

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-III]

Topic: Jal Shakti Ministry

The Ministry of Jal Shakti was established in May 2019 under Government of India. Two ministries namely the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, as well as the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, were merged together to form the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The Jal Shakti Ministry focuses on issues such as international and inter-state water disputes, cleaning of the Ganga, its tributaries and sub-tributaries and also aims in providing clean drinking water. The formation of this ministry targets towards the mounting water challenges faced by India over the past few decades.

The highlights of this ministry are discussed in the table below:

Ministry of Jal Shakti	
Date of formation	May 2019
Governing Ministers	Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Cabinet Minister and Rattan Lal Kataria, Minister of State
Jurisdiction	Republic of India

National Water Mission

The National Water Mission was launched by PM Narendra Modi under the National Action Plan for Climate Change to tackle the threats of global warming. The National Water Mission emphasizes on conservation of water and minimizing the wastage. It also ensures the equitable distribution of water across and within the states through the development and management of integrated water resources.

The major goals of the National Water Mission are as follows:

- To reduce and study the impact of climate change on water resources and to provide comprehensive water database in the public domain.
- Promotion of citizen and state actions for water conservation, augmentation and preservation.

- To focus on the vulnerable areas including over-exploited areas and also to increase the water use efficiency by 20%.
- To promote the management of basin level integrated water resources.

Water Scarcity in India

India has 18% of the world's population which has access to only 4% of the usable water sources. Poor management of resources and lack of government attention has contributed as a major factor for water scarcity in India. As per NITI Aayog report released in June 2019, India is facing the worst-ever water crisis in history. Approximately 600 million people or roughly around 45 % of the population in India is facing high to severe water stress. As per the report, 21 Indian cities will run out of their main source of water i.e. groundwater by 2020. The report goes on to say that nearly 40 % of the population will have absolutely no access to drinking water by 2030 and 6 % of India's GDP will be lost by 2050 due to the water crisis.

What is Jal Shakti Abhiyan?

As per the promises made by the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Ministry of Jal Shakti was formed on May 2019 to reduce the issues related to water scarcity in India. Soon after the announcement of Ministry of Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat announced the commencement of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan on 1st July 2019. This was a campaign for water conservation and water security which continued from 1st July 2019 to 15th September 2019. This campaign mainly focused on the water-stressed districts. As per Shri Parameswaran Iyer, Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), the Jal Shakti Abhiyan is a collaborative campaign of various Ministries under the Government of India and the State Governments being coordinated by the DDWS. The Jal Shakti Abhiyan mainly focuses upon conservation of water in 1592 water-stressed blocks in 256 districts. It also ensures five important water conservation interventions:

- rainwater harvesting
- renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks
- Reuse bore well recharge structures
- Watershed development
- Intensive afforestation.

The Jal Shakti Abhiyan was also established to develop various Water Conservation Plans for Blocks and Districts, to promote efficient water use for irrigation and selection of better crops through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

