

### **Regarding dredging of sand deposited on the riverbed of Mahanadi**

**SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK):** Sir, for ages Mahanadi is the only river in Odisha which has a perennial flow of water. However, due to construction of some large barrages in the river's catchment areas in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, the flow of water in Mahanadi has been adversely affected. Water levels in Odisha's Hirakud Dam are going down posing water crisis in downstream regions. The crisis is alarming as Mahanadi is almost dry two weeks before the month of Baishak. Our concern lies in having water during non-monsoon times as well. The river is exposed to severe erosion. Sand and Silt too are a bane. The bed of the river is rising due to sand formation and endangering the embankments. The river's earlier capacity of handling 9 lakh cusecs of water has been upgraded to 11 lakh cusecs.

All embankments are in dangerous condition. If floods happen, then embankments will collapse. So, I request the central government for dredging the riverbeds. The Centre and the state government should jointly carry out the dredging in Mahanadi and its subsidiary rivers as soon as possible, so that Odisha can be saved from floods.