

# **MOS JAL SHAKTI SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA ADDRESSES BRICS INTERNATIONAL FORUM WEBINAR, HIGHLIGHTS GRAVITY OF WATER CRISIS BEING FACED BY THE WORLD TODAY**

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

The Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Rattan Lal Kataria, speaking at a webinar organized by BRICS International Forum, a civil organization, highlighted the role of BRICS Nation in resolving common problems like lack of access to safe drinking water. Shri Kataria cited example of Cape Town, South Africa, which became the first major city to have run out of water in the year 2017-18, to highlight the gravity of water crisis being faced in the world today. He mentioned about Brazil where around 3 million population still lack access to safe drinking water. Russia on the other hand has 1/4th of the world's fresh surface and ground water resources and provides 248 lpcd water to its residents for domestic use.

Shri Kataria added that the ongoing pandemic has exacerbated the existential global crisis like hunger poverty and water scarcity. He Emphasized upon learning from each other's valuable experience in handling the water crisis as 2.2 billion people across the globe still struggle to have access to safe drinking water (WHO). He termed providing safe drinking water to people as an inescapable duty of any Government and also a Human Right as enshrined in UNGA resolution 64/292.

Shri Kataria informed the esteemed dignitaries that realizing the true importance of providing access to assured and safe drinking water to each rural household, Government of India, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, launched an ambitious Scheme to cover all rural households with piped water supply by the year 2024. In August 2019, India launched Jal Jeevan Mission (Water is life) Scheme with a total outlay of Rs 3.60 lakh Crore that is around 48 billion US\$.

A Scheme of this scale is unprecedented in the history of this Nation and probably in the world. Shri Kataria informed that in a short span of 1 and a half years, India has provided over 40 million piped water connections to rural households. At this pace, it is expected to meet the ambitious target of covering all rural households well within the time limit.





The MoS Jal Shakti added that the outcome of Jal Jeevan Mission cannot be limited to providing piped water connections to households as it is ushering a Social revolution as each and every household - irrespective of caste, color, creed or religion is getting water at 55 lpcd - following an inclusive approach. It is reducing the drudgery of women who used to travel long distances to get water for their families. In fact, village level committees have been constituted for making plans for augmenting water supply for their respective villages. 50% participation has been ensured for women in such committees. This step shall empower women to take important decisions linked with water management.

The Mission includes a huge investment in water network infrastructure like pipes, taps, water pumps, storage tanks etc. it shall create a huge demand for skilled/semi-skilled workforce like pipe fitters, plumbers, electricians, pump operators etc. Therefore, the Mission includes a component of skill training for the rural youth so that they can earn their living.

Terming JJM as a success story, Shri Kataria mentioned that India is ready to share its experience with other developing Nations. He also called upon the BRICS Nations for sharing the innovative and best practices being followed in water sector both at the Government level as well as amongst the civil organizations. This shall sensitize people towards judicious use of water and to develop efficient water management practices. In the end, he termed BRICS as an association of emerging economies, with considerable regional influence, and built upon the principles of equality, trust, mutual understanding.

The webinar was attended by Prof Prince William Mishiki, Hon'ble Minister of DR Congo, Yulia Berg Co- Founder of The International Business Acceleration Centre, Russia, Purnima Anand President, BRICS International Forum President, International Federation For Indo-Russian Youth Club, Volker Tschapke Consultant for Foreign Trade Federal Association for Economic Development and Foreign Trade Global Economic Trade (Germany) amongst others. It is informed that currently the fifteenth-year anniversary of BRICS missions is being celebrated. India is the chair country of the 13th conference in the BRICS summit and is committed to the common goals uniting the BRICS countries.

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