

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1719

ANSWERED ON:01.12.2011

RIVERS AS NATIONAL ASSETS

Majumdar Shri Prasanta Kumar; Tirkey Shri Manohar

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Government has decided to adopt some rivers as national assets;
- (b) if so, the details of the rivers in the country which have been adopted by the Central Government so far;
- (c) whether the Central Government is aware that water disputes amongst some States have created obstacles in increasing irrigation potential; and
- (d) if so, the strategies the Government proposes to formulate to have an adequate control over various rivers?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) The Government of India has a scheme of declaration of important river projects as national projects with a view to expedite completion of identified National Projects in a time bound manner for the benefit of the people. Under this scheme, 14 projects have been declared as National Projects. The list of these 14 projects is enclosed at Annexure-I.

(c) & (d) Most of the major rivers in India are inter-State in character having catchments/watersheds in two or more States. The water disputes arise amongst the basin States with regards to the use, distribution or control of the waters in respect of these inter-state rivers/river valleys. The settlement of disputes by negotiations fosters a spirit of involvement of the States concerned and ultimately leads to more expeditious development of water resources.

The Government of India has enacted the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 for adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers and river valley. When the Central Government is satisfied that the dispute cannot be settled by negotiations, the same is referred to a tribunal under the provisions of Inter State River Water Disputes (ISRWD) Act, 1956. The ISRWD Act has been amended in 2002. At present, five Tribunals have been constituted in respect of water disputes related to Ravi & Beas, Cauvery, Krishna, Mahadayi (Mandovi) and Vansadhara river under ISRWD Act 1956.

Further, the Government of India enacted the River Boards Act 1956 under entry 56 of List I (Union List) of the VIIth schedule to the Constitution. The River Boards Act envisages setting up of River Boards for Inter-state river basins to advise the State Governments in planning and development of inter state rivers. So far, no river board has been established under this Act. However, some River Boards, Commissions, Authorities have been constituted through Government resolution, executive orders or Acts based upon interstate agreements, state reorganization acts and award of tribunal such as Betwa River Board, Bansagar Control Board., Tungabhadra Board, Narmada Control Authority, Bhakra Beas Management Board and Upper Yamuna River Board.