

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6914  
ANSWERED ON:13.05.2002  
GLACIER THREAT  
SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government have not conducted any study to assess the impending danger of flash flooding in the Himalayas as a result of fast melting glacier lakes as reported in the 'Pioneer' dated April 22, 2002;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to arrest the catastrophe and to meet the disastrous flood situation?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU):

- (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has not conducted any such study. However, some studies carried out by some other agencies have indicated that these glaciers are passing through a phase of recession. The recession of glaciers is a natural process sensitive to climatic fluctuation wherein the rise in global average temperature (called global warming) results in melting of the glaciers in extents varying with their locations as well as seasons.
- (c) The rate of recession in different climatic zones of the Himalayas is found to be different in different years. It has been estimated that during the coming ten years the rate of recession is not likely to reach an extent, which could cause water scarcity. The measures taken to reduce the effect of human interference on glaciers include conservation activities such as afforestation, removal of garbage and promotion of sustainable eco-tourism.