

40% water shortage by 2030: UN report

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New Delhi: The world is set to face a 40% per cent shortfall in water supplies by 2030 due to urbanisation, pressures of food production, population growth and the increasing demand from the manufacturing, domestic and energy sector, said the United Nations on Friday. Ahead of World Water Day on March 22, the UN released its World Water Report 2015 in New Delhi and stressed that the 'water crisis was one of governance and not of due to the lack of resource availability'. Even today, 748 million people do not have access to improved and safe source of drinking water and the worst affected are the poor, the disadvantaged and women.

What about India?

In India, the report analysed, the groundwater or tube well revolution has largely contributed to relieving poverty, but the increase in demand for irrigation has also caused severe groundwater stress in areas such as southern and eastern Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In fact, the total number of mechanized wells and tube wells rose from less than one million in 1960 to 19 million in 2000. Groundwater stress is also a larger South Asia problem the report said. India, China, Pakistan, Ne-

pal and Bangladesh alone account for half the world's total groundwater use, the report said.

What are future projections?

"By 2050, global water demand is projected to increase by 55%, mainly due to growing demands from manufacturing, thermal electricity generation and domestic use and the world will have to produce 60 percent more food and the global water demand for industry is predicted to increase by 400 per cent," said the report.

Is urbanisation to blame for the crisis?

Increasing urbanisation is causing specific and often highly localised pressures on freshwater resource availability, especially in drought-prone areas. More than 50% of people on the planet now live in cities, with 30% of all city dwellers residing in slums. Urban dwellers are projected to increase to a total of 6.3 billion by 2050. The growing population across urban and rural areas will need 70 per cent more energy and water is required to produce almost forms of it. The report recommends a host of measures to limit water insecurity.

Freshwater in the world

Access to renewable water sources (m³ per person, per year in 2013)

