

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:270

ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008

SETHUSAMUDRAM PROJECT

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Masood Shri Rasheed;Pandey Dr. Laxminarayan;Rijiju Shri Kiren

**Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Sethusamudram project is a threat to the security of the country as reported in "Rashtriya Sahara" dated February 01, 2008;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard and reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to review the project and carry out any change in said project;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has constituted any committee to review the Sethusamudram project;
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the composition of the committee; (g) whether this committee has submitted its report to the Government; (h) if so, the details thereof; and (i) the targeted time by which this project is likely to be completed?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS(SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b): The Government has seen the report captioned 'Sethusamudram Se Desh Ki Suraksha Ko Khatra` appearing in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated 1st February, 2008. The Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project was approved by the Government in May, 2005 after obtaining all necessary clearances and inter ministerial consultations.

(c) to (h): Pursuant to the submissions made before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India by the Government Counsel on 14.9.2007 in respect of certain transferred cases and writ petitions relating to the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project, the Government constituted a Committee consisting of eminent persons on 5.10.2007 with the terms of reference to invite objections & suggestions from all concerned including the writ petitioners having interest in the subject matter and to consider all suggestions/proposals/documents after giving them a personal hearing. The composition of the Committee is as follows:-

(i) Prof. S. Ramachandran – Chairman of Monitoring Committee on Environmental Impact Issues of Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project and Vice-Chancellor of University of Madras – Convenor.

(ii) Prof. R.S. Sharma – former Professor of History, Delhi University.

(iii) Dr. M. Sakthivel – President of Aqua Culture Foundation of India.

(iv) Shri Dilip K. Biswas – former Chairman of Central Pollution Control Board, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India.

(v) Dr. J.R.B. Alfred – former Director of Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.

(vi) Dr. S.R. Wate – Deputy Director of National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur.

(vii) Prof. P. Jagadeesan – former Vice-Chancellor of Bharatidasan University, Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu.

(viii) Prof. Y. Vaikuntham – former Vice-Chancellor of Kakatiya University, Andhra Pradesh.

(ix) Dr. K. Paddayya – Director of Deccan College, Pune.

(x) Shri R.K. Jain, IAS – Managing Director, Indian Ports Association – Member Secretary.

The Committee has submitted its report on 29.11.2007. The report of the Committee is under process.

(i) The project is expected to become operational in November, 2008, depending upon final judgement of the Supreme Court.