

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**Lack of independence of AERB**

2401. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether media has reported several times that the Nuclear safety in India is compromised by the lack of independence of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(b) whether any audit has found irregularities in AERB's mandates, such as the agency not possessing enough power to oversee nuclear safety and security, failure of the board to develop a full and comprehensive safety policy, poor inspection rates, lack of formal procedures for decommissioning nuclear reactor etc. and if so, the reaction of Government thereto, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Government is aware of media reports questioning independence of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). These reports are not based on facts. Nuclear power plants in India are designed, built and operated in accordance with the safety and security requirements and guidelines prescribed by AERB in the form of Safety Codes, Safety Guides, Safety Manuals and Technical documents. These requirements/guidelines are in line with the safety and security standards advised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other international bodies. Further to bolster the nuclear safety, reviews of the Indian nuclear power plants are carried out periodically by the AERB. In addition, international peer reviews are also carried out by experts of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO). Post Fukushima, Government decided to get the safety of RAPS Units 3 and 4 reviewed by the Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) of IAEA also. Thus AERB has evolved a robust mechanism to ensure complete nuclear safety.

The safety reviews of the Indian Nuclear Power Plants (NPPs) are carried out by the regulatory authority, the AERB which is functionally independent. The Government has constituted AERB by exercising the powers conferred by the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 to carry out certain regulatory and safety functions under sections 16, 17 and 23 of the Act. AERB also has the powers of the Competent Authority for the safety related rules issued under the Act, namely the Atomic Energy (Radiation Protection) Rules, 2004, Atomic Energy (Safe Disposal of Radioactive Wastes) Rules, 1987 and Atomic Energy (Factories) Rules, 1996. AERB has been effectively fulfilling its mandate of safety review and regulation concerning nuclear safety with various nuclear facilities in India. This is evident from the very good safety performance of the nuclear facilities which is on par with the international benchmarks.

(b) The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India had carried out a performance audit of AERB for the period 2005-2010. The audit report issued by CAG had made observations and recommendations regarding certain improvements needed. In this regard, the following actions were taken to further strengthen the nuclear safety.

- (i) Detailed responses to explain the position of AERB and the status/progress of development of the documents were submitted to CAG.
- (ii) AERB agreed to the suggestion of CAG of consolidating the existing policy objectives and higher level principles as brought out in various codes and other documents into a separate 'Safety Policy' document. AERB also issued a document consolidating the established policies into single document named "Policies Governing Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Safety".

Commissioning of Kudankulam nuclear plant

2402. SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the provisions of Civil Nuclear Liability Act, 2010 would be applicable to the construction and commissioning of Kudankulam 3, 4, 5 and 6; and

(b) if not, the implications for suppliers, domestic and foreign vendors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Electricity from atomic energy sector

2403. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries in which electricity is generated by atomic energy sector;

(b) the percentage of electricity generated in this way out of the total electricity generated globally, country-wise particularly in America, China, England, Japan, Germany, Canada, Russia, France and India etc.; and

(c) whether power generation through atomic energy is being reduced globally?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) Electricity is generated from nuclear power presently