

INTEGRATED APPROACH NEED OF THE HOUR

Top priority is fresh water conservation by stopping seepage and increasing storage through watershed development and rainwater harvesting. By recycling industrial effluent and domestic sewage we can significantly reduce use of fresh water, and it should be made mandatory for all new projects. Good water management is so urgent, critical and gigantic a task, it needs collaborative efforts between public, private and voluntary sectors and particularly community participation, says Rajesh Sharma, managing director of Ion Exchange (India) Ltd. Read on....

HOW DO YOU SEE THE ROLE OF WATER TREATMENT INDUSTRY?

The water treatment industry must focus on how to make more fresh water available, by promoting concepts of rainwater harvesting and watershed development and at the same time, take more initiatives in developing cost-effective technologies for conservation of water through its recycling. In other words, a total water management approach is needed and technologies must also increasingly

utilise less or no chemicals and less energy.

CAN AN INTEGRATED APPROACH ALSO HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS DETERIORATING SO RAPIDLY?

Definitely. Although water is perhaps the resource most under pressure, increasing population, industrialisation, pollution and global warming will severely impact every aspect of the environment. There is an urgent need for investment in infrastructure for not just water and sanitation, but also solid and hazardous waste management, renewable energy and air protection, across the country.

Over 70 per cent of people in India - 90 per cent in rural areas - have no access to a toilet, and only 5-7% of the country's sewage is treated. Annual solid waste generated in Indian cities is 95 million tonnes and expected to touch 150 million tonnes in a few years. This must be safely disposed or recycled or used to generate energy. An integrated approach is the only way to meet the challenges of water security, cleaner environment and green energy.

