

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 694 OF 2023

IN THE MATTER OF :

News item titled "UN predicts ground water level in India will reduce to 'low' by 2025" appearing in Hindustan dated 26.10.2023.

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THROUGH

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BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 694 OF 2023

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IN THE MATTER OF :

News item titled "UN predicts ground water level in India will reduce to 'low' by 2025" appearing in Hindustan dated 26.10.2023.

RESPONSE AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF THE STATE RESPONDENTS NO. 15, STATE OF ODISHA IN COMPLIANCE TO THE ORDER DATED 24.11.2023 & 09.02.2024 IN ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 694 OF 2023.

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:

1. The present Reply is being filed on behalf of State of Odisha in obedience and compliance to the direction of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal Principal Bench in the Order dated 24.11.2023 & 09.02.2024 in Original Application No. 694 of 2023.
2. The News item appearing in Hindustan times dated 26.10.2023 is based on the report Titled "Interconnected Disaster Risks Report 2023" published by the United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNUEHS). In the said report, it has been reported that India is the world's largest user of groundwater, exceeding the use of the United States and China combined. The north-western region of India serves as the breadbasket for the nation's growing 14 billion people, with the States of Punjab and Haryana producing 50% of the country's rice supply and 85 % of its wheat stocks. However, 78% of wells in Punjab are considered over exploited, and the north-western region as a whole is predicted to experience critically low groundwater availability by 2025.



3. The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, PB, New Delhi vide Order dated 24.11.2023, observed that the news item raises very serious concern relating to depleting the ground water level. Hence, the Hon'ble Tribunal impleaded various State Governments through Department of Water Resources and issued notices to all such respondents for filing of response.
4. It is humbly submitted that the State of Odisha is underlain by diverse rock types, which range in age from Precambrian to Cenozoic era. The Precambrian occupy nearly 80% of the total geographical area of the State. The Tertiary and the Quaternary Alluvial formations are restricted mainly to the narrow coastal tracts. The Godwana group of rocks belonging to Palaeozoic and Mesozoic era occurs in isolated patches in different parts of the State whereby these formations occur in Talcher area of Angul district and in the river valley area of Sambalpur and Sundargarh districts. The Ground water abstraction in the State is mostly done by dug wells constructed in the weathered zone in hard rock areas and in shallow phreatic aquifers in alluvial areas. The yield of open (dug) wells varies from 1 to 5 Ips. However, at present, borewells, shallow to medium deep tube wells, filter point tube wells are also in use for ground water abstraction both for domestic and irrigational purpose. The yield of bore wells varies from 2 to 5 Ips in general depending on the occurrence of saturated fractures at depths. The yield from shallow and medium deep tube wells may vary from 6 to 10 Ips in general depending on the aquifer disposition.
5. The details of ground water, category of area in the context of the level of ground water and other streams and relevant extract in respect of State of Odisha are as given as under: -



A. Ground Water Resources Assessment of the State of Odisha

- i. Ground water is the source for more than 85% of India's rural domestic water requirements, 50% of its urban water requirements and more than 50 % of its irrigation requirements and the State of Odisha is no exception. The ever-increasing demand of ground water from different sectors of the state called for judicious and planned utilization of its ground water resources. That for proper planning and management of ground water development in a judicious and socio economically equitable manner, quantification of ground water resources is one of the most important prerequisites. The sustainable development of ground water resources warrants precise quantitative as well as qualitative assessment based on the reasonably valid scientific principles.
- ii. The Ground Water Resources Assessment (GWRA) is jointly carried out by Central Ground Water Board and Directorate of Ground Water Development under Department of Water Resources, Govt. of Odisha periodically as per the Ground Water Resources Estimation Committee (GEC) methodology. It is carried out under the guidance of the respective State/UT Level Committee (SLCs) and overall supervision of Central Level Expert Group (CLEG). As part of the assessment, 'Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource' as well as 'Annual Ground Water Extraction' is assessed for each assessment unit (Block).
- iii. The 'Stage of Ground Water Extraction' is computed as the ratio of 'Annual Ground Water Extraction' with respect to 'Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource' and is usually expressed in percentage. Based on the stage of extraction, the assessment units are categorized as Safe ($\leq 70\%$), Semi Critical ($>70\%$ & $\leq 90\%$), critical ($>90\%$ and $\leq 100\%$) and Over-exploited ($>100\%$).



Sl. No.	Category	GWRA-2017		GWRA-2020		GWRA-2022		GWRA-2023	
		Number of AUs	% of AUs						
1	Safe	303	96.5	302	96.17	300	95.5	299	95.22
2	Semi-Critical	5	1.5	6	1.91	8	2.5	9	2.57
3	Critical	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Over-exploited	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Saline	6	2	6	2	6	2	6	1.91
Total No. of AUs		314		314		314	314		

*AU – Assessment Unit

• Ground Water Resources Assessment (GWRA)- 2023

The Ground Water Resources in the state have been assessed block-wise Total Annual Ground Water Recharge of the State has been assessed as 17.35 bcm and Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource as 15.94 bern for the year 2023. The Annual Ground Water Extraction for 2023 is 7.39 bcm and Stage of Ground Water Extraction is 46.33 % for the year 2023. Out of the total of 314 assessment units (blocks), 9 units (2.87 %) have been categorized as 'Semi-critical', 299 units (95.22 %) as 'Safe' and 6 units (1.91 %) as 'Saline' categories of assessment units. That similarly out of 121593.15 sq. km recharge worthy area of the State, 3339.96 sq. km (2.75 %) area are under 'Semi-critical', 116071.86 sq. km (95.46 %) under 'Safe' and 2181.33 sq. km (1.79 %) area under 'Saline' categories of assessment units. Out of total 15933.74 mcm annual extractable ground water resources of the State, 499.13 mcm (3.14 %) are under 'Semi-critical' and 15434.01 mcm (96.86 %) are under 'Safe' categories of assessment units. As compared to 2022 assessment, the



Annual Ground Water Recharge has decreased from 17.79 to 17.35 BCM. Similarly Annual Extractable Ground Water Resource has decreased from 16.34 to 15.94 bcm and total annual ground water extraction for all uses has increased from 7.23 to 7.39 bcm. The stage of ground water extraction has increased to 46.33 % in 2023 as compared to 44.25% in 2022.

The table below gives an overall comparison of the present Groundwater scenario of the State of Odisha:

Attribute	GWRA-2017	GWRA-2020	GWRA-2022	GWRA-2023
1 Total Annual Ground Water Re-charge (in bcm- Billion Cubic Meters)	16.74	17.08	17.79	17.35
2 Annual Extractable Ground Water Resources (in bcm)	15.57	15.71	16.34	15.94
3 Annual Ground Water Extraction (in bcm)	6.57	6.86	7.23	7.39
4 Stage of Ground Water Extraction (in %)	42.18	43.65	44.25	46.33

• Saline Blocks

There are 6 coastal blocks namely Chandbali, Ersama, Mahakalapada, Marsaghal, Rajnagar and Rajkanika where phreatic aquifer is saline. But fresh aquifers exist at variable depth, more than 140 m deep in general which are sources of public water supply system. Moreover, in coastal blocks, there are isolated sand dunes which contain fresh ground water and water exist under perched water table conditions which sustain dug wells.

• Semi-Critical Blocks

From ground water resource point of view, blocks are categorized as semi-critical where stage of ground water extraction lies between 70 to 90% of annual extractable

groundwater resources. There are 9 blocks out of 314 blocks in Odisha which are categorized as semi-critical. Baliapal block in Balasore district where stage of groundwater extraction is 88%. In remaining 8 blocks, stage of extraction lies in between 70-84%. The extraction is more because of groundwater utilization is more for irrigation and to meet growing urban population. In Bolagarh block of Khurda, the stage of extraction is more because of limited groundwater resource due to its hydrogeological setup. Various measures have been proposed by CGWB and State Govt. has initiated augmentation and other measures to arrest the increasing extraction.

- **Failing Water Level**

Only 1.1% of the total wells monitored (out of 1077 wells) show fall in water by more than 4m between Pre-Monsoon, 2019 & Pre-Monsoon, 2022. These wells are scattered and do not follow any pattern and are local in nature. The fall may be due to some unnatural effect. Fall in water level during the above period in the range between 2 to 4m has been observed in around 6% of the wells which is insignificant.

- **Ground Water Level (GWL) fluctuation trend from 2017 to 2023**

The annual average GWL of Odisha during 2017 was 4.69 m below ground level which gradually increase to 4.565 m below ground level during 2020. While later by 2023, it decreased to 4.67 m below ground water level. In 2017 with the state average rainfall of 1401 mm, the state average annual ground water level during pre-monsoon time was 5.96 m and post monsoon ground water level was 3.42 mbgl, with the ground water level fluctuation was observed to be 2.54 m.

In 2020 with the state average rainfall of 1421 .54 mm, the annual average premonsoon groundwater level of Odisha was 5.98 m below ground level and post



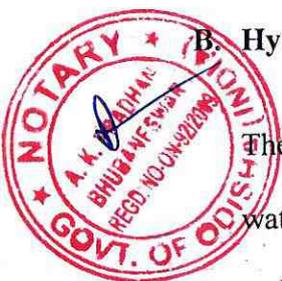
monsoon groundwater level was 3.15 m below ground level giving us the fluctuation of water level to be 2.83 m.

In 2023 with the state average rainfall of 1421 .87 mm, the annual average premonsoon groundwater level of Odisha was 5.77 m below ground level and post monsoon groundwater level was 3.5 m below ground level giving us the fluctuation of water level to be 2.20 m.

So, we can perceive increase in groundwater level from 5.96 m to 5.77 m below ground level during pre-monsoon season to a relative decrease in water level from 3.42 m to 3.57 m below ground level with a reduction in the ground water fluctuation from 2.54 m to 2.20 m from 2017 to 2023 respectively. Further, out of 92 stations monitored by the Odisha State Pollution Control Board for ground water quality in the State, there has been no indication of the 'Groundwater Depletion' reported at those locations.

B. Hydrogeological conditions of Odisha

The Hydrogeology which deals with the occurrence and movement of ground water below the earth Surface, is mainly controlled by geology, geomorphology and rainfall patterns of an area. The type of geological formation and the topography or landforms in an area influence the occurrence of ground water in that area. The main source of ground water is rainfall, which precipitates on the earth surface and percolates downwards through un-saturated soil zone to form ground water within open spaces of rock formations at different depths. The rate of infiltration of rainwater as well as, storage potential of ground water mainly depends on the geomorphic setup as well as geological formation of any area. The



complex geology, varied geomorphic setup and skewed distribution of rainfall both in space and time, have resulted in varied hydro-geological set up in Odisha.

C. Rainfall of the Odisha State

- i. The normal annual rainfall of the state is 1386.5 mm with average annual rainy days of 74. The state receives about 85% of the annual rainfall from the south-west monsoon. The maximum precipitation occurs in July and August. The rainfall is highest in the northern part of the coastal tract and reduces westward. The low rainfall area stretches from Keonjhar on the north to Gopalpur in the south through Angul and Phulbani district. The distribution of rainfall over the state is uneven and often erratic. Floods and cyclones in the coastal districts and droughts in the inland and rain shadow areas are common Phenomena. Most of the river valleys are flood prone with vast stretches of Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Puri, Ganjam, Bhadrak and Balasore district experience flood very often. The ten drought prone districts are Nuapara, Kalahandi, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Kandhamal and Boudh.
- ii. The Monsoon rainfall is the main source of recharge which contributes 58.73% of the total annual ground water recharge. The overall contribution of rainfall (both monsoon and non-monsoon) is 67.44% of the total recharge. Rest 32.56% of the total annual ground water recharge is due to other sources like canal seepage, return flow from irrigation, recharge from tanks, ponds and water conservation structures.
- iii. That only 1.1% of the total wells monitored (out of 1077 wells) show fall in water by more than 4m between Pre-Monsoon, 2019 & Pre-Monsoon, 2022. These wells are scattered and do not follow any pattern and of local in nature. The fall



The Ecological rejuvenation of waterbodies initiative named Ama Pokhari has been launched in 2023 across all 15 ULBs of Odisha which plays pivot role in recharging ground water besides many other benefits to nature and community.

The Key principles of the initiative are:-

- a. Rejuvenation with minimal to nil use of concrete.
- b. Focus on water quality improvement and soil water interface.
- c. Removal of complete silt & excavation of soil up to 2 feet.
- d. Focus on nature based solutions (Ecologically) like phytoremediation for treatment of water.

Presently, DPRs for 407 water bodies have been sanctioned covering area about 1900 acres and 370 water bodies have been taken up for implementation on ground covering area of approx. 1800 acres. That out of these 150 waterbodies covering area over 500 acres are in final stages of completion.

The rejuvenated waterbodies improve the harvesting during surface run-off and helps in creating the new seepage paths along with improving the efficiency of existing ones. During dry seasons, water stored in the water bodies seeps into the ground and improves the ground water level.

iv. Construction of Rain Water harvesting Structures (RWHS)

‘Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain’ campaign launched on 22nd March, 2021, H&UD Deptt has taken a State wide campaign for creation of Rain Water harvesting Structures (RWHS) in Urban Odisha suitable to the climate conditions and sub soil strata. The RWHS has been constructed in parks, playgrounds, open spaces and in vacant lands inside the institutions available in all the ULBs as per technical feasibility and space availability.



The prime objectives of implementation of RWHS include:

- a. To reduce depletion of ground water levels by recharging the aquifers
- b. To enhance availability of ground water and utilize rain water for sustainable development
- c. To increase infiltration of rain water in the subsoil aquifers
- d. To increase ground water QUALITY BY DILUTION
- e. To improve ecology of the area by increase in vegetative cover

Over 35,000 numbers of RWHS covering both Rooftop and open areas have been constructed across 111 ULBs covering catchment area of around 3700 acre and annual recharge potential of around 6,000 million litres to the ground has been created.

v. Greywater Management

In 110 Urban local bodies under Greywater Management Initiative by Housing & Urban Development Department, Govt. of Odisha, waste stabilization pond, Maturation pond and constructed wet land in large scale at major outfall points have been taken up which will treat the waste water of cities and simultaneously will help in ground water recharge.

Presently, 70% (5.91 Lakhs) House Hold Survey & 94% (11 055) Lane Survey (Ward wise) has been completed & 5.97 MLD Greywater Management is achieved through completed intervention.

vi. Closure of production wells and construction of recharge ponds

Previously water supply to Puri town was sources through production wells resulting in ground water depletion. All such production wells have been closed



and switched over to surface sources in order to prevent depletion of ground water. Further, to replenish the depleted ground water, 6 nos. of recharge ponds have been constructed in April 2022 under AMRUT that are filled with surface water. The Surface water is being pumped to these recharge ponds in non-monsoon period to uphold the ground water level in Sweet Water Zone and also to prevent the Saline intrusion. The surface area of these 6 recharge ponds is 27,000 Sqm. (approx.) with maximum depth of 2.45 m.

vii. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)

Watershed Development Programme under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme “WOC-PMKSY 2.0” was started during the financial year 2021 -22. Under the programme, 53 Watershed clusters have been sanctioned having 2.93 lakh hectares of treatable areas with an outlay of Rs. 759.00 crore over a project period of 5 years (2021 -22 to 205-26). Till now, Rs. 480.31 crore has been utilized under the scheme by treating an area of 1.92 lakh hectare. Various watershed interventions have been taken up in these areas for augmentation of ground water recharge.

viii. Rejuvenation Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD)

World bank assisted science-based watershed development programme Rejuvenation Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD) have been implemented in 5 districts namely Deogarh, Sambalpur, Dhenkanal, Nayagarh and Koraput from 2022-23 for treatment of 1.12 lakh hectare area. Till now, Rs. 118.75 crore has been utilized and 47.500-hectare area have been treated with Soil and Water Conservation activities



particularly with field bunds. These interventions enhance ground water recharge in the project areas.

ix. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)

- JHOLAKUNDI: In order to facilitate ground water recharge and irrigation through solar pump sets, construction of 60 Nos. of Jholakundis (dugwell in low land) has been taken up in Koraput district during 2023-24. Rs. 0.92 Crore has been utilized under the scheme.
- WHS: For sustainable water management and recharge of ground water, improvement and renovation of Water Harvesting Structures in kanas and Satyabadi blocks of Puri district is taken up with a project outlay of 3.90 crore.
- Doha Model : It entails for excavation of pits along the drainage line (Nala) which enhances ground water recharge. It is in operation in Malkangin, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Keonjhar and Kalahandi with a total physical target of 200 nos. projects with financial target of Rs. 5.43 Crore.

x. Forest and Tree Cover in Odisha

The Forest Survey of India (FSI) is making assessment of the Forest Cover of different States and union Territories of the country by using remote sensing technology every second year. Based on the data obtained from the satellite imageries, the FSI in 2021 has assessed that the total forest cover of Odisha is 52,156 sq.km., which is about 33.50% of the geographical area of the state as compared to the national coverage of 21.71%. there has been an increase of 537 sq.km. (53,700 Ha) of forest cover in the State in comparison to the previous assessment made by FSI report 2019. Similarly, the tree cover has been assessed at 5,004 sq. km. with an increase of 356 sq.km. over the 2019 FSI Report. The mangrove Cover of the State as per the 2021 FSI Report is 259 sq. km. Odisha



has recorded an increase of 8 sq. km. over the year 2019 report, which is the highest increase in the country. This has been possible due to the extensive plantation programmes taken up in the state followed by active protection measures provided by more than 16000 Vana Surakshya Samities (VSS).

xi. Annual Plantation Activities taken up in the State of Odisha

The Government. of Odisha in Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department are implementing afforestation activities year by year both in Forest Land & Non-Forest Land to increase the Forest Cover as well as Tree Cover under different plantation schemes such as Increasing Green Cover in the State (IGC), Green Mahanadi Mission (GMM), State CAMPA, National Mission for Green India (GIM), MGNREGS, CSR through OMC Ltd., National Bamboo Mission (NBM), OMBADC, OFSDP, DMF etc.

The year wise plantation activities achieved for last 5 years & target for plantation to be taken up during 2024-25 in respect of all Plantation schemes are furnished below:

Plantation/afforestation activities taken up during last five years under different plantation schemes and target for next year								
Year	AR in ha.	ANR		Total in ha	Avenue in RKM	UTP in lakh of seedlings	Seedlings planted in lakh	Seedling distributed in lakh
		With gap in ha	Without Gap in ha.					
2019- 20	13055.18	53303.12	71698.00	140056.30	3588.00	7.84	339.26	212.48
2020- 21	12486.37	94837.10	0	107323.50	4164.70	3.78	392.47	465.77
2021- 22	11225.30	99143.00	0	110368.30	4616.60	0.11	382.91	230.46
2022- 23	11856.30	76342.67	0	88197.97	4069.30	6.87	351.59	211.74
2023- 24	5790.46	37512.61	0	4330.07	3068.87	4.06	247.19	396.13

2024-25	5028.93	32017.99	73.96	37120.88	2756.60	5.00	216.62	280.15
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xii. Soil Moisture & Conservation (SMC) Works

Soil, Moisture & Conservation (SMC) works are being taken up under State CAMPA, OMBADC and MGNREGS under the control of Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department to check the water run-off, preservation/ recharge the ground water, prevent soil erosion along the plantation activities and in different blocks.

Under SMC, different components like staggered trenches, percolation pits, earthen bunds, LBDC (Loose Bolder Check Dam), Check Dam, Contour bunds etc. have been constructed depending on the site requirements.

The year wise area covered under SMC work during last 4 years is furnished below:

Year	Scheme			Total
	CAMPA	OMBADC	MGNREGS	
2020-21	6650	5191.82	11732	23573.82
2021-22	7115	9702.91	3415	20232.91
2022-23	23696.18	17434.74	2874	44004.92
2023-24	14876.30	7419.99	1835	24131.29
Total	52337.48	39749.46	19856	111942.94

xiii. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

Interventions such as Farm ponds, Dug wells, Plantations and Land Development are taken up through MGNREGA under the control of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Department. All these measures/ projects facilitate in enhancing ground water recharge in the periphery of the project areas. Rs. 530.00 crore has been utilized under MGNREGA during 2023-24. Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department,

Govt. of Odisha has been actively involved in groundwater recharge initiatives under MNREGS. These activities include the rejuvenation of ponds, digging of farm ponds, construction of water harvesting structures and check dams through MNREGS program. Around 3 lakhs recharge pits have been created near tubewells as on date.

That Specially under the MNREGS program, the following have been achieved so far.

- 48,727 Water Conservation & Watershed projects 24856 Traditional Water Bodies projects.
- 6, 15,101 Individual Assets (such as Farm Ponds, Dug Wells, Housing, Livestock Shelters etc.)
- 63,47 4 Afforestation & Plantation projects

xiv. Green-Ag Program:

Many soil and water conservation measures like field bunding, dug out ponds, Plantations, Crop diversions along with Training and capacity building program for the beneficiaries are taken up in the Similipal biosphere areas of Mayurbhanj district. In-situ water conservation practices with emphasis on increasing of ground water recharge in one of the major objectives of the Green-Ag project which is being implemented by Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Department, Government of Odisha.

xv. Object Mineral Bearing Area Development Corporation (OMBADC)

Different soil and water conservation activities are being implemented for ground water recharge through Watershed Development Projects and Water Harvesting Structures in the mining affected villages of the State. The scheme is implemented in Jajpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts. An amount of Rs. 120.84 crore is the total outlay of the projects from 2019-20 to 2024-25.

xvi. District Mineral Foundation (DMF):



DMF is being implemented in Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Koraput and Rayagada districts to create irrigation potential and livelihood improvement in the mining affected villages. Various interventions like construction of Check dams, Water harvesting structures, Watershed projects, plantations etc. are taken up under this program. All these activities facilitate in enhancing of ground water recharge.

xvii. Agricultural Sector

- Saline Areas have been identified and no activities on Borewell and Shallow tube wells are being taken up in the saline belt.
 - Micro River Lift Projects are being taken up in the saline areas as well as in water deficit areas. Micro Irrigation (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation systems) are promoted in these projects.
 - Schemes promoting low duty crops such as Crop Diversification Programme (Area covered 29604 ha in 22-23 & 127919 ha in 23-24), Odisha Millets Mission (Area covered 79556.54 ha in 22-23 & 143643.03 ha in 23-24), NFSM-Pulse (Area covered 7534 ha in 22-23 & 6300 ha in 23-24), Rice Fallow Management (Area covered 72000 ha in 22-23 & 389000 ha in 23-24) are being promoted in selected districts of the State of Odisha.
- Direct Seeded Rice programme is also being implemented in selected districts to minimize the water requirement of Rice cultivation.

xviii. Horticulture Sector

- It has been programmed to take up massive Plantation under of 25000 Ha under MGNREGS during 24-25.
- It has been programmed for Micro Irrigation under PDMC 2024-25 at subsidized rate.

- Drip - 10000 Hectare, Sprinkler - 61735 Hectare. Total area of 71735 Hectare is to be covered with financial outlay (CS+SS) of Rs. 12667 Lakh.
- There is a provision of 1000 Hectare mulching under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH/NHM) programme in the Annual Action Plan for 2024-25.

xix. Awareness Programme(IEC activities)

Awareness Programme(IEC activities) created mass awareness about the Ground water Management including its periodic monitoring TV-Radio related publicity and preparation of associated manuscripts/audio-visuals was done by the Directorate, Ground Water Development(the GWD). Mass awareness Programmes on the following themes taken up by the GWD during scheme implementation are,

- Importance of Ground Water,
- Water Conservation and Roof-top Rainwater Harvesting,
- Re-use of defunct Borewell/Tubewell,
- Watershed Development, e. Intensive afforestation.

The GWD took up the above awareness programmes in public through various modes such as: Distribution of leaflets/handouts/ pamphlets, fixing hoardings, publicity through print and electronic media i.e., newspaper advertisements, TV spots etc.,

Conducting awareness workshops/ seminars in schools & educational institutions, Street

plays.

The State recognizes the importance of the situation and acknowledge the need for urgent action to mitigate the issue in the State of Odisha. We are committed



1225
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to cooperating fully with the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal and other relevant authorities to address the issue comprehensively.

THROUGH

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PLACE: New Delhi
DATE: 24.07.2024

VERIFICATION:

Verified at New Delhi on this 24th day of July, 2024 that the contents of the Response Affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief, no part of it is false and nothing material has been concealed therefrom.

Anu Garg
DEPONENT

Additional Chief Secy. to Govt.
Dept. of Water Resources

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The deponent Anu Garg,
S/o, D/o Mr. Anu Garg, who is being
identified by Advocate A. K. Pradhan
appears before me this day of 24.7.2024
at 11 AM/PM and solemnly affirm
that the facts stated above are true to
his/her knowledge

A. K. Pradhan
Notary
24.7.2024