

State Irrigation Ministers' meeting on inter-linking of rivers

*279. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a meeting of the State Irrigation Ministers was held recently to discuss various issues relating to the project on the inter-linking of rivers;

(b) if so, the details of outcome of the meeting;

(c) whether it is also a fact that on the basis of the outcome of the above meeting, it is proposed to conduct a Jal Manthan to thrash out various issues, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how much time it would take to link all the rivers in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (SHRI SANWAR LAL JAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The first meeting of the Special Committee for Inter-linking of Rivers (ILR), constituted as per the direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court *vide* its judgement dated 27th February 2012, chaired by Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation was held on 17.10.14 at New Delhi. State Irrigation/Water Resources Ministers of various States along with Secretaries of various States attended the meeting. Issues pertaining to background of Inter-linking of Rivers and directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court for functioning of the Committee were discussed. It was decided to constitute sub-committees to expedite the objectives of the program of inter-linking of river as per terms of reference of the Committee.

(c) The Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has organized a three day conference "Jal Manthan" from 20-22 November, 2014 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi to take up wide ranging consultations with the States/ Union Territories, Irrigation/Water Resources Ministers, Secretaries, Non-Government Organizations and a range of other stakeholders, to dwell on issues crucial for optimal use of water resources. The focus was on refining policies and schemes of the Ministry to make them more people friendly and responsive to the needs of the States/Union Territories. The second day of the Conference was devoted to deliberate on various aspects of "Inter-linking of Rivers (ILR)" Programme wherein views of various State Governments and stakeholders were obtained.

(d) The Government is pursuing the Inter-linking of River program in a consultative manner. Its implementation is dependent upon the consensus and co-

operation of the concerned States and upon obtaining various mandatory clearances from Ministry/Departments of Central and State Governments including statutory clearances. The time-limit for the completion of individual link projects can be identified only after Detailed Project Reports are techno-economically approved. However, the Government has constituted a Consensus Group headed by the Chairman, Central Water Commission and Secretaries of Irrigation/Water Resource Departments of the concerned States for arriving at a consensus on various proposed links for sharing of the surplus water and preparation of DPR by NWDA. In addition, the issues on the inter-State links are also regularly discussed during the meeting of Governing Body and Society of the NWDA. The Special Committee for Inter-linking of Rivers (ILR), chaired by Hon'ble Union Minister of Water resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation is also reviewing the progress of river link proposals in consultation with the stakeholders for expediting these projects.

Popularising Thirukkural's messages

*280. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the message of Thiruvalluvar have shaped Indian minds for the last many centuries but still his teachings through the great work of Thirukkural do not find any presence in the North India; and

(b) Government's view to popularise Thirukkural's messages in North India for greater cultural integration of the country benefitting the society?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) The Government is aware that the messages of Shri Thiruvalluvar have shaped Indian mind for the last many centuries. The Sahitya Akademi under the Ministry of Culture has published an important monograph in 1979 on Shri Thiruvalluvar respecting him as one of the makers of Indian Literature. The book contains times and teaching of Shri Thiruvalluvar, and is a blueprint of evolution of universal man. This monograph was translated by Sahitya Akademi in many Indian languages like Hindi, Sindhi, English, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu. A scholarly treatise on Thirukkural was given the Sahitya Akademi award in 1988, named as Vazhum Valluvam (Immortal Kural), thereafter it was translated in English for the benefit of non-Tamil readers. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has incorporated messages of Shri Thiruvalluvar in the textbook of Communicative Sanskrit for Class X, published by them. A complete chapter is devoted to the teachings of Saint Thiruvalluvar from his great work Thirukkural and it is prescribed in all the schools offering Sanskrit across the country including