

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:61
ANSWERED ON:08.07.2009
INTER-LINKING OF RIVERS
Adityanath Shri Yogi;Joshi Shri Mahesh

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government is working on any scheme/project to inter-link all the major rivers of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of the rivers which are likely to be inter- linked;
- (c) whether the Union Government has held any discussion with the State Governments in this regard;
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Union Government in this regard and the benefits likely to accrue as a result of the proposed scheme/project?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. +61 TO BE ANSWERED ON 8.7.2009 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING INTER-LINKING OF RIVERS

(a) Yes Sir,

(b) The Ministry of Water Resources(MOWR) (erstwhile Ministry of Irrigation) formulated a National Perspective Plan(NPP) for Water Resources Development in 1980 envisaging inter- basin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit basins/areas which comprises two components, namely, Himalayan Rivers Development Component and Peninsular Rivers Development Component. 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 (16 under Peninsular Component & 14 under Himalayan Component). The names of the above links and the rivers to be linked alongwith their present status are given at Annexure-I.

(c) to (e) The NPP was initially discussed by the then Secretary, Ministry of Irrigation with the Irrigation Secretaries and Chief Engineers of the concerned State Government in June 1980. The initiative taken by the Government of India was welcomed by the States.

The issues related with the inter-basin water transfer proposals under NPP are regularly discussed with the officials of State Governments in the meetings of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Governing Body (GB) and Society of NWDA. So far 37 meetings of TAC, 52 meetings of GB and 24 meetings of society have been held. The Government has also constituted a Consensus Group headed by Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC) and consisting of Secretaries of Irrigation/Water Resources Departments of the concerned States for arriving at consensus regarding sharing of surplus waters and to discuss issues of preparation of Detailed Project Reports by NWDA. So for nine meetings of the consensus group have been held.

Further, a Conference of the Chief Secretaries and Principal Secretaries of Water Resources of the States / UTs was held on 2nd and 3rd August, 2004 where-in issues related with the Inter-Linking of Rivers (ILR) programme were also discussed in detail. Most of the States are supportive of the concept of the ILR programme provided the projects can ensure "win – win" situation for all the States.

The National Common Minimum Programme of the last UPA Government indicated that it would make a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking the rivers of the country starting with the south-bound rivers and this assessment would be done in a fully consultative manner. It would also explore the feasibility of linking sub- basins of rivers in states like Bihar. After the comprehensive assessment, it was decided that river linking programme be continued with a focus on peninsular rivers. Five links under Peninsular Component namely

(i) Ken-Betwa,

(ii)Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal,

(iii) Damanganga-Pinjal,

(iv) Par-Tapi-Narmada &

(v) Godavari (Polavaram)-Krishna (Vijayawada) were identified as priority links for building consensus among the concerned states for taking up their DPRs. Also, the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of link projects and pre-feasibility/ feasibility reports of intra-state links as proposed by States were included in the functions of NWDA vide resolution dated 30.11.2006.

NWDA has completed Feasibility Reports (FRs) of 14 links under Peninsular Component and 2 links (Indian Portion) under Himalayan Component. DPR of one priority link namely Ken-Betwa was taken up by NWDA after signing of a tripartite agreement between the Government of India and concerned States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh on 25.08.2005 and the DPR has been completed on 31.12.2008. As per the criteria under the scheme of National Projects approved by the Government, the river interlinking projects are eligible for consideration as a National Project. Ken-Betwa project has been included in the list of National projects and is eligible for 90% Central Assistance.

Further, NWDA has taken up the preparation of DPRs of another two priority links namely Par – Tapi-Narmada and Damanganga –Pinjal which is planned to be completed by December, 2011. NWDA has also completed Pre-Feasibility reports of four intrastate links.

The ILR proposals under NPP envisage additional irrigation benefits of 25 million hectares (ha) of irrigation from surface waters, 10 million ha by increased use of ground waters and generation of 34000 MW of power apart from the benefits of flood moderation, navigation, water supply, fisheries, salinity, pollution control etc.