

# Sangam Vihar residents face water shortage as borewells are sealed

Ritam Halder

ritam.halder@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The National Green Tribunal in an order last year stressed on the need to seal borewells and asked the authorities to ensure that there is no illegal extraction of groundwater in any manner whatsoever.

The reality on the ground, however, hasn't changed much.

For residents of Sangam Vihar, it has meant increase in water scarcity. Vinay Gupta, a resident of Shani Bazar, says it has added to his woes. "Many borewells in our locality have been sealed. It means less water for people like us. Even though the water wasn't of very good quality, it used to take care of our needs. Now we have to buy water from private tankers," Gupta said.

The Economic Survey of Delhi 2014-15 states that Delhi Jal Board has 3,961 functional tube wells and 14 ranney wells.

Residents, however, say that most of these borewells are not functional. Ashok Bhasin, president of the North Delhi RWA Federation, says many tube wells in various parts of the city have gone dry.

"The groundwater level has been depleted and thereby many hand pumps have gone dry. Every time it rains, the rain water seeps in and some gases are emitted. But none of these hand pumps have been sealed," Bhasin said.

The Delhi Jal Board says it has been making sure no contaminated groundwater reaches people of Delhi.



■ Ashok Bhasin, president of RWA federation in North Delhi, shows the dilapidated condition of the water harvesting pit near Malka Ganj in North Delhi. RAJ K RAJ/HT PH

DJB CEO SS Yadav said, "In Delhi, extraction of groundwater has been regulated and prior permission of district advisory committees is necessary for the same. This has reduced over-exploitation of groundwater."

According to him, in some parts of Delhi, groundwater is not fit for use and it requires desalination.

"Areas where there is no piped water supply, people tend to draw groundwater from hand pumps from upper shallow aquifers. The DJB carries out survey and such hand pumps are painted red,

**DELHI JAL BOARD SAYS IT HAS BEEN MAKING SURE NO CONTAMINATED GROUNDWATER REACHES THE PEOPLE OF THE CAPITAL CITY**

where water is not found to be fit and public is advised not to use their water. DJB installs tube wells at those places where groundwater is fit for drinking purpose," Yadav said.