

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Regarding request for a Special Package for preparing and implementing River Action Plans for the rivers of Kerala

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN (CHALAKUDY): Mr. Chairman, Sir, once water-rich State of Kerala is now facing severe seasonal water shortage ranging from two to six months a year. With an annual utilisable water availability of about 48000 million cubic meters, the per capita water availability is only 1350 cubic meters per annum against a requirement of 1800 cubic meters.

In our State, 44 rivers contribute more than 80 per cent of our water needs. Decline of these river systems is the main reason for the water scarcity. The once perennial rivers have now become seasonal with a reduction of 60 to 100 per cent in natural summer flow. On top of this, due to climate crisis, we are now frequently facing huge flood threats.

Conserving and rejuvenating our river systems and managing them efficiently and equitably is the best possible step to ensure future water security for the state.

In this context, we have initiated an attempt to prepare a River Action Plan for Chalakudypuzha and Periyar, two of the main rivers in my constituency, with support from premier research institutes and various government departments and local self-governments and NGOs.

I humbly submit that the Union Government may provide a special package for the State of Kerala for preparing and implementing River Action Plans for our 44 river systems, aimed at rejuvenation and efficient management of these rivers. Thank you.