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Title: Need to start work on Subarnarekha Barrage-cum-Dolong Dam Project in West Bengal.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE): Subarnarekha Barrage-cum-Dolong Dam Project (SBDP) in West Bengal was conceptualized as a part of Subarnarekha Multipurpose Project (SMP) with a view to provide : (i) reliable water supply to vast areas of agricultural lands covering about 12 blocks of Pashchim Medinipur district of West Bengal; (ii) to reduce the flood damages in West Bengal and Orissa and (iii) to generate hydroelectric power through medium and micro-hydroelectric projects to be located at various points of the river canal system.

The project started in 1982-83 with a view to benefit directly 1,30,000 farmer families, increasing the irrigated area of 2,55,000 hectares, increasing food grain production by 1000 tonnes, increasing water supply, generating farm employment of 1,38,000 jobs and non-farm employment of 25,000 jobs. However, it has not been implemented properly.

The work on the main project has not started at all so far, in West Bengal. With each passing day the cost of the project is mounting. It is, therefore, my appeal to the Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources to take steps on urgent basis and start the work to complete the project with right earnest, so that the country becomes fully able to appropriate the gifts of nature. It would be the major project to address the Maoist-affected areas in both Paschim and Purba Medinipur districts.