

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1767

ANSWERED ON:05.12.2005

OBJECTIONS BY NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES ON RIVER LINKING PROJECT

Barman Shri Ranen

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether objections against the river-linking project are being raised by neighbouring countries;
- (b) if so, the names of the countries and the nature of objections raised;
- (c) the forumz(s) utilized by them to raise their objections;
- (d) whether the basis of such objections have been examined; and
- (e) if so, the outcome thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR HEAVY INDUSTRIES, PUBLIC ENTERPRISES AND WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Bangladesh feels that inter-linking project would deprive them of sufficient water for their needs in the context of rivers of Himalayan region.

(c) Government of Bangladesh has expressed apprehension at the proposal of linking rivers in bilateral meetings. The issue was discussed in the 35th meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission held in New Delhi in September, 2003. Similarly, the Bangladesh Prime Minister raised this issue during a bilateral meeting with our Prime Minister on the margins of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Co- operation (BIMST-EC) summit in May, 2004. It was raised also during the Foreign Office Consultations in June, 2005.

(d) & (e) The Government of India has assured the Bangladesh side that the project was at the conceptual stage. UPA Government gave emphasis in National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) for peninsular component only and therefore apprehension of Bangladesh is not relevant at this stage. The Government of India has also stated that it would not take any unilateral action, which would harm the interest of Bangladesh.