

## Regional Conference of Western States on Water Resources at Mumbai on 18-06-2018

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A Regional Conference of Western States on Water Resources, an initiative by Govt. of India to discuss the contentious issues among the five western states viz. Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa was held in Mumbai today.

On this occasion, Union Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal said, pending inter-states water issues need to be solved on priority; therefore; it is decided to organise such conferences at state level. He reiterated that, water management is the top priority at Union Government as well as state governments. He also added that the river basins of different states need to be connected, so basin specific states meet will also be held. Water management, irrigation, flood management etc. were other topics which were discussed at the conference.

Shri Meghwal further stated that, such conferences give an opportunity for studying details of many pending issues related to main issue and such issues can be resolved with participation of concerned authorities. Such conference can induce improved habits, new thoughts, and help in appreciating field reality. All these factors will be put forth to NITI Ayog as well, so that they can come up with new schemes.

This is third in the series of such initiative by the Union Government following similar Conferences for southern states (at Hyderabad on 20.02.2018) & Eastern states (at Kolkata on 16.04.18). Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation chaired the Conference.

In the Conference, various issues pertaining to inter-state and intra-state river linking proposals under Peninsular Rivers Development Component and regarding projects/schemes undertaken by the states were discussed.

- **Karnataka** has raised certain issues regarding intra-state link proposals of Maharashtra concerning them, Godavari (Akinpalli)-Cauvery (Grand Anicut) link project, Kalasa-Bandura Nala diversion project and Dudhganga project.
- **Madhya Pradesh** requested for inclusion of their approved projects under Pradhan Manthri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) and sought central assistance for their on-going pressurised micro-irrigation projects.

- **Maharashtra** raised the issues of finalisation of MoU to be signed among the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Union Government regarding Par-Tapi-Narmada and Damanganga-Pinjal link projects, use of Tapi regeneration flow, proposal for mega recharge of ground water in Tapi basin, alternative proposal to Kanhan Hydro-electric project, review of water allocation in Pench valley and reimbursement of expenditure incurred in respect of Tilara Inter-state project from Goa.
- **Gujarat** requested for approval of their proposal for RRR of water bodies in Saurashtra region under PMKSY and for taking up of DPR of Damanganga – Sabarmati – Chorwad intra-state link project by NWDA.
- **Goa** requested for central assistance for restoring of Khazan land bunds, aquifer mapping and methodologies for regulation of groundwater, RRR of ponds/lakes, evaluation of environmental flows for the rivers and implementation of post monsoon harvesting structures in the state. The state also sought its inclusion in DRIP and other flagship programmes of MOWR, RD &GR.

**All the issues were duly deliberated and it was broadly decided -**

- to further this initiative by conducting follow up meetings at appropriate level on specific issues by the concerned states for speedy resolution and if need be under the aegis of Central Govt.
- to extend budgetary support by the Centre to the various schemes of the states under PMKSY, CADWM etc. and through external funding from NABARD or World bank
- to abide by the awards of the Tribunals and to take up any proposals by the States in accordance with them
- to await the Award of the Tribunal regarding the issues raised by the States concerning Mahadayi basin and
- to work in collaboration by the Centre and the States for the development and management of water resources in the country in national interest

Ministers of Water Resources from States of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa, have participated in the Conference. Principal Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra, Secretaries of Governments of Karnataka and Gujarat and other senior officials from the participating states, Member (D&R), Central Water Commission, Chairman, Central Ground Water Board, Joint Secretary (RD&PP), MoWR, RD&GR, Director General, National Water Development Agency, Chief Engineers from CWC & NWDA and other senior officers of Govt. of India attended the Conference.

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