

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government proposes to approach the global atomic watchdog IAEA to review its nuclear regulatory process;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard;
- (e) the details of the status of commissioning of first 1000 MW unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project; and
- (f) the details of the expenditure so far incurred in the said unit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India issued its report on the performance audit of the activities of Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), wherein some observations and recommendations have been made. The report of CAG tabled in the Parliament has not made any allegation of impropriety on AERB; in fact it notes compliance with the procedures in respect of regulation of nuclear power plants and nuclear fuel cycle facilities. It has made recommendations for strengthening of regulatory control of radiation facilities. Currently, PAC is seized of the report and the point-wise response against each recommendation in CAG report has been submitted to PAC.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. AERB has committed to get its regulatory process peer reviewed by the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission of IAEA. As a first step, AERB decided to assess the readiness of AERB for IRRS mission by undergoing the detailed internal review of all the requirements of IRRS. In this regard, a committee was constituted in AERB with several working groups to meticulously review the existing system *vis-à-vis* the IAEA regulatory safety standards.

(e) Currently, fuel loading is completed in KKNPP-1 and preparation to first approach of criticality has reached its advanced stage. This reactor would attain criticality (start of the fission reaction for the first time) after AERB grants stage-wise clearances by December, 2012.

(f) Total expenditure incurred for KKNPP 1 and 2 upto October, 2012 is Rs. 15,161 crore.

Safety of Nuclear Power Plant

4. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) had reviewed the

safety of all nuclear power plants in the country after the disaster at the nuclear plant in Fukushima, Japan and recommended various factors to be considered before loading fuel into the Kudankulam plant;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the AERB has faced criticism for agreeing to load the fuel without heeding the recommendations; 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. The safety of Indian NPPs against external events was reviewed by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). AERB has also reviewed the plant specific assessments for establishing capabilities and margins for coping with severe natural events, such as earthquakes and floods and their possible effects, which *inter-alia* include extended Station Black Out and non-availability of normal cooling water sources. AERB carried out special inspections of all the NPPs to assess the existing provisions and the preparedness of these plants to deal with such events. Accordingly, in the case of Kudankulam 1 and 2 plants, seventeen recommendations were made for implementation in different time frames. The implementation of these recommendations was not a precondition for initial fuel loading.

(c) and (d) Following its established process of regulatory review, AERB had granted clearance for initial fuel loading to unit-1 of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) on August 10, 2012. This clearance was challenged in the Writ Petition 22253/2012 filed in the Hon'ble Madras High Court. The contention of the petitioner was that unless all the 17 post Fukushima safety enhancements recommended by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board for KKNPP are implemented, AERB should not have granted the clearance for initial fuel loading. In its counter affidavit, AERB submitted that the detailed safety review carried out for KKNPP indicated that KKNPP already has adequate safety measures and additional safety enhancements were recommended by way of abundant caution, and were agreed for implementation in a phased time-bound manner. Thus, the review and resolution of safety issues were completed before granting clearance for initial fuel loading. The Hon'ble Madras High Court has dismissed the writ petition.

The judgment of the Hon'ble Madras High Court has been challenged in a Special Leave Petition (SLP No. 27335/2012) filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The matter is *sub-judice*.