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Title: Need for laying emphasis on rainwater harvesting and inter-linking of rivers to overcome water scarcity in the country.

DR. UDIT RAJ (NORTH WEST DELHI) : The present water scarcity is affecting almost all parts of the country today- be it the factories in Maharashtra or the tourists in Shimla. The NTPC plant at Farakka had to be shut down in the absence of water, which has also affected electricity and industrial output not only in West Bengal, but also in East India. Drought conditions are seen in 10 states, and many others are on the verge of drought. It is indeed strange that Section 144 had to be imposed in Latur, Maharashtra to avoid riots during distribution of water. Even in Delhi, especially in North West Delhi Constituency, during the summer months people are dependent only on tankers for drinking water; the situation is also similar for industries. The lack of water has forced many industries to shut down; due to this, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is expected to fall 50 to 100 basis points. In a situation where the overall storage in reservoirs is hovering below 24%, interlinking of rivers and proper emphasis on rain water harvesting should become the immediate priority of the Government.