Water Quality Report

Why in News

Recently, **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** has released **Water Quality Report** for State capitals & Delhi as analysed by the **Bureau of India Standards (BIS)**.

- The study focused on the **quality of piped drinking water** and **also ranked** the States, smart cities and districts accordingly.
- This study was in line with Jal Jeevan Mission which **aims to provide tap water to all households by 2024**.

Key Points

- Tests were conducted on various **parameters**:

    - Organoleptic and Physical Tests
    - Chemical test
    - Toxic substances
    - Bacteriological tests
    - Total Dissolve Solids (TDS)
    - Turbidity
    - Total hardness
    - Total alkalinity
    - Minerals and metals
    - Presence of Coliform and E Coli
- A vast majority of the samples have failed to comply with the requirements in one or more parameters.
- **Tap water** in **Mumbai is the safest** for drinking while **Delhi's water is one of the worst**.

Challenges

- **Lack of initiatives** in tap water systems due to the expanding packaged drinking water.
- **High dependence on groundwater** in fast-growing urban clusters where piped water systems do not exist.
- **Lack of accountability** of the official agencies.
- **Absence of robust data** in the public domain on quality testing.

Way Forward

- It should be **legally binding** on agencies to achieve standards and empowering consumers.
- State governments should take an **integrated view** of housing, water supply, sanitation and waste management.
- A **scientific approach** for water management should be adopted.
- A **separate agency** in each state should be entrusted for regular testing rather than relying on the same agency.
- **Data on water should be made public** on the same lines as air quality which would put pressure on governments to act.

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