GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1630
ANSWERED ON:19.07.2004
LEGISLATION FOR INTER-LINKING OF RIVERS
Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has asked the Union Government to furnish within four months details of progress made for enacting legislation to take control of rivers across the country to facilitate their inter-linking;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) & (b) In connection with the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 512/2002 regarding 'Networking of Rivers', the Supreme Court in its order dated 31.10.2002 has recorded that "the petitioner has contended that if a legislation under Entry 56, List I of the Constitution is made, the need for obtaining the consent of the States would not arise and the Centre would be in a position to undertake the project and complete the same within a reasonable period of time" and further the Court stated that 'it is not open to this Court to issue any direction to the Parliament to legislate but the Attorney General submits that the Government will consider this aspect and, if so advised, will bring an appropriate legislation.' Also, on being drawn its attention to the River Board Act, 1956 which has been enacted by the Parliament, the Court recorded that Learned Attorney General would look into this in order to examine whether any further piece of legislation is necessary for bringing about the inter- linking of rivers. Therefore in its order dated 26.4.04 the Supreme Court ruled that in the affidavit to be filed within four months, the aspect of Central legislation as noticed in this Court's order dated 31st October, 2002, be also indicated.

(c) The Central Government envisages comprehensive review of the feasibility of the linking of the rivers of the country in a fully consultative manner.