

Environment clearance to Athirapally Hydro-Electric Projects

1869. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:

SHRI P.R. RAJAN:

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether environmental clearance was granted to Athirapally Hydro-Electric Project, Kerala, based on the EIA study conducted by the Water and Power Consultancy Services India Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Central Government has sent a notice to the Kerala State Electricity Board to furnish reasons as to why the environmental clearance granted to the Project should not be withdrawn;

(d) if so, the circumstances under which such a notice was sent to the KSE Board;

(e) whether the Board/State Government has responded to the notice;

(f) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(g) whether required clearance will be granted to the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The Athirapally Hydro-Electric Project in Kerala was accorded environmental clearance on 17th July, 2007 based on the Environmental Impact Assessment study carried out by WAPCOS.

(c) and (d) On the basis of representation received from Shri Rajendra Singh (Ramon Magsaysay Awardee) regarding impact on biodiversity and local tribals, a showcase notice was issued on 04.01.2010 to the Kerala State Electricity Board.

(e) to (g) The response has been received from the Kerala State Electricity Board, which will be considered by the Expert Appraisal Committee for River Valley and Hydro-Electric Projects at its next meeting for taking a decision.

Climate change

†1870. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA:

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is difference of opinion among experts on Government's approach in Copenhagen on the issue of climate change;

(b) whether per capita allowed emission can affect some parts of the country adversely in the future;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (c) if so, the details thereof and the likely damage as a result thereof; and
- (d) Government's plan to tackle it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Approach of Government on the issue of climate change at Copenhagen was clearly enunciated in the statement of the Prime Minister made on December 18, 2009 at the High Level Segment of the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change (UNFCCC).

(b) to (d) Actions and commitments of Parties under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is based on the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The concept of per capita emissions is derived from equity and takes into account the responsibility for historical emissions of countries. Prime Minister has announced that India will never exceed the average per capita emissions of the developed countries. This protects the interests of the country and ensures adequate space for growth and sustainable development.

Commercial cultivation of Bt. brinjal

1871. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's decision to disallow the commercial cultivation of Bt. brinjal, against earlier clearance by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee, is prompted by the findings of the France-based team of experts in Caen University;
- (b) whether the French bio-tech experts had declared cultivation of genetically modified brinjal as unsafe and toxic;
- (c) whether the French expert study was sponsored by an international NGO Greenpeace with its aggressive greenpeace agenda; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir. The Government's decision to impose a moratorium on commercial cultivation of Bt. brinjal approved by the GEAC is based on the concerns expressed by some of the State Governments, NGOs and some sections of the scientific and farming communities on the safety of Bt brinjal from the point of view of its long-term impact on human health and environment.

(b) to (d) Prof. Gilles-Eric Seralini University of Caen, France has reviewed M/s Mahyco's data on Bt brinjal. The report "Effects on Health and Environment of Transgenic Bt. brinjal" concludes that Bt brinjal cannot be considered as safe for human consumption or release into the environment. The review was commissioned by Greenpeace, an international NGO.