

## Global Water Sustainability and Peace in Context to India: World Water Day 2024

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### Abstract

The article unveils scenario analysis of water in context to origin of World Water Day. 22<sup>nd</sup> March is acknowledged as World Water Day every year to raise awareness and inspire individuals to engage in the sustainable management of freshwater resources. This year in 2024, “Water for Peace” is the theme to celebrate World Water Day. Initiatives taken in India like “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” is a first river link project for India, “Har Ghar Nal ka Jal” in Bihar to access safe potable water and “Per Drop More Crop” for irrigation are the major steps to sustain the water on Earth’s surface.

**Keywords:** Arsenic, Bihar, Water-Contamination, KVK, Water.

### Introduction:

(May the Waters, the mothers, purify  
us—*Taittiriya Samhita I. 2. 1*)

Water has always been an important concern from the dawn of civilization (Kumar *et al.*, 2020). 22<sup>nd</sup> March of every year is honoured as World Water Day to emphasize the significance of freshwater and promote the sustainable handling of freshwater reserves. The occasion encourages proactive measures to address the worldwide water crisis, aligning with the objective of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: secures water and sanitation accessibility for everyone by 2030.

### History of World Water Day

In 1992, United Nations has established World Water Day with the concept

originating during United Nations Conference on Environmental Development held in Rio de Janerio. The resolution to officially recognize World Water Day was first endorsed by the General Assembly of United Nation on December 22, 1992. Since then, March 22<sup>nd</sup> has been designated as World Water Day and has been celebrated Globally. The inaugural observance of World Water Day took place in 1993 (Dhyani, 2023; Gupta, 2024).

### State of Jala

1. Ambha – Presence of water at the Sun’s upper sphere.
2. Marichi – Presence of water between the Earth and Sun.
3. Mara – Presence of water on the earth including river, sea, ponds and other

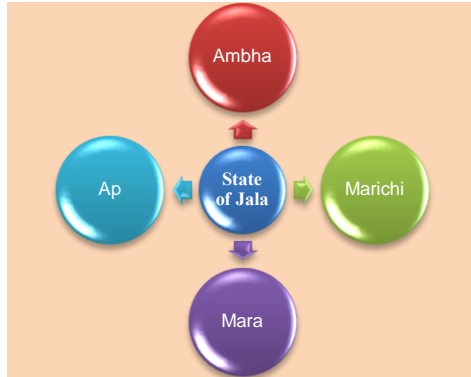
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resources etc.

4. Ap – Presence of water below the earth.



### World Water Day Theme 2024

During this present year, the theme will revolve around “Water for Peace”, emphasizing the pivotal significance of water in ensuring global stability and prosperity. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) coordinate current year’s Task Force of UN-Water members and partners. The Vedas regard water as divine, believing it to be a source of peace, wealth, happiness, longevity and good health.

Every year, a new issue is covered as focus of the mass awareness (Table 1), which provides policy recommendation to those who make decisions through optimal practices and comprehensive analysis.

### World Water Day in India

“Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” campaign and “Ken-Betwa Link Project” were

launched by the Ministry of Jal-Shakti and the Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh by signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2021. India’s inaugural river-link project with the objective of transferring water from regions with a surplus to arid regions by interlinking rivers.

**Table1: World Water Day themes of the last 15 years (2010-2024)**

World Water Day Themes	Year
Water for Peace	2024
Accelerating the change to solve the water and sanitation crisis	2023
Groundwater, Making the Invisible Visible	2022
Valuing Water	2021
Water and Climate Change	2020
Leaving No One Behind	2019
Nature for Water	2018
Why Waste Water?	2017
Better Water, Better Jobs	2016
Water and Sustainable Development	2015
Water and Energy	2014
International Year of Water Cooperation	2013
Water and Food Security	2012
Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge	2011
Clean Water for a Healthy World	2010

### Water Contamination in India

Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were the initial Indian states to record cases of exposure to arsenic in groundwater. As estimate states that India comprises 16 percent of the worldwide populace, however, just 4 percent of freshwater resources globally.

### **Water Contamination in context to Bihar**

The Bhojpur district's Semaria Ojhapatti village was the first place in Bihar where elevated groundwater's arsenic content and corresponding health issues came to light. Till now, eighteen districts of Bihar have reported groundwater poisoning with arsenic, endangering over 10 million residents in the state. They are facing several health risks as a result of arsenic contamination in groundwater.

According to Bihar's 16<sup>th</sup> Economic Survey Report (2021-22), a significant health risk is presented by the elevated levels of iron, arsenic and fluoride in rural area's groundwater across 31 districts out of 38 districts. A total of 30,0272 rural wards are affected by chemical contamination in groundwater. Among these wards, arsenic contamination notably impacted in 4,742 rural wards of 14 districts alongside Ganga (Bihar Economic Survey, 2022; The Economic Times, 2022).

### **Intervention of Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Melas**

Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Melas are organized to promote the judicious use of water for irrigation, emphasizing the "Per Drop More Crop" philosophy. Additionally, these initiatives aim to guide farmers in choosing crops that actively contribute to water conservation.

### **Initiative taken by Bihar Government**

➔ In September 2016, Bihar government initiated "Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal Yojan" to ensure access to safe drinking water for residents in rural areas. So far, 83,24,502 households have been provided with Functional Household with Tap Connection (FHTC) under this scheme (Bihar Economic Survey, 2023-24).

➔ National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratory (NABL) has been established to monitor and surveillance water-quality in piped-water supply scheme.

### **Conclusion**

One of the most important problems that societies are dealing with in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is water quality, posing risks to human health, restricts food production, diminishing ecosystem vitality and hinders economic development. The primary aim to of World Water Day is to raise awareness and inspire individuals to engage in the sustainable management of freshwater resources. It

encourages learning about critical water-related issues such as water pollution, scarcity, insufficient access to water, sanitation inadequacies and prompting people to take meaningful actions to enact positive change.

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