

NOTE ON UPPER MAHANANDA PROJECT – BIHAR

Estimated Cost	84.94 Crore on 1986 price level 124.00 Crore on 1/2000 price level
CCA (Th. Ha.)	26.80
River/Basin	Mahananda /Ganga
District Benefited	Purnea & Kishanganj

Project Proposal:

Upper Mahananda Project envisages construction of distribution system to provide irrigation to an area of 26,800 ha. in Thakurganj, Pothia and Kishanganj blocks of Purnea District in North Bihar. The main components of works are as under:

1. Link channel off-taking from Fall NO.2 of Mahananda Main Canal of West Bengal to Upper Mahananda Main Canal of Bihar.
2. New Canal, starting from the end part of Link Channel at Bihar-West Bengal Border.
3. Three numbers of Branch Canals namely Arabari, Kishanganj and Jaley branch canals along with other distribution system, sub-distributories and minor water courses etc.

The project was first formulated at an estimated cost of Rs. 25.70 crore, which was received in CWC in 11/83. The same was examined and comments on Canal Design and Financial Aspects were sent. Later on with some modifications the report was again received in CWC 6/87. This project was sent back to State Government in 7/87, as the report was not prepared as per the guidelines of CWC.

The main problems involved in clearance of the project are non-supply of following data / information by West Bengal to Bihar:

1. **Off-take point of canal for Bihar.**
2. **Water Release pattern in canal for Bihar from Phulbari Barrage which is located in West Bengal.**
3. **Programme for construction of Right Canal and Link Canal in West Bengal along with the Plan outlay and Budget Provision.**
4. **Alignment of Link Canal and its capacity**
5. **Modalities for construction of Link Canal in West Bengal.**

The upper Mahananda Irrigation Project was originally submitted to CWC in the year 1983. The proposal was examined in CWC and observations were communicated to Government of Bihar. The proposal was formulated as per the interstate agreement on 19.07.1978 between Bihar and West Bengal regarding water sharing from river Mahananda. Government of Bihar submitted the proposal again in 2001 after incorporating the observations of CWC. The estimated cost of project was Rs. 124 crore at 2001 Price Level. The proposal was again examined in CWC. However, the points raised by CWC on the initial proposal pertaining to off-take point

for link canal from main canal of Phulbari Barrage (West Bengal), water release pattern for command area of Bihar etc. were not resolved by project authorities.

The Bihar Government vide letter dated 29.10.2002 requested CWC to coordinate and convene meeting for resolving the issue. CWC made an effort to convene meeting during 2003/2005 and requested Governments of Bengal and Government of Bihar for their participation, however, meeting could not take place as the officials of Government of West Bengal did not attend the meeting due to some reasons.

In the 8th meeting of Standing Committee of Eastern Zonal Council on 07.11.2014 at Patna, the representatives of Bihar raised the matter on the issue of Mahananda Barrage Project and opined that a joint committee should be formed to sort out this issue. The representative of Government of West Bengal agreed to the proposal of Bihar. In the 21st meeting of Eastern Zonal Council 16.01.2015, it was decided that a Joint Committee of officers from both the States under the Chairmanship of CWC may be constituted. A Committee headed by Member, WP&P, CWC along with representatives of Government of Bihar and West Bengal as members has been constituted vide OM dated 12.08.2015

Thereafter, report on the water availability analysis report and crop water demand computations was requested from Govt. of Bihar vide CWC letters dated 25.08.2015 and 23.09.2015. The same was received vide letter dated 28.09.2015 from Govt. of Bihar and sent to Govt. of West Bengal vide letter dated 29.10.2015 for their views/observations. However, no reply has been received from Govt. of West Bengal till date.

In the mean time, Govt. of West Bengal requested for change of constitution of the Committee by incorporating Chief Engineer, Teesta Barrage Project, West Bengal in place of Engineer-in-Chief as no post of Engineer-in-Chief exists in West Bengal. Accordingly the constitution of the Committee has been revised.

A meeting of the Committee is proposed to be held on 06.06.2016 in New Delhi to deliberate the issue and proceed further.

The Committee shall assess the water availability for Mahananda Project and suggest further course of action taking into consideration the views of the State Govts. of Bihar and West Bengal and the interstate agreement of 1978.
