

**Drinking water under NWG Scheme**

3498. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Water Grid Scheme to provide potable water to all citizens of the country is contemplated;

(b) if so, the progress made in this regard; and

(c) if not, how Government plan to provide clean drinking water to all citizens and by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA) (a) and (b) The National Water Development Agency (NWDA) under the Ministry of Water Resources is carrying out studies of the National Perspective Plan which *inter-alia* envisages diversion of water from surplus basins to deficit/drought prone areas by inter-linking major rivers of the country. The proposal includes construction of storage reservoirs to store flood waters and inter-linking of river systems for optimum utilisation of available water resources. The water so diverted will be used for irrigation, drinking and other uses. The present mandate of NWDA is to prepare Feasibility Reports of the links. It is proposed to complete the Feasibility Reports of Peninsular and Himalayan Rivers Development Components in a period of about 5 and 10 years respectively.

(c) Drinking Water Supply is a State subject. The State Governments implement the programme under the State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). The Central Government only supplements the efforts of the States by providing funds under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and the Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme (AUWSP). Under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) powers have been delegated to the States to plan, sanction and implement their individual water supply schemes. All the States have been requested to prepare action plans to provide drinking water facilities to all rural habitations in five years time. This Objective could be achieved, subject to availability of funds. Similarly, 100% urban population is targeted to be provided with safe drinking water facilities in the Ninth Plan period, subject to availability of funds.