- The **Jal Shakti Ministry** is the nodal ministry for the implementation of the scheme.

Key Points

- The Jal Shakti Ministry has directed various States that returning labour, **especially those working in the construction sector (skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled)**, may be deployed to expedite the completion of works under the scheme.
- **Significance:**
 - It is an arrangement that could provide **employment** to the currently **unemployed workers**.
 - The mission is being used as a way to ameliorate some of the effects of the **mass migration of inter-State workers** back to their home States in the wake of the Covid -19 **pandemic**.
- **Need:**

Huge Demand for Work: It has been created because of **workers returning** to their home states from different parts of the country.

 - It is clear from the fact that allocations under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** have already been hiked by ₹40,000 crore over and above the ₹60,000 crore already allocated.
 - While the MGNREGA is an old programme, the new Jal Jeevan Mission also has funds.

- **Tap Water Connections:** There is a need for tap water connections in several households under the mission.
 - A revalidation exercise of households and status of tap water found that out of **19.04 crore rural households in the country, 3.23 crore households** had tap connections and **15.81 crore households** have to be provided functional tap connections.
 - Apart from the ₹11,000 crore in the budget, ₹12,000 crore has been allocated from extra budgetary allowances, and **50% of the ₹60,750 crore allocated by the 15th Finance Commission** for rural local bodies is tied to grants for **water bodies and sanitation**.
- **Construction Sector: Skill mapping** by various State governments has shown that a majority of inter-State workers returning home are from the **construction sector**.
 - In Uttar Pradesh alone, 16 lakh out of the **18 lakh migrant labour** mapped till now are from this sector.
 - The State has assured funding of ₹3,382 crore under the Jal Jeevan Mission which would be utilised in providing employment in rural areas to returning migrants.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** envisages supply of **55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024**.
- JJM focuses on **integrated demand and supply-side management of water** at the local level.

Creation of local infrastructure for source sustainability measures as mandatory elements, like **rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and management of household wastewater for reuse**, would be undertaken in convergence with other government programmes/schemes.
- The Mission is based on a **community approach to water** and includes extensive Information, Education and Communication as a key component of the mission.
- JJM looks to **create a jan andolan for water**, thereby making it everyone's priority.
- **Funding Pattern:** The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and states is 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States, 50:50 for other states, and 100% for Union Territories.
- The total allocation to the scheme is over ₹3 lakh crore.

Jal Shakti Ministry

- The government has created a **new ministry called ‘Jal Shakti’** after merging Ministries of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation along with Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- ‘Jal Shakti’ ministry will **encompass issues ranging from providing clean drinking water, international and inter-states water disputes, to the Namami Gange project** aimed at cleaning Ganga and its tributaries, and sub-tributaries.
- The ministry will roll out the government’s ambitious plan (**‘Nal se Jal’ scheme under Jal Jeevan Plan**) to provide piped water connection to every household in India by 2024.

Way Forward

- While the **National Skill Development Mission** was successful to create a pool of manpower skilled in masonry, plumbing, fitting, electricity etc, there is a growing realisation that **returning inter-State labour could be deployed** in different sectors due to the prevailing situation of Covid -19.
- There is a need to encourage all States to consider the existing skill development plans and provide employment to migrant workers.
- There is a requirement of a **strategic framework** to provide the returning citizens with suitable employment opportunities through discussions with key stakeholders including State Governments, Industry Associations and Employers.

Source: TH