

Regarding need to take steps to appoint chairman of Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal (MWDT) at the earliest-Laid

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): River Mahanadi an interstate river which flows from Chhattisgarh eastward is the life of Odisha. Today Odisha is threatened due to gradual decrease in flow from upstream, mainly from the catchment of Chhattisgarh. Inflow into Hirakud Reservoir has been gradually reducing in the non-monsoon period. This reduction of flow has been intimated to Ministry of Jal Shakti. As both the States Odisha and Chhattisgarh could not reach an agreement to sharing of water amicably, on the direction of Supreme Court of India in 2018, Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal was formed by the Union Government and complaint of Odisha was referred to it. The tenure of MWDT was for 3 years and was extended to for two more years upto 11.03.2023 and subsequently has been extended upto 13th April 2026 or till the submission of report whichever is earlier. The 43rd sitting of the Tribunal was held on 22nd Feb 2024. Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, Chairman, Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal has resigned from the post since March 2024 and that post is lying vacant. In such an eventuality, the Tribunal is in limbo and Odisha while waiting for a decision is suffering for want of water. I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to appoint a Chairman of MWDT so that the decision be given at the earliest.