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State of Water Supply in Schools and Anganwadis

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Why in News

According to information provided to the **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources**, only half of government schools and **anganwadis** have tap water supply, despite a **100-day campaign for 100% coverage** being launched by the **Jal Shakti Ministry** in October 2020.

The Committee also noted the progress of the flagship **Jal Jeevan Mission**.

Key Points

- **About the Campaign:**
 - The campaign aims to provide **potable piped water supply** for **drinking and cooking purposes** and tap water for **hand washing** and in toilets in every school, anganwadi and ashramshala or residential tribal school.
 - It was launched on **2nd October, 2020 (Gandhi Jayanti)**.
 - The 100-day period should have ended on 10th January, 2021.
 - However, some States/ UTs have indicated that they need more time to complete the task and sustain the efforts. Therefore, the campaign has been **extended till 31st March, 2021**.

- **Related Observations:**

Basic need **unmet**

While seven States in the country have 100% tap water coverage in schools, three have abysmally low coverage of less than 15%



States with 100% tap-water coverage

State
Andhra Pradesh
Goa
Tamil Nadu
Haryana
Himachal Pradesh
Telangana
Punjab

Least coverage

State	% of schools with tap water supply
Uttar Pradesh	7.93
West Bengal	10.89
Jharkhand	12.99

- As of now, only **48.5% of anganwadis** and **53.3% of schools** had **tap water supply**.
 - **Less than 8% of schools in Uttar Pradesh** and **11% in West Bengal** have it, while it is available in **only 2-6% of anganwadis in Assam, Jharkhand, U.P., Chhattisgarh and Bengal**.
 - **Seven States** - Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Punjab - **achieved 100% coverage**.
 - Around 1.82 lakh **grey water management structures** and 1.42 lakh **rainwater harvesting structures** were also constructed in schools and anganwadi centres.
- **Health Issues of Children Emanating from Contaminated Water:**
 - Children are more susceptible to **water borne diseases (Diarrhea, Cholera, Typhoid)**, more so, when there is also a **need for repeated washing of hands as a precautionary measure during the pandemic**.
 - Other **nutritional issues and the health hazards** emerge in children from on account of lack of potable drinking water.

- **About 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**.
- In the **Budget 2021-22**, **Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban)** has been announced under the **Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households** through functional taps in all statutory towns in accordance with **Sustainable Development Goal- 6**.

- **Suggestions:**

- The Standing Committee noted that **mere provision** of tap connection without ensuring assured availability of water in the pipeline **would not serve the purpose** and would defeat the very objective of JJM.
- It called for **real-time monitoring of water supply at the district level**.
- The centre government should take measures to set up **water purification or reverse osmosis (RO)** plants on an urgent basis so that children do not suffer due to contamination of drinking water.

Grey water

- Grey water is defined as wastewater that is produced from household processes (e.g. washing dishes, laundry and bathing).
- Grey water can contain harmful bacteria and even faecal matter that contaminates soil and groundwater.

Source:TH