

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4491

ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

INTERLINKING OF RIVERS BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS

†4491. SHRI AMRA RAM:

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any action plan or scheme for interlinking of all rivers of the country between the northern and southern regions and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that half of the country is being devastated by floods during the monsoon while the other half suffers from drought and a large population is compelled to consume fluoride-contaminated water due to non-implementation of the said scheme and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has taken note that the said scheme is the most appropriate mechanism to address these issues and if so, the details thereof along with the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) The Government of India formulated the National Perspective Plan (NPP) in 1980 for interlinking of rivers (ILR) with the objective of transferring water from water-surplus basins to water-deficient regions across the country. Under the NPP, 30 ILR projects have been identified, 14 under the Himalayan Component and 16 under the Peninsular Component. Under the Himalayan Component, the Manas–Sankosh–Tista–Ganga–Damodar–Subernarekha–Mahanadi linkage system is envisaged to transfer water from the Manas basin to the Ganga and, thereafter to the Mahanadi. Under the Peninsular Component, water from the Mahanadi is proposed to be diverted to the Godavari, and the Mahanadi–Godavari–Krishna–Pennar–Cauvery–Vaigai–Gundar link system is planned to convey water further southwards.

The National Water Development Agency (NWDA) has been entrusted with the work relating to ILR projects. NWDA has completed Pre-Feasibility Reports (PFRs) for all 30 links, Feasibility Reports (FRs) for 26 links, and Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for 14 links.

(b) & (c) The Government is aware that certain regions of the country experience floods during the monsoon, while others face drought-like conditions. The National Perspective Plan (NPP) has been formulated to address such spatial and temporal imbalances by creating storage capacities and enabling the transfer of surplus waters to deficit regions. The link projects are designed to divert floodwaters from surplus basins to drought-prone areas, reduce the volume of water flowing unutilised into the sea, and support groundwater recharge, tank filling, and canal supplementation in the command areas.

The Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) programme is expected to augment water availability, enhance irrigation, improve drinking-water supply, and contribute to flood moderation. The implementation of ILR projects is undertaken in a phased manner, subject to techno-economic feasibility, inter-State agreements and statutory clearances. The implementation schedule of individual ILR projects depends upon consensus among the party States and the signing of link-specific Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) by the concerned States. Further, five links have been identified as priority links under the NPP for implementation on priority basis, and work on the Ken Betwa Link Project has already commenced.
