

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there are adequate thorium reserves available in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Construction of Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR) will be launched towards the end of Twelfth Five Year Plan period. The quantity of ThO_2 required for the initial core is 52 tones, The annual requirement of ThO_2 for refueling is 4.7 tones. Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has taken action to see that this quantity made available at the scheduled time.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. India has vast reserves of Thorium. Total estimated reserves of monazite in India are about 10.7 million tones (containing about 0.84 million tones of thorium metal) occurring in beach and river sands in association with other heavy minerals, Out of nearly 100 deposits of the heavy minerals, at present only 17 deposits containing about ~4 million tones of monazite have been identified as exploitable. Mineable reserves are ~70% of identified exploitable resources. Therefore, about 2,25,000 tones of thorium metal is available for nuclear power programme.

Making of AERB a statutory body

2952. SHRI N. K. SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government is proposing to make the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) a statutory body;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps being taken by Government to make nuclear regulation and safety more transparent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government of India attaches the highest importance to nuclear safety and that the Government will take all the necessary measures to ensure the safety of our plants. Work is underway in the Department of Atomic Energy towards further strengthening Indias national nuclear safety regulatory authority. Accordingly, Government has introduced the Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority Bill, 2011 in Lok Sabha on 07 September 2011.

- (c) Does not arise.
- (d) Creation of a statutory nuclear safety authority through introduction of

The Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority (NSRA) Bill will ensure greater degree of independence and transparency.

Proposal for National Aviation University

2953. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to set up a National Aviation University to deal with the problem of skill shortage in the civil aviation sector;
- (b) if so, the objectives sought to be achieved by this exercise;
- (c) the estimated cost therein; and
- (d) by when such a University would be established?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) One of the proposals recommended by the Working Group on Civil Aviation for Formulation of Twelfth Five Year Plan is to consider setting up of a National Aviation University to cater to the growing educational and training requirement of civil aviation sector.

- (c) and (d) Details on these aspects are not available as of now.

Development of Gwalior airport

2954. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps being taken for development of Gwalior airport;
- (b) whether Government has set any time limit for the project; and
- (c) the expected expenditure for development of airport at Gwalior?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) Gwalior airport belongs to Indian Air Force and Airports Authority of India (AAI) owns a civil enclave. The present infrastructure at Gwalior airport is sufficient to handle current passenger traffic. Further developments for any future requirement is subject to traffic growth, demand by airlines and economic viability of enhanced airport operations.

Change in the aviation policy

2955. SHRI BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a need for change in the aviation policy in the view of the recent crisis in the aviation sector;