

# Need more funds for Jal Jeevan Mission, BSY tells Centre

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BENGLAURU, DHNS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa told Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Wednesday that the Centre should hike its fund allocation for Karnataka to meet the target of providing tap water connection to 15 lakh households this year.

Under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Karnataka wants to

provide functional tap connection to 15 lakh families at a cost of Rs 2,300 crore, of which Rs 1,150 crore will come from the Centre and state governments.

"Rs 2,300 crore will not be sufficient to fulfill the target of 15 lakh household connections. This target will be achieved by using the JJM funds, the 15th Finance Commission funds and the state-funded rural water supply scheme. However, I

urge the Government of India to increase our allocation from the current Rs 1,150 crore," Yediyurappa told Shekhawat during a video conference.

Karnataka has 88 lakh rural households, Yediyurappa said, of which 25 lakh have tap water connections. Under JJM, Karnataka needs to cover the other 63 lakh rural families in phases.

Referring to Karnataka as a "drought-affected" and "wa-

ter-starved" state, Yediyurappa said most of the rural water schemes depended on ground water.

"The ground water sources are very unreliable," he said. "In many districts, the depth of the borewells has gone up to 1,000-1,400 feet. In such districts, providing functional household connection with 55 litres per capita per day (LPCD) by depending entirely on bore-

wells is difficult," he pointed out.

That is why Karnataka has implemented 474 multi-village schemes (MVS) by drawing water from rivers and reservoirs, serving 6,660 villages and 1.23 crore persons. "MVS are very costly. The Government of India, while funding JJM, must look at the actual cost of providing water through MVS based on our schedule of rates," Yediyurappa said.

## 659 villages face water shortage

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa directed officials from the Rural Development & Panchayat Raj department to ensure rural areas do not suffer from drinking water shortage. There are 659 villages in 14 districts facing drinking

water shortage which is being addressed through 389 tankers and 706 private borewells, officials informed the CM. Officials were also asked to ensure migrants returning to villages get jobs under MGNREGA.