

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (d) The responsibility for remediation and waste disposal works pertaining to the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster has been entrusted to Government of Madhya Pradesh. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has constituted an Oversight Committee to provide oversight and support to the Government of Madhya Pradesh in taking the necessary remedial actions. The National Environment Engineering Institute (NEERI), National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) and Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) have submitted reports on remediation in and around the premises of the former Union Carbide India Ltd Plant at Bhopal. A Peer Review Committee has been set up by the Department of Science and Technology to study the reports and review the comments of experts on the reports. Action is to be taken by the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh for remediation of the contaminated site and disposal of toxic waste.

Clearance to dam projects on Ganga

1523. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has raised the green flag on all dam projects on river Ganga;
- (b) if so, the details of dam projects which are pending before Government for clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;
- (c) whether the Forest Advisory Committee has asked the National Ganga River Basin Authority to set up a committee of experts to conduct the study of all the dam projects; and
- (d) if so, by when the committee is likely to submit its report to Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in its Order dated 20.02.2009 directed that the re-constituted Forest Advisory Committee shall review its earlier decision on the proposals submitted by the Government of Uttarakhand for diversion of 258.737 ha forest land for Kotlibhel hydro electric

project (Stage -1A) and 496.793 ha forest land for Kotlibhel hydro electric project (Stage- IB), in favour of the National Hydro Power Corporation, and take a fresh decision after considering recommendation of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC).

The recommendation of the CEC referred to in the said Order of the Hon^{ble} Supreme Court is as below:

"the CEC is of the view that it would be prudent that the reconstituted FAC reviews these projects after considering the findings of the studies regarding

(a) cumulative environmental impact of various hydro electric projects particularly on the riverine eco system and land and aquatic biodiversity; and

(b) effectiveness of the mitigative measures and compliance of the stipulated conditions on which various projects have earlier been cleared."

The said recommendation of the CEC is one of the criteria, on whose basis the Forest Advisory Committee frames its recommendations on the fresh proposals seeking diversion of forest land for construction of hydro electric projects on river Ganga and its tributaries.

(b) Details of the proposals seeking diversion of forest land, in accordance with Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for construction of hydro electric projects on River Ganga and its tributaries, pending before the Central Government for approval under the said Act are given in the Statement (~~See~~ below).

(c) and (d) The Forest Advisory Committee in its Meeting convened in December 2009 recommended that the National Ganga River Basin Authority may be requested to study and fix the minimum ecological water flow. The terms of reference of such study may include issues like minimum ecological water flow in River Ganga *vis-a-vis* sustainable aquatic eco-system and bio-diversity there-in.

A study to assess cumulative impact of hydro power projects in Bhagirathi and Alaknanda Basins has been awarded to the Alternate Hydro Energy Centre (AHEC), IIT Roorkee.

Similarly, a study on cumulative environmental impact of various hydro electric projects on the riverine eco system, in general, and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity, in particular, along with a review of the effectiveness of the mitigative measures and compliance of the stipulated conditions on which various projects have earlier been cleared, has been assigned to the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

Report of the study assigned to the IIT Roorkee is likely to be received within a period of six months. Similarly, report on study assigned to Wildlife Institute of India is likely to be received within a period of one year.

Statement

Details of proposals for construction of hydro electric projects on River Ganga and its tributaries pending before the Central Government for approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

A: Projects for which both In-principal and Final Approval are yet to be accorded

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Forest Area
1.	Kotlibhel Hydro Electric Project - (Stage -IA)	258.737 ha.
2.	Kotlibhel Hydro Electric Project - (Stage -IB)	496.793 ha.
3.	Kotlibhel Hydro Electric Project - (Stage -II)	658.282 ha.
4.	Vishnugarh Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project	80.607 ha.
5.	Alaknanda Hydro Electric Project	60.513 ha.

B. Projects for which In-principal Approval has been accorded but Final Approval is yet to be accorded

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Forest Area
1	2	3
1.	Malkhet Hydro Project in Chamoli	6.614 ha.
2.	Melkhet Mini Hydro Electric Project	6.614 ha.

1	2	3
3.	Rayat Hydro Electric Project along with 33 K.V. Electric Transmission Line	2.831 ha.
4.	2x 2250 KW Assiganga Mini Hydel Project	1.583 ha.
5.	Asiganga Mini Hydel Project (Phase-I)	1.239 ha.
6.	Hanol Tyuni Micro Hydel Project	34.858 ha.

Pollution in back water and rivers in Kerala

1524. SHRI K.N.BALAGOPAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has noticed high level of pollution affecting the back waters and rivers in Kerala; and

(b) whether Government would consider to implement the project like clean Ganga to clean the Vembanadu Lake and Ashtamudi Lake?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) As per information provided by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of Kerala, studies have pointed out that the river Pamba, which joins Vembanad backwaters is contaminated by bacterial pollution due to lack of proper sanitation and mass bathing by pilgrims. The downstream of river Periyar is reported to be polluted due to discharge of industrial effluents. High levels of pollution have been noticed at certain hotspots of Vembanad backwaters.

(b) Government has identified the Vembanad and Ashtamudi wetlands under National Wetlands Conservation Programme (NWCP). As per the Management Action Plan (MAP) submitted by the Govt. of Kerala, the Ministry has so far released an amount of Rs.74.45 lakh for conservation and management of the Ashtamudi wetland. With regard to Vembanad wetland a total amount of Rs. 54.5 lakh has been released for the development of Kuttanad Ecosystem. In addition, the State Govt. has been requested to provide a comprehensive MAP for the conservation of Vembanad wetland.