

**Title: Need to clear the proposal of the State Government for inter-linking of regional rivers in the Dakshina Kannada region of Karnataka.**

**SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (UDUPI):** The Govt has woken up very late to the problem of falling ground water tables all over the country and is in desperate search of long-term solutions like inter-linking of national rivers at a colossal cost of more than Rs. 5,76,000 crores.

I would urge the Centre to explore short-term solutions with much less capital outlay. The District Panchayat of Udupi had drawn up a modest scheme for inter-linking regional rivers of Dakshina Kannada which now drain out to Arabian Sea. This proposal with a capital outlay of only Rs. 5,000 crores aims at harnessing the waters of these regional rivers both for irrigation and drinking water requirements of the region apart from mini-hydel power generation. This project will also help controlling floods and check soil erosion of river embankments. The proposal was vetted by the Govt of Karnataka and sent to the Central Water Commission long back for critical appraisal and assistance. Till now no action has been taken on this proposal.

International experts have commented that India should go for small and localised solutions for its water problems with the active involvement of the local community. I would urge the Centre to consider this proposal on its merits.