



# Standing Committee Report Summary

## Review of the Ganga Flood Control Commission

- The Standing Committee on Water Resources submitted its report on a review of the Ganga Flood Control Commission on February 20, 2014. The Ganga Flood Control Commission was set up in 1972 to deal with floods in Ganga basin states. The Committee made recommendations that pertain to the creation of water storage and state-wise information regarding usage of water.
- **Long-term policy for water use:** The Committee urged the Ministry of Water Resources to evolve a long-term comprehensive policy to ensure the judicious and efficient utilisation of the river Ganga. Such a policy should be evolved in consultation with the Planning Commission, ministries of agriculture, environment and forests, energy, rural development, and the states located on the banks of the river.
- **Database on utilisable water:** The Committee suggested that the Ministry compile updated, authentic and comprehensive state-wise information pertaining to the usage of water for drinking, irrigation and hydro-electric power in the basin of the Ganga. The Ministry should also establish a website for the above information.
- **Creation of water storage:** The Committee noted that water from the Ganga rivers can be stored in upper catchment areas and transferred from water-surplus to water-deficit areas. It observed that the government is in dialogue with Nepal to build storage projects since the flat terrain in the Gangetic plain areas of India does not allow for the construction of storage projects. Taking note of the delay in implementation of these projects, the Committee urged the Ministry to accelerate the pace of storage creation in Nepal.
- **Scientific assessment of flood-prone areas:** The Committee recommended a speedy establishment of regional committees for the compilation and assessment of state-wise flood-prone areas.
- **Creation of storage capacity through implementation of scheme:** The Ministry formulated a pilot scheme, the National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture during the Tenth Five Year Plan. The scheme entails improvement of existing water bodies such as lakes and ponds to store water available locally during the flood season. The scheme was approved for continuation in the Twelfth Plan with central assistance of Rs 6,235 crore. The Committee wanted to be apprised of the status of implementation of the scheme, including the additional storage capacity created till December 2013 for flood moderation and cushioning in the Ganga basin states.
- **Role of Inter-Linking of Rivers (ILR) programme in reservoir creation:** The Committee noted that as part of the ILR programme, a series of reservoirs have been planned to be created in Nepal or in the foothills of the Himalayas. These links are expected to harness the waters of the Ganga and its tributaries before going into the sea or the neighbouring country and serve as an effective mechanism for flood control. It recommended that the implementation of the ILR programme and storage projects in Nepal and Bhutan be taken up with utmost emergency by the Ministry. The Ministry should work out implementable time-schedules for the completion of these projects.
- **Flood affected areas and magnitude of damage:** The Committee noted that the Ministry could not furnish information regarding: (i) the average annual rainfall, total cropped area, flood prone area, and (ii) the proportion of the total flood prone area that is cropped. The Committee recommended that this information be furnished to it within three months. Details of the relief and rehabilitation package provided to the flood affected areas in the Ganga basin over the last five years should also be provided.
- **Flood management in Ganga basin states:** The Committee recommended that the Ministry or the Central Water Commission should, in consultation with the basin states, devise a time-bound programme of action to identify drainage systems, rivers/streams, canals, etc. which need immediate rehabilitation. It should also adopt measures to be taken by the concerned agencies for their repair and restoration and review their progress every six months.

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