

NPCIL's joint venture with ONGC

314. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether NPCIL has entered into a joint venture with ONGC; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : (a) Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has not entered into any joint venture with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), so far. However, discussions in this regard between NPCIL and ONGC are in progress.

(b) The Joint Venture between NPCIL and ONGC is intended for setting up of nuclear power projects in future.

Public opposition to nuclear plants

315. SHRI TARUN VIJAY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) the status of Nuclear Power Plants facing public opposition in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu;
- (b) the investment that has already been made in both the plants under construction; and
- (c) whether Government is still determined to go ahead with plans in both places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : (a) Sections of local population are opposing the setting up of nuclear power project at Jaitapur in Maharashtra and construction, commissioning and operation of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plants (KKNPP) in Tamil Nadu.

At Jaitapur, land has been acquired, Environmental and Coastal regulatory Zone clearances have been obtained and site infrastructure works taken up. The detailed techno-commercial offer of Areva, France is under the consideration Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). Administrative and Financial sanction for implementation of project will follow thereafter. KKNPP Unit-1 is at an advanced stage of commissioning with its 'hot run' having been completed. KKNPP Unit - 2 is also closely following the first unit.

(b) The cumulative expenditure upto September 2011 has been Rs. 14,122 crore on Kudankulam project (KKNPP Units 1 & 2). The expenditure on Jaitapur nuclear power project upto September 2011 has been Rs. 46 crore.

(c) 20 nuclear power reactors are in operation for last 40 years, marking 350 reactor years of operation. They have maintained highest level of safety. Our safety records are impeccable. The safety of Indian nuclear power plants have been reviewed and they have been

found to be having adequate margins and features in design to withstand extreme natural events. Further, India's energy resources are limited and its demand huge and rapidly growing, which requires, that all sources of electricity generation need to be deployed optimally. Nuclear energy is a clean energy option that can not only enhance our energy security in the future but also reduce CO₂ emission which is essential for preventing climate change. Nuclear programme which will be pursued with full regard to safety, environment and livelihood of the people living in the neighborhood of the reactors.

Agitation against atomic plants with foreign assistance

†316. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister is aware that the reasons for growing public agitation against all atomic power generation plants being built in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, West Bengal etc. with foreign assistance are security related concerns;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to allay those concerns; and

(c) whether the local people are being satisfied by those steps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) The project at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu is being set up in technical cooperation with the Russian Federation. The project construction started in 2002 and has reached the commissioning stage. While there was no opposition to the project all along, during the "hot run" and testing of systems, noise from steam discharge appear to have created fears amongst the local people. This was compounded by an emergency preparedness drill at the site and neighbouring areas to meet regulatory requirement before commissioning. These fears were heightened in view of the Fukushima (Japan) incident. The fears were fuelled further by misinformation spread by anti nuke activists. At Jaitapur in Maharashtra land has been acquired, environmental clearances obtained and site infrastructure works are in progress and project construction is yet to start. The opposition to nuclear power projects at Jaitapur in Maharashtra is largely due to issues related to rehabilitation, apart from apprehensions about safety of nuclear power and effect on livelihood. Pre-project works are underway at Haripur in West Bengal.

(b) Public awareness programmes and outreach activities have been enhanced to allay the fears about safety of nuclear power plants and fears of loss of livelihood. In respect of Kudankulam, the Government has constituted an expert group of 15 specialists for interacting with officials of the state government of Tamil Nadu and spokespersons of people in the neighbourhood of Kudankulam project. The expert group had two meetings to explain the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.