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Interface

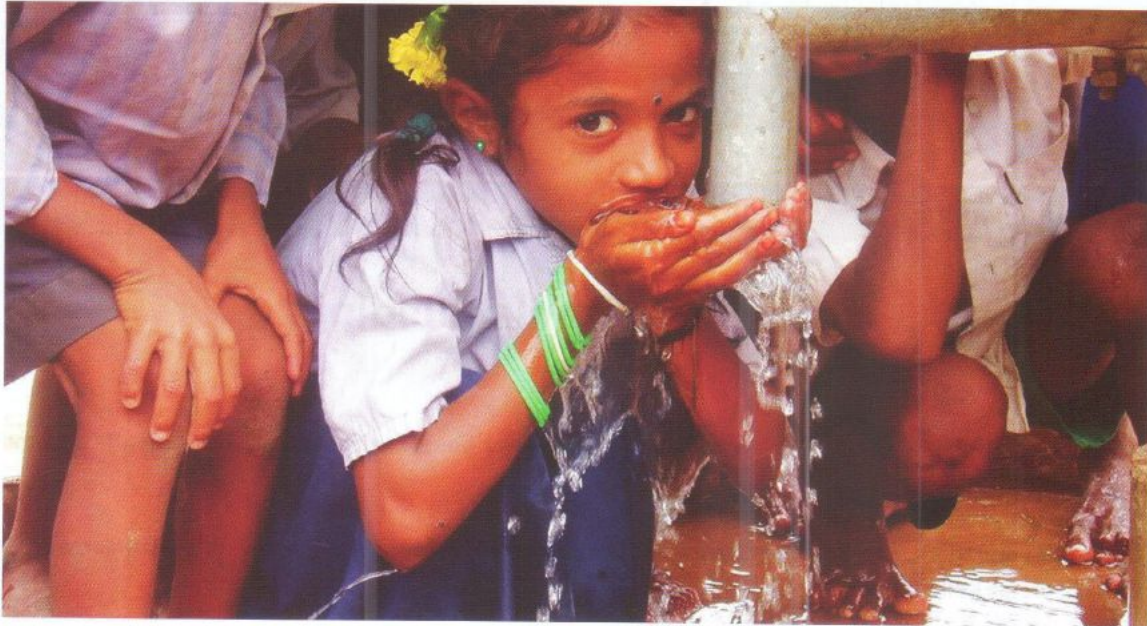
Sewage discharge norms are set, but there is no quality monitoring

Please throw some light on the drinking water supply analysis both in rural and urban parts of India.

It is very difficult to quantify the supply analysis in rural and urban parts of India. It is obvious that in terms of quantity, the demand for fresh water is not being met. With respect to quality, some rural areas may not get treated water while it may be available in some urban areas to some extent. To the best of my knowledge, so far there has been no study published on the portability of water in terms of the chemical and microbiological content. Improper monitoring capabilities and lack of regulations for drinking water supply results in diseases caused by drinking contaminated water in India.

Budget allocation for NRDWP (National Rural Drinking Water Programme) has been increased from ₹8,500 crore in 2011-12 to ₹11,000 crore in 2013-14. But good quality water supply is lacking in many parts of Rural India. Comment.

This is mainly because of the absence of proper regulations for drinking water supply in India. In rural areas, there is a lack of proper facilities to test the water for various toxic chemicals and microbes which affect the quality of drinking water. Infrastructure development in terms of capacity building and equipment installations is highly recommended to overcome this problem. It is important that the water quality reports



There are no proper facilities to test water for various toxic chemicals and microbes

with regard to chemical and microbiological quality are made available to the public.

Most towns and cities have drinking water treatment units managed by municipalities and local authorities. Therefore there is lack of emphasis of certifying the quality of water being provided to citizens. Comment.

There are drinking water treatment plants installed in different parts of cities and towns. But sufficient infrastructure has not been developed for monitoring the quality of water. Audits from third party bodies are crucial for the treatment and supply of drinking water. The public should be made aware of the quality of water supplied to them through regular reports. If there is any contamination found in the supplied water, corrective and preventive measures should be put into action immediately.

People across India are increasingly putting more emphasis on water quality. Is this leading to more demands for water certification services?

Water quality depends on the contaminants dissolved in the water which are of both geological origin and also man-made. The contamination level varies across regions. The microbiological contamination results from unhygienic conditions surrounding the source water. Other sources of contamination could be water treatment chemicals like chlorine, sand and alum and poor quality water supply system components like pipes, valves, gaskets and plumbing items. Currently, there are no regulations in India to govern the safety aspects of water treatment chemicals and water supply system components.

In developed countries, there are standards available for the certification of chemicals and components used in drinking water applications. There are strict regulations and standards that manufacturers have to adhere to. Consumers are also aware of the

different safety aspects so that the demand for potable water is driven by them. There are third party certifications involved to ensure that the quality of potable water is not compromised. India needs to take lessons from these developed countries to make the demand for safe drinking water heard by the various stakeholders.

Are you satisfied with the sewage discharge norms that are set?

Sewage discharge norms are set but frequent monitoring of the quality is lacking. There is a need to collect and treat the sewage and make sure it meets the requirement for disposal so that the contamination of fresh water can be avoided. Also, there is a need to reuse water to fight shortage. There are reliable technologies available for the treatment of sewage which can be adopted.

What is UL India's long term business strategy in the water sector? Going forward does the company intend to offer any new services in this segment?

UL India has a world class state-of-the-art laboratory in Bangalore. This lab has the facility to test drinking water across 173 parameters. The primary focus of this laboratory is to test and certify the water treatment chemicals and water supply system components for safe drinking water applications. This laboratory also supports the manufacturers of domestic water purifiers in testing the efficiency of the water purifier for microbiological (bacteria, virus & cyst) contamination removal efficiency as per International Standards. UL is also equipped to coordinate with the Government for monitoring of contaminants in drinking water supply; mainly for regulated metals & organic contaminants like chlorination by-products. UL's water test facility also has the capability to evaluate different technologies and validate the manufacturer's claims. Going ahead, UL in India intends to provide services for water audits, which is a very important aspect of water conservation. ▲