

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3674

ANSWERED ON 10.08.2023

DEATHS DUE TO ELECTROCUTION OF STPs

3674. SHRI SANJAY SADASHIVRAO MANDLIK SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE
SHRI DHAIRYASHEEL SAMBHAJIRAO MANE SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA
SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of people died and many injured due to electrocution at the site of a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) of the Namami Gange Project on the Alaknanda river in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has sent any Central team to ascertain the reasons for such dreaded incident and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has announced any financial assistance to the kith and kins of people injured and died in the said incident;
- (e) whether the Government has ordered any probe to fix the responsibility of the people responsible for the said incident and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such incidents in future at hydro-electric sites across the country?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) to (e) Two incidents of electrocution happened on 19.07.2023 at the 50 KLD STP at Chamoli, Uttarakhand in which 16 number of people, including 4 police officials, died and 11 injured at the site of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). This STP was sanctioned under Namami Gange program on 29.03.2017 and after completion of construction, handed over to Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam (UPJN) on 23.09.2019 for Operation & Maintenance (O&M), which inturn handed it on 05.06.2021 to Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan (UJS) for its O&M for the next 13 years. Presently, this project is under the supervision of UJS.

A team of 02 officers from National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), Government of India was deputed to the site to assess the ground situation. The team visited the accident site, interacted with locals/State officials. As per their report, the first incident happened during the early hours of 19.07.2023, when the main electric panels in the STP got burnt due to high voltage and one staff of the STP operator

was electrocuted. The second accident occurred at about 11:30 AM, when the electric line was inadvertently energized by a staff of the Uttarakhand Power Corporation Limited, while the Police officials were preparing the report of the accident along with some local people at the accident site.

The actions taken by the State Government, as reported by them, are as under:

- i. A Magisterial enquiry was ordered by District Magistrate, Chamoli and ADM Chamoli was asked to conduct the enquiry.
- ii. FIR No. 29/23 under Section 304 IPC and under Section 13/31 Dangerous Machines (Regulation) Act was lodged in Chamoli Police Station.
- iii. Rs 5 lakhs for the next of the kin of the deceased and Rs 1.0 lakh each to the injured has been disbursed.
- iv. The Secretary, Drinking Water Department, Govt. of Uttarakhand has directed to conduct Electrical Safety Audit with the help of competent technical experts in all STPs, water supply pumping units and other similar installations. The Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttarakhand has also ordered, vide letter no. 3881/PS-CS/2023 dated 20th July, 2023 to ensure all the electrical safety measures in all the vital installations.
- v. Two officials of the State Government have been placed under suspension. Four persons have been arrested by the local Police.

The following actions were taken by NMCG:

- i. An emergency meeting was held under the chairmanship of DG, NMCG on 19.07.2023. A team of 02 Officers from NMCG was deputed to the site to assess the ground situation.
- ii. A Video Conference (VC) was organized by DG, NMCG on 20-7-2023 with concessionaires of all projects under NMCG and senior officials of SPMG to sensitize them on the issues related to safety at work sites and installations. Over 500 people attended the VC.
- iii. The Director General, NMCG has issued Advisory addressed to SPMG, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal regarding electrical safety protocols to be followed and safety audit at sewerage infrastructure works and other assets created under Namami Gange Programme.
- iv. NMCG has framed an environment and social management framework (ESMF) for managing social and environmental impacts through appropriate measures during the planning, design, construction, and operation phases of various investments such as following:
 - Environment and Social Audit: The audits and trainings are being held annually regarding the environmental and social aspects. Till date, 44 projects have been audited.

- Occupational Health and Safety Audit (OHSA): OHSA carried out in 9 supercritical projects, i.e; 6 in Bihar, 2 in Uttar Pradesh and 1 in West Bengal from October 2021 to January 2022.
- Annual National OSHA workshops: Annual National OSHA workshops were held on 17.06.2022 in Delhi and on 12.06.2023 in Patna. Onsite trainings were held during the workshops.
- Environment and Social Due Diligence Report: Seven reports have been prepared during 2021-22.
- Environment and Social Management Action Plan: ESAMPS are used to be prepared for all the projects for which funding is sought under Namami Gange program from 2021-2023.
- A training workshop on Occupational, Health & Safety Audit/ESA was organized on 20th July 2023 under the chairmanship of Director General NMCG on “Key risks and mitigation strategies in sewerage treatment plants (STPs) under operation”.

(f) The following steps have been taken by the Government to prevent such incidents in future at hydro-electric sites across the country:-

- i. Under section 177 of Electricity Act 2003, Ministry of Power has notified CEA (Measures relating to safety and Electric supply) Regulations, 2023 for ensuring safety of electrical installations of all voltages. In addition, to prevent incidents of electrocution and spreading awareness regarding electrical safety, every year 26th June is observed as National Electrical Safety Day and the corresponding week is observed as National Electrical Safety Week (NESW).
- ii. In view of above, 37 Nos. of Electrical Safety Workshops were organized by CEA during FY 2022-2023 and 24 Nos. of Electrical Safety workshops were organized in ongoing year i.e. April 2023 to August 2023 for O&M personnel of Power utilities and Industries by CEA.
- iii. Respective State Governments have the mechanism/procedure in place for inspection of electrical installations falling under their jurisdiction.
