

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5248

ANSWERED ON:05.09.2011

CHECK ON CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

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

- (a) whether the Government has noticed about the environmental reasons for melting of the 'Shivling' made of snow at Amarnath;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for maintaining proper climatic conditions of the said area

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) & (b) The Shivling at Amarnath is a natural ice, in the form of stalagmite that is formed by re-freezing of snow/ ice melt. This is a natural process which occurs every year during the early summer. Subsequently, the Shivling melts out by late summer.

Long spells of warmer temperature as well as progressive increase of pilgrims may be amongst some of the reasons for early melting of the ice Shivling. However, no systematic studies in this regard have been carried out.

(c) Government has come up with a National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) which was launched on June 30, 2008. The NAPCC includes a National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system which aims at enhancing understanding of ecosystem changes and monitoring of the Himalayan ecosystem, in particular the state of its glaciers. Besides, a research centre on Himalayan Glaciology has been established at Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun. The Mission and the Centre have the objective of addressing the issues relating to Himalayan glaciers.

The Government has developed Guidelines and best practices for Sustaining Himalayan Eco-system (G-She), which has been shared with all State Governments in the Himalayan Region.