

Minutes of the 6th meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 13th February, 2017 at New Delhi

Sixth Meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers was held on 13th February, 2017 at New Delhi under the chairmanship of Shri B. N. Navalawala, Chairman, Task Force and Chief Advisor, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation. List of the participants is enclosed as Annex-I.

At the outset, Shri B. N. Navalawala, Chairman, Task Force and Chief Advisor, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation extended a warm welcome to all the Members, Special Invitees and other participants attending the meeting. In his opening remarks, he expressed concern over the slow progress, being made in respect of implementation of Interlinking of River Programme, mainly due to non-consensus amongst the concerned States. The PFRs/FRs of ILR projects and DPRs of few projects are ready. These reports have been prepared in consultation with the concerned States. Citing example of Mahanadi-Godavari link, he mentioned that the officers representing the States in various meetings of Task Force/Sub-Committees normally agree with the viewpoint of Task Force/Sub Committees, but when question of formal consent of States comes, they take just opposite view on the view expressed by its representative in the meeting. As such he emphasized the need for evolving the mechanism or process to help in building consensus among the concerned States over the important links. The Chairman, Task Force desired to know about new Members attending the meeting. Director (Tech), NWDA informed that letter of invitation and agenda was issued to all new members by email and out of three new members, he could contact only two members over phone. They informed that they would not be able to attend the meeting due to their pre-occupations. However he could not contact Shri Dulal Chand Goswami due to non-availability of his contact number.

The Chairman, Task Force then requested Director General, NWDA and Member Secretary, Task Force to take up agenda items for discussion.

Item 6.1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 5th meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 25th October, 2016 at New Delhi

Director General, NWDA and Member Secretary, Task Force informed that the minutes of the Fifth meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers (TF-ILR) held on 25th October, 2017 at New Delhi were circulated to all the members vide letter dated

23.11.2016. The Government of Telangana vide letter dated 07-01-2017 communicated their observations on the guidelines for preparation of water balance studies which have been replied by NWDA vide letter dated 02.01.2017. As no change in the minutes is required due to these observations, the minutes of the Fifth meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers were confirmed as circulated.

Item No.6.2: Follow-up action on the decisions taken during the last meeting

(i) Surplus water and guidelines for preparation of PWBS

The information given in the agenda was noted by the Members. DG, NWDA mentioned that this item would be discussed in detail under Item No. 6.3.

(ii) Constitution of Group on legal aspect.

DG, NWDA informed that the Group on legal aspects under TFILR under the chairmanship of Shri A.D. Mohile so far had held six meetings on 19.8.2016, 15.9.2016, 28.10.2016, 4.11.2016, 02.12.2016 and 02.02.2017 respectively. The Chairman, Task Force desired to know from Shri Mohile the likely date by which report would be submitted. Shri A.D. Mohile, informed that the report would be submitted by 31.3.2017.

(iii) TA/DA to newly approved members

DG, NWDA mentioned that MOWR, RD & GR had issued necessary Office Memorandum vide their letter No.2/5/2015-BM/25590-25601 dated 23.1.2017 regarding permissible TA/DA to newly co-opted members of TFILR. The Chairman, Task Force desired to know regarding their entitlement. DG, NWDA informed that as per the O.M., the Members (retired Govt. officers) would be entitled for TA/DA as admissible to them at the time of their retirement, and in case of other members the TA/DA entitlement will be equal to that of a Govt. Officers drawing grade pay of Rs. 6600/- per month as per DOPT guidelines. Chairman, TFILR expressed concern over lower entitlement and requested NWDA to enquire about the entitlement of TA/DA of members of similar committees constituted by various other Ministries.

Item No.6.3: Review of NWDA guidelines for carrying out Water Balance Study in a River Basin

Representative from Telangana raised the issue of considering the storage effect in case of irrigation projects indicated in Para 5.2.4 (upstream utilization) of the circulated Guidelines. He mentioned that Krishna Water Dispute Tribunal (KWDT)-II has considered storage effect for irrigation projects also. So the aforesaid para of the guidelines needs modification. Shri Mohile suggested that this aspect requires to be considered where carryover storage is provided while Shri Gopalakrishnan supported the existing guidelines of NWDA on the plea that evaporation losses have been considered. Shri Pandya mentioned that filling up and depletion of reservoir in a particular year is a dynamic process. So storage effect in irrigation project should also be considered. After detailed discussion, it was decided to modify the Para as under:

“Storage effect on account of various projects be considered appropriately to arrive at virgin yield. “

For inter basin water transfers, Shri Ghosh emphasized the need to incentivize water surplus State Governments by modifying distorted cropping pattern. Chairman, Task Force while agreeing to the suggestion of Shri Ghosh stressed the need for enhancing to the level of optimization of water use efficiency. While referring to para 5.2.5, Shri Ghosh mentioned that instead of having two types of regression equations (linear and non-linear), we should consider only non-linear equation. Shri Mohile explained the need of using both linear and non-linear regression equations. As such no change was recommended.

Shri Jeyaseelan pointed out that the statements made under Para related with ground water on page-20 and page-36 are not consistent. It was decided to make appropriate modification so that any inconsistency is removed in relevant Paras.

Representative of Maharashtra pointed out that per capita per day consumption of domestic water for rural population has been made 100 litres in Maharashtra as per State policy whereas NWDA guidelines provides for 70 litres per capita per day. Chairman and other Members agreed with NWDA’s guidelines in this regard on the plea that for inter-basin water transfer certain restrictions on water utilisation should be there.

It was decided that considering the above suggestions, NWDA may modify the guidelines for working out surplus water in a river basin and preparation of water balance study and include in the agenda of the next meeting of the Task Force for consideration and approval.

Item No.6.4: Extension of Time Period for legal group and appointment of its Chairman

The Group on legal aspects under Task Force on Interlinking of Rivers, constituted vide NWDA's O.M. dated 18.7.2016, was given one month time for submission of its report. Considering the quantum of work and complexity of the issues involved in the subject matter, the Group required sufficient time to deliberate and come out with the proper recommendations. Therefore, the Chairman, Task Force for ILR in the 5th meeting of TF agreed for extension of tenure of the Group on Legal Aspects for a period upto 20th November, 2016.

Shri A.D. Mohile, Chairman of Legal Group mentioned that the Legal Group held six meetings so far, i.e., on 19.8.2016, 15.9.2016, 28.10.2016, 4.11.2016 , 2.12.2016 & 02.02 2017. Seventh meeting of the Group is proposed to be held on 14.02.2017 wherein first draft report of the Group is likely to be discussed. However, finalization of report would take some more time. The Chairman, Task Force desired to know from Shri Mohile the likely date by which the report would be submitted. Shri A.D. Mohile, Chairman of the Legal Group indicated that the report would be submitted by 31.3.2017.

After deliberation, the Task Force agreed for extension of tenure of the Legal Group up to 31.03.2017. However, considering international complexities involved in various links of NWDA, it was also decided that NWDA should initiate the action for co-opting Ms. Meera Shankar, Retired I.F.S. officer as Member of the Task Force. This will help in deciding the strategy for resolution of international issues.

Item No.6.5: System Simulation Studies of Mahanadi-Godavari link

DG, NWDA informed that the report on “System Simulation Studies of Mahanadi-Godavari link” prepared by NIH was discussed during the 9th meeting of the Sub-Committee-II held on 30.08.2016 along with observations of Govt. of Odisha. The study has been further revised by NIH and the modified/ revised report will be considered by the Sub-Committee-II in its next meeting to be held shortly. Thereafter, final report would

be presented first to the Task Force and then to the Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers.

DG, NWDA further mentioned that in view of the present stand of Government of Odisha, it would not be possible to implement Mahanadi-Godavari link without considering contribution of Manas-Sankosh-Teesta-Ganga link (Himalayan Link). Shri Ghosh advised to get crop modeling study done through ICAR or reputed Agricultural University so that the extent of area in which a particular crop could be grown, can be established and realistic assessment of crop delta made.

Shri Ghosh also advised that the environmental study of Mahanadi basin be carried out to make realistic assessment of environmental flows so that Odisha's stand on this aspect can be discussed at later stage. Shri Mohile mentioned that some study has been made in respect of Chilka lake which should also be referred to.

Item No.6.6: Manas - Sankosh - Teesta - Ganga (MSTG) Link:

DG, NWDA explained the latest status of MSTG link to the Members of the Task Force as given in the Agenda Notes. Chairman, TF mentioned that the international issues concerning Nepal/Bhutan involved in planning of Himalayan links should be taken up with Nepal/Bhutan through Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Regarding funding of Sankosh HE Project, Shri Pandya mentioned that funding of this project is in Inter Governmental mode which MEA may not agree in case of Manas H.E. Project. They may like to go for JV (Joint Venture) mode of funding. Members raised the issue of sharing of Teesta water with Bangladesh, issue of involvement of the Ministry in this matter and the concerns of West Bengal.

After detailed discussion, it was decided that Chairman, Task Force would forward a note on MSTG bringing out concerns of the Task Force and a suggested road map to Hon'ble Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation for her attention.

Item No.6.7: Funding of ILR Projects as proposed in Action Plan-II of Task Force-I

Shri Ghosh desired that the presentation on funding pattern should be made in next meeting. DG, NWDA mentioned that except for three projects whose DPRs have been prepared, the cost of other ILR projects are not firmed up. Further, only funding of Ken-

Betwa Link Project has been decided, because of being declared as National Project. However, decision on funding of other ILR projects would have to be taken on the project to project basis. After detailed deliberations, the Task Force decided the following:

- (i) To arrange presentation on funding of ILR projects in next meeting and
- (ii) To constitute a Financial Sub Committee headed by Shri Prodipto Ghosh (on the pattern of Legal Group) to go into financial aspect of ILR project. It should have 2-3 Members. Members suggested for consideration in the proposed Sub-Committee are: Director (Finance), NHPC; Shri Rana, Chairman of Yes Bank; Shri Pratip Choudhary, former Chairman, SBI; Shri H. Satish Rao, Director, ADB; Representatives either from IDFC or IDBI bank; Representative from Niti Ayog or Ministry of Finance.

Item No.6.8: Any other item

DG, NWDA informed that the present tenure of the Task Force is upto April, 2017. As such there is a need to approach the Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers for extension of tenure of TF by atleast one year. Members were of the view that the Task Force is a technical organ of the Special Committee for ILR. So it should not have any fixed tenure rather its tenure should be co-terminus with that of SCILR. However, tenure of the Members should be initially for three years and thereafter either Member should be given extension or replaced by new member. Accordingly, the matter can be brought to the notice of the SCILR its next meeting.

Meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chair.

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**List of Members, Special Invitees and participants of the Sixth Meeting
of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 13.02.2017 at New Delhi.**

1.	Shri B.N. Navalawala, Chief Advisor, Ministry of WR, RD & GR	Chairman
2.	Shri Narender Kumar Chairman, Central Water Commission	Member
3.	Shri Prodipto Ghosh Former Secretary to Govt. of India	Member
4.	Shri A.D. Mohile, Former Chairman, Central Water Commission	Member
5.	Shri SriramVedire, Adviser, MoWR, RD&GR	Member
6.	Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Former Secretary to Govt. of India	Member
7.	Shri S. Masood Husain Director General, NWDA	Member-Secretary
	Special Invitees	
8.	Shri R. Jeyaseelan, Former Chairman, Central Water Commission	Special Invitee
9.	Shri A.B. Pandya, Former Chairman, CWC	Special Invitee
10.	Shri C.A. Birajdar, Director General, Maharashtra Engg. Research Institute, Nashik, Maharashtra,	Representing Principal Secretary, WRD, Government of Maharashtra
11.	Shri J. Vijay Prakash, Engineer – in – Chief (Adm.) I&CAD Department, Government of Telangana, Hyderabad	Representing Additional Chief Secretary, I&CAD, Government of Telangana
12.	Shri K.B. Rabadia, Chief Engineer (S.G.) & Addl. Secretary, Water Resources Department, Govt. of Gujarat, Gandhinagar	Representing Secretary, WRD, Govt. of Gujarat

13.	Shri D.R. Meena, Chief Engineer, SWRPD, Water Resources Deptt., Jaipur (Raj)	Representing Secretary, WRD, Government of Rajasthan
14.	Shri T. Giridhara Rao, Executive Engineer. C/o CE, IS&WR, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayavada	Representing Principal Secretary, I&CAD, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad
	Other State Government Officers	
15.	Shri C.N. Mali, Superintending Engineer, Data Analysis Circle, Jal Vidyan Bhawan, Nashik-4, Maharashtra	
16.	Shri R. Venkata Ramana, Executive Engineer, I & CAD Department, Govt. of Telangana	
17.	Shri PVSSUP Raju, Dy. Executive Engineer, o/o CE, IS&WR, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada	
	NWDA Officers	
18.	Shri M.K. Srinivas Chief Engineer (South), Hyderabad	
19.	Shri R.K. Jain, Chief Engineer (HQ), New Delhi	
20.	Shri N.C. Jain, Chief Engineer (North) New Delhi	
21.	Shri K.P. Gupta, Director (Technical)/SCILR New Delhi	
22.	Shri Rakesh Kumar Gupta Executive Engineer (HQ) New Delhi	
23.	Shri M.K. Sinha, Senior Consultant, New Delhi	
24.	Shri R.K. Agrawal, Middle Level Consultant, New Delhi	