



Punjab Water Regulation & Development Authority

(A Statutory Authority established under the Punjab Water Resources (Management and Regulation) Act, 2020)

World Water Day



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Location: Sangrur, Punjab

The event was presided by Dr Surinder Singh Kukal, Member of the Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority, Chandigarh. He detailed about the alarming rate of groundwater depletion in district Sangrur, averaging 2 to 2.5 feet per year. He advocated on awareness in water-saving at various domestic practices and contamination of water reserves due to urban and rural sewage and industrial wastes. He stressed that water saving can be achieved by alternate wetting and drying (AWD) method in paddy.

Sh. Rajesh Vashisht, Technical Advisor, Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority, highlighted the history of World Water Day, emphasizing its inception in the United Nations in 1992 and subsequent celebrations since 1993. He detailed about the historic and present

scenario of groundwater in Punjab. The average stage of groundwater in Punjab is 164.11 per cent. At present 117 blocks are categorised as overexploited. He emphasized that # 60 blocks with stage of groundwater extraction above 200 per cent need to be taken up on priority for water conservation, especially in agriculture.

Dr. Ajmer Singh Dhatt, Director of Research at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, underscored the pivotal role of water resources in human civilization and agriculture. Dr Dhatt cautioned against the indiscriminate use of water, highlighting its potential adverse impacts on the environment and agriculture. He emphasized the urgent need for sustainable practices to mitigate groundwater depletion, particularly in paddy cultivation.

Dr. Ajmer Singh Brar, in Charge of the Centre for Water Technology and Management at PAU Ludhiana, discussed the potential of the Internet of Things (IoT) in irrigation water conservation. He also cautioned against cultivating summer maize to mitigate groundwater depletion.

Dr. Mandeep Singh, Associate Director (Training) at KVK Sangrur, highlighted the critical situation regarding groundwater levels of the district's agricultural blocks falling into the 'dark zone'. He urged farmers to transition to shorter and medium-duration paddy varieties to safeguard groundwater resources.

Dr. Amarjeet Singh, Block Agriculture Officer, urged farmers to embrace water-saving technologies endorsed by Punjab Agricultural University to improve state agriculture while sharing farmer welfare schemes implemented by their department.

The event also saw the felicitation of progressive farmers for their contributions to water-saving practices in agriculture. Harwinder Singh Bhadalwad, Bal Krishan Bhulan, Nirmal Singh Longowal, Kuldeep Sharma Banarsi and Karamjit Kaur Pedhni Kalan were honoured for indulging in water saving practices in agriculture. An impressive exhibition by KVK and Self-Help Groups further enriched the event.

Dr. Sukhpreet Singh, Agronomist at CWTM, PAU Ludhiana, facilitated a visit to demonstration plots showcasing water quantification pilot projects. Several distinguished personalities, including Dr Ravinder Kaur, Dr Sunil Kumar, Dr Rukinder Preet Singh Dhaliwal, Dr Vitasta, Dr Ujjal Mal, Sh. Tanul Mohod and Sh. Anil Kumar graced the occasion with their presence.