

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2803

ANSWERED ON:11.08.2010

NON-FUNCTIONAL CANALS

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of old irrigation canals are non- functional in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any survey in this regard;
- (c) if so, the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether the water in most of the functioning canals does not reach to the last of the beneficiary;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the action taken by the Government on both the aspects?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT H. PALA)

(a) to (f): Irrigation being State subject, planning, execution, funding, maintenance of project including providing water for irrigation is within the purview of the respective State Governments. No survey in respect of non-functional canals of major/ medium projects is carried out by the Ministry of Water Resources.

In order the water reaches the tail end of the command, it is necessary that canal system carries designed discharge at each of the level such as main canal, branch canal, distributory, minors, sub-minors and outlets right from the start of main canal up to the tail end of the command and cropping pattern as planned in the project report is strictly followed. Normally these aspects are not fully followed by the State Governments resulting in water not reaching last beneficiary.

In order to renovate non-functional canal systems in major/medium irrigation projects, Union Government provides financial assistance under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) as per guidelines of the programme. As the country is having vast system of canals for irrigation and it is very difficult for State Governments to look after maintenance of canals and distribution of water amongst the farmers as per approved cropping patterns, the State Governments should encourage formation of legalized Water Users Association on all irrigation projects which should look after distribution of irrigation water and maintenance of canal system. This aspect is covered in Command Area Development & Water Management Programme being implemented by the Union Government in various States.