

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:490

ANSWERED ON:29.04.2002

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

A. VENKATESH NAIK;RAMSHETH THAKUR

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Water Policy silent on inter-state sharing" appearing in the Hindu dated April 2, 2002;
- (b) if so, the objectives of the new policy;
- (c) whether there is no guidelines in the new water policy for inter-State water sharing;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to solve the inter- State water disputes;
- (f) the steps taken by the Government for the development and management of water resources at National Level; and
- (g) the action plan formulated by the Union Government to support the States in the implementation of new policy?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) & (g) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (g) OF STARRED QUESTION No. 490 TO BE ANSWERED IN THE LOI SABHA ON 29.04.2002 REGARDING NATIONAL WATER POLICY

(a) to (d) & (g) Yes, Sir. Objectives of the National Water Policy is to achieve accelerated and equitable economic development of the country, through integrated and sustainable development and efficient use of country's water resources. The policy also aims at maintaining the quality of water resources and active involvement of all stakeholders in development and management of water resources in the country. The National Water Resources Council, while adopting the revised National Water Policy, 2002 in its 5th meeting held on 1st April 2002, decided to refer the "National Policy Guidelines for water allocation amongst the states" to the National Water Board for arriving at consensus on these guidelines. However, the requisite provision for the guidelines on inter-State water sharing in the National Water Policy, 2002 has been accepted by the Council and reads as : " 21.1 -The water sharing / distribution amongst the states should be guided by a national perspective with due regard to water resources availability and needs within the river basin. Necessary guidelines, including for water short states even outside the basin, need to be evolved for facilitating future agreements amongst the basin states."

The Chairman, National Water Resources Council has directed Ministry of Water Resources to prepare an Action Plan to facilitate the State Governments in implementation of the National Water Policy.

(e) Inter-State water issues are resolved by facilitating bilateral / multilateral negotiations among the basin States and reaching inter-state agreements, setting up of Boards and corporations for development of water resources in inter-state rivers or by arranging consensus in Zonal Councils. In the event no agreement is reached, the dispute is then referred to a Tribunal on a request from one of the party states under the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 for adjudication. In order to settle the disputes expeditiously, in a time bound manner, the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 has been amended recently.

(f) Water being a State subject, schemes are investigated, planned, funded and implemented by the State Governments out of their own resources and as per their own priorities. In order to facilitate the State Governments, Government of India has launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) since 1996-97. Under the Programme, financial assistance in form of central loan is being extended to State Governments to help them complete the ongoing irrigation projects in a time bound manner so that the

benefits could accrue at the earliest. Accordingly, the Central Loan Assistance (CLA) amounting to Rs. 8480 crore to the State Governments has been provided under AIBP upto end of 2001-2002. An outlay of Rs. 2800 crore has been provided for the year 2002-2003. Additional irrigation potential of over one million hectare upto the end of March, 2002 has been created under AIBP. Assistance is also being extended to State Governments under Command Area Development (CAD) Programme for bridging the gap between potential created and utilised. An expenditure of Rs. 764.15 crore was incurred during Ninth Five Year Plan under CAD programme and an outlay of Rs. 202 crore has been proposed for the year 2002- 2003. Government of India is also promoting rain water harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, artificial recharge of ground water and roof-top rain water harvesting under the sector reform project of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme under the Ministry of Rural Development, for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and other implementing agencies. Central Ground Water Board has also taken up a Central Sector Scheme on "Studies of Recharge to Ground Water" on pilot basis. For meeting future requirements of water, as a long term measure, National Water Development Agency have formulated National Perspective Plan for water resources development which envisages interlinking various Peninsular rivers and Himalayan rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins.