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House of the Federation

SENATE OF PAKISTAN

REPORT NO. 1

Parliamentary Tenure 2021-24

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES

ON

“Starred Question No.03 regarding ‘details/table of underground water level in every district of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during last ten years, ascertainment of decrease in water level in the whole country and the steps taken by the Government to cope up with the issue’ raised by Senator Fida Muhammad in the Senate sitting held on 13th July, 2021.”

Presented by:

SENATOR MUSADIK MASOOD MALIK
CHAIRMAN
STANDING COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES

SENATE SECRETARIAT

Subject: REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES.

I, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Water Resources, have the honour to present report on "starred question No.03 regarding 'details/table of underground water level in every district of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during last ten years, ascertainment of decrease in water level in the whole country and the steps taken by the Government to cope up with the issue' raised by Senator Fida Muhammad in the Senate sitting held on 13th July, 2021 and referred to the Committee for consideration and report. The starred question was referred to the Standing Committee for consideration and report.

2. The composition of the Standing Committee is as follows:-

i.	Senator Musadik Masood Malik	Chairman
ii.	Senator Dr. Mohammad Humanyun Mohmand	Member
iii.	Senator Muhammad Ayub	Member
iv.	Senator Gurdeep Singh	Member
v.	Senator Sana Jamali	Member
vi.	Senator Syed Faisal Alu Subzwari	Member
vii.	Senator Dr. Sikandar Mandhro	Member
viii.	Senator Taj Haider	Member
ix.	Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri	Member
x.	Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen	Member
xi.	Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt	Member
xii.	Senator Ahmed Khan	Member
xiii.	Senator Fida Muhammad	Move
xiv.	Minister for Water Resources	Ex-officio Member

3. The Standing Committee on Water Resources considered the matter in its meetings held on 26th August, 2021 and 4th November, 2021 under the Chairmanship of Senator Musadik Masood Malik. Final consideration of the starred question was held in the meeting dated 4th November, 2021, which was attended by the following members:-

i.	Senator Musadik Masood Malik	Chairman
ii.	Senator Dr. Mohammad Humanyun Mohmand	Member
iii.	Senator Taj Haider	Member
iv.	Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen	Member
v.	Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri	Member
vi.	Senator Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari	Member
vii.	Senator Fida Muhammad	Mover
viii.	Minister for Water Resources	Ex-officio Member



4. Senator Fida Muhammad underscored the need to get information and devise a way forward on the issue of underground water level in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Committee was informed about the various reasons for depletion of groundwater in Pakistan including non-availability of groundwater regulatory framework, less rainfall leading to low recharge, melting of glaciers due to global warming, issues of conservation of water and an increased demand due to unplanned growth of urban cities.

5. The Committee identified data gaps in undertaking an evidence-based approach while considering the starred question, and expressed its displeasure on the lack of information. The Committee was informed that due to shortage of funds there was lack of data, and that further research was needed. Most of the groundwater related studies conducted in the Indus Basin were in bits and pieces and confined to soil-water-plant relationship, water logging, salinity and ground water development. Sustainable ground water management required a comprehensive and quantitative assessment of available resources, determining sources of recharge, predicting the future behavior of groundwater dynamics and estimating safe yield. The Committee noted gaps in research and water mapping in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and in some areas of Punjab.

6. The Chairman PCRWR informed that the ground water resources of Pakistan were the 4th largest in the world after India, China and USA. The groundwater accounted for 60% of agriculture, over 90% drinking requirement, and almost 100% of industrial use. The Chairman PCRWR also informed that 142 million acre ft. supply of surface water was available, out of which 70 million acre ft. was groundwater. Further it was informed that the groundwater was recharged by the irrigation system, and because of its marine geological formation most of the groundwater was saline. The water resources close to the recharging sources were fresh, and the ones close to the Arabian Sea were saline. It was further informed that the major use of tube-wells was in Punjab (84%), about 13% in Sindh, and 2.8% in Balochistan.

7. It was indicated to the Committee that there were 40,000 tube wells in Balochistan and most of them were established near the populated area and recharge sources. The Committee was informed that due to the non-availability of data the Ministry had to rely on drillers for water related information. Since there is no groundwater regulatory framework in Pakistan, anyone can install any number of tube wells anywhere, of any size, and pump large quantities of water.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fida Muhammad', is written at the bottom right of the page. The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

8. After deliberations, the Committee recommended the followings:

- i) The Ministry of Water Resources to conduct a comprehensive and country-wide mapping of surface and sub-surface water to determine the shortage of water.
- ii) The Ministry of Water Resources to explore new aquifers with the help of Grace-Satellite system throughout Pakistan



(MUKHTAR AHMED KHAN)
Acting Secretary Committee



(SENATOR MUSADIK MASOOD MALIK)
Chairman Standing Committee on Water Resources
