

Dam Safety Bill, 2019

94. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

(a) the rationale for departing from the procedure of State Governments having jurisdiction over dam safety, though water is a State subject;

(b) the rationale for all 21 Members of the Dam Safety Committee, including the State appointees, being chosen by the Central Government;

(c) the details of the procedure followed regarding the compensation for people affected by dam activities; and

(d) whether there is an independent regulating body deciding on compensation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) The safety of the dams is the prime responsibility of the State Governments and the dam owners. The Dam Safety Bill (DSB), 2019 proposes an institutional framework and provisions for prevention of dam failure related disaster through proper surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of dams in India. The proposed DSB, 2019 in no way seeks to alter or dilute States' established ownership of dams or their day-to-day roles in the operation and management of dams. Rather, the provisions of the Bill are directed essentially at the empowerment of the States' own dam safety institutional set-up.

(b) The DSB, 2019 has proposed constitution of a National Committee on Dam Safety consisting of upto 21 members which includes upto seven representatives of the State Governments as Members of the Committee.

(c) and (d) The Water Resources Projects are planned, funded, executed and maintained by the concerned State Governments as per their own resources and priority. The land acquisition (LA) and Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R & R) works of such projects are also carried out by the concerned State Governments. As per the Schedule-1 of proposed DSB, 2019, the National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS) shall also explore compensation by means of insurance coverage for the people affected by dam failures.