

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WATER RESOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:73

ANSWERED ON:06.12.2004

LINKING OF RIVERS

Khairi Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao;Solanki Shri Bhupendrasinh Prabhatsinh

**Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has initiated the Rivers Linking Project;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has set up consensus groups for the execution of rivers-linking project;
- (d) if so, the details alongwith composition thereof;
- (e) whether these groups would resolve the technical issues with States also;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the time by when the entire rivers in the country are likely to be interlinked?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (g) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 73 TO BE ANSWERED ON 6.12.2004 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING LINKING OF RIVERS.

(a) & (b) Yes, sir. Two proposals for interlinking of rivers which have attracted considerable attention were given by Dr. K.L. Rao in 1972 and Captain Dastur in 1977. These proposals were not found techno-economically viable. Later, the Ministry of Water Resources (MOWR) (erstwhile Ministry of Irrigation) and Central Water Commission (CWC) formulated a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Water Resources Development in 1980 envisaging interbasin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit basins/areas which comprises of two components namely Himalayan Rivers Development Component and Peninsular Rivers Development Component. The Peninsular Rivers Development Component of NPP was discussed in the Conference of the State Irrigation Ministers held during 1980 and 1981 and were welcomed by all. Seeing the merit of the concept, National Water Development Agency (NWDA) was set up under the MOWR in 1982 for carrying out various technical studies to establish the feasibility of the proposals of NPP and to give concrete shape to it. Based on various studies conducted, NWDA has identified 30 links for preparing Feasibility Reports (FRs). NWDA has completed feasibility reports for thirteen links and others are scheduled to be completed by December 2005. With a view to bringing about a consensus among the states and provide guidance on norms of appraisal of individual projects and modalities for project funding etc., the Central Govt. had set up a Task Force under the chairmanship of Shri Suresh Prabhu, Member (Lok Sabha) in December, 2002. The Task Force had submitted the required Action Plans to the Government giving an outline of the time schedule for completion of feasibility studies, detailed project reports, estimated costs, implementation schedule, benefits and alternate option for funding and execution of projects as also suggested methods of cost recovery.

The National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government indicates that it will make a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking the rivers of the country starting with the southern rivers and this assessment will be done in a fully consultative manner. After the comprehensive assessment, it has been decided that river linking programme be continued with a focus on peninsular rivers.

(c) to (f) In 2002, it was decided by the Governing Body of NWDA where the States are represented that after preparation of FRs for the links by NWDA, further discussion with States on water sharing and Consensus building should be initiated. For this purpose, a Consensus Group headed by Chairman, CWC with States' Secretaries among others as members was formed to arrive at consensus and resolve the technical issues with various States on a continuous basis. Consensus Group headed by Chairman, CWC has held number of meetings in respect of Ken-Betwa link and Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link and the outstanding technical issues/reservations were discussed with the States and were clarified.

(g) Time required to complete construction of inter basin water transfer links depends upon how fast consensus and cooperation from the States is available for these river links.

