

Regarding need to take comprehensive measures to ensure regular flow of water in river Mahanadi to the reservoir of Hirakud Dam-Laid

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Water flow beneath the Mahanadi River is being constricted. There is a need for regular flow of water in river Mahanadi to the reservoir of Hirakud Dam during the year, especially non-monsoon season. There is an urgent need to integrate climate resilience models in the river basin management planning of the nation. For Mahanadi, the need is urgent because drought is expanding its grip, marginalising millions of farmers and forcing millions to migrate seasonally. Both Odisha and Chhattisgarh have climate change action plans that need to work in sync with each other to save Mahanadi River, its farmers and other dependent communities from climate impacts. While the dispute between the two states has been fuelled by apprehension and experience of reduced water flow in the basin due to dams and barrages, the State Governments need to recognize that climate change has an equally important effect and its impacts are going to grow manifold. The Tribunal needs to give its decision urgently as it has already crossed more than six years. I urge the Government to take necessary steps for regular flow of water in river Mahanadi to the reservoir of Hirakud Dam during the year so severely affected Odisha in terms of water shortage to fulfill the local agricultural demand and make available as nature resources for the people of Odisha.