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Title: Need to expedite completion of Pamba-Achankovil-Vaippar river linking project in Tamil Nadu-laid.

SHRI B. MANICKAM TAGORE (VIRUDHUNAGAR): I would like to state the issue relating to the present status of Pamba-Achankovil-Vaippar river linking project. Water scarcity has been a big concern in South Tamil Nadu and multiple researches done by Governmental and Environmental agencies have stated that canal linking and diversion of water from west flowing rivers from Western Ghats towards the Eastern slopes and arid regions of Tamil Nadu have huge potential to extend benefits to the people and farmers of the region. I would request the Jal Shakti Minister to inform the House on present projects undertaken by his ministry for river linking across western Ghats in South Tamil Nadu-Kerala region and areas they would benefit including timeline for completion of projects.

The project looks at diverting 634 cubic metres of water from Pamba and Achankovil rivers to Vaippar in Tamil Nadu through tunnels and dams. The aim is to irrigate three districts in - Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi and Virudhunagar. It also looks at production of 500 MW electricity. Three dams at Punnamedu, Chittar Muzhi and Achankovil have also been proposed. Punnamedu and Chittar Muzhi reservoirs are interconnected with an 8-km tunnel. Water from Achankovil reservoir has to be pumped to Chittar Muzhi reservoir. A 9-km tunnel will be constructed through the Western Ghats. A 50-km-long canal has been proposed to bring water from the tunnel to Mekkara dam. Six mini

hydro power plants have been proposed in Achankovil, Punnamedu and in TN along the canal route.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to expedite the matter to do the needful at the earliest to solve the water problem in the state.