

PROLOGUE

Water is an important input for proper crop growth. Especially under the arid and semi arid areas irrigation has an added importance. Though Major and Medium Irrigation projects provide irrigation to larger areas, yet they have a long gestation period, requiring heavy investments, apart from other limitations. On the other hand, Minor Irrigation Schemes have shorter gestation periods and also can be taken up with considerably low investments. Moreover, ground water schemes provide irrigation throughout the year and, are more dependable for sustaining agricultural production over the years.

Most of the minor irrigation projects are being executed and maintained by farmers. The irrigation projects including, those projects which were undertaken by the Government, while suffer from several problems of maintenance, they are also either underused or disused altogether. The actual position can be known properly only if the database of all such Minor Irrigation Projects is available.

Efforts have been made in the past by Government of India for building up such a database in the States and the Union Territories. The First Minor Irrigation Census was carried out with Reference Year 1986-87 and, the Census Report was published during November 1993. In order to update the database, the Second Census of Minor Irrigation projects was carried out under the "Rationalisation of Minor Irrigation Statistics Scheme" with Reference Year 1993-94. This census covers tremendous amount of data on Minor Irrigation Schemes, which can be used for further planning to strengthen the Irrigation Sector in general, and the Minor Irrigation Sector in particular.

The data collected in the Second Census cover all ground water and surface water Minor Irrigation Schemes of the country and the Census Report provides district-wise and scheme-wise information in respect of 21 States and 4 Union Territories except for the States of Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep. The Report also brings out the data on Minor Irrigation Projects that are out of use. Naturally, this should come as a concern to all Planners and Administrators. I hope the data given in this Report would be of immense help to all those who are concerned with the development of the Minor Irrigation Sector.



(PALAT MOHANDAS)
Additional Secretary
Ministry of Water Resources
Government of India

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