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BIS Draft Standard for Drinking Water

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Why in News

Recently, the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has prepared a draft **standard for the supply system of piped drinking water**.

The draft has been titled as **‘Drinking water supply quality management system – requirements for piped drinking water supply service’**.

Key Points

- **Draft Standard:**

- It outlines the **process of water supply**, from raw water sources to household taps.
- The draft standard is expected to make the process of piped **water supply more uniform, especially in rural and underdeveloped areas** of the country where the system runs on various government orders and circulars.
- The draft has been developed keeping in view the **Centre’s Jal Jeevan Mission**.

The **Jal Jeevan Mission aims** for providing safe and adequate drinking water to **all rural households by 2024** through tap connections.

- It has been prepared by the **BIS’s Public Drinking Water Supply Services Sectional Committee**.

- **Features of the Draft:**

- It outlines the **requirements for a water supplier or a water utility** on how they should establish, operate, maintain and improve their piped drinking water supply service.
- **Guidelines for top management of the water supplier/utility** which includes:
 - Accountability and customer focus.
 - Establishing a quality policy for their service.
 - Monitoring the quality of water released to people.
 - Conducting a water audit.
- It sets the **Indian Standard (IS) 10500** for the treated water for drinking. The IS 10500 outlines the **acceptable limit of heavy metals** such as arsenic, **pH value** of water, **turbidity**, **the total dissolved solids** in it, and the **colour and odour**.
- Adoption of the concept of **District Metering Area (DMA)** where possible. DMA is a concept for **controlling leakages in the water network**, which is essentially divided into a number of sectors, called the DMAs, and where flow meters are installed to detect leaks.
- The water supplier may provide **bulk water meters** in the water distribution system to ensure water audit, however the provisions should be made for domestic meters also.

The water supplier shall ensure that the consumers do not have direct access to the meters to avoid possible tampering of the meters.
- The draft also mentions that **water should be sampled at the treatment plant every four hours** against quality parameters.

- **Background:**

- Quality of drinking water became a contentious issue in November 2019 when a BIS report, released by Union Government, found **Delhi's tap water quality as the worst among 21 metros** and state capitals in the country.
- The report had also found that tap water in 13 state capitals, including Bhopal, Chandigarh, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Chennai, did not comply with BIS standards.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- Under this the Union government envisages **to provide water supply to every household by 2024**.
- The Mission is based on **various water conservation efforts** like point recharge, desilting of minor irrigation tanks, use of greywater for agriculture and source sustainability.
- The Mission is based on a **community approach to water** and includes extensive Information, Education and Communication as a key component of the mission.

- The Mission will **converge with other Central and State Government Schemes** to achieve its objectives of sustainable water supply management across the country.
- The **Jal Shakti Ministry** is the nodal ministry for the implementation of the mission.

Source: IE