News: A survey regarding water situation in Himalayan regions was recently published in the latest edition of the journal Water Policy.

About the survey

The researchers surveyed 13 towns across Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan to understand the challenges of the urban denizens of these regions.

Key findings of the survey

- Eight towns in the Himalayan region of Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan were nearly 20%-70% deficient in their water supply.

- Unplanned urbanisation and climate change are the key factors responsible for the state of affairs, the study underlines.

- The places surveyed are extremely dependent on springs (ranging between 50% and 100%) for their water, and three-fourths were in urban areas. Under current trends, the demand-supply gap may double by 2050, the researchers warn.

- Communities were coping through short-term strategies such as groundwater extraction, which is proving to be unsustainable. A holistic water management approach that includes springshed management and planned adaptation is therefore paramount.

- Across the region, the encroachment and degradation of natural water bodies (springs, ponds, lakes, canals, and rivers) and the growing disappearance of traditional water systems (stone spouts, wells, and local...
water tanks) are evident.

- Although only 3% of the total Hindu Kush Himalayan population lives in larger cities and 8% in smaller towns, projections show that over 50% of the population will be living in cities by 2050, placing “tremendous stress” on water availability.

- **Rural areas** have typically garnered much of the attention in terms of development and issues surrounding urban environments have been “sidelined”.