

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1234

ANSWERED ON:08.08.2011

MELTING OF HIMALAYAN GLACIERS

Bajirao Shri Patil Padamsinha ;Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Paranjpe Shri Anand Prakash

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware about the incidence related to the melting of Himalayan Glaciers;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has formulated any policy to deal with the situation;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said policy is likely to be implemented;
- (d) whether Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has conducted any study on the aspect of melting Himalayan Glaciers; and
- (e) if so, the details and the outcome thereof along with the action taken thereon?

Answer

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

(a) The studies carried out by the Geological Survey of India have revealed that the majority of Himalayan glaciers are passing through a phase of recession, which is a worldwide phenomenon. The recession of glaciers is a part of the natural cyclic process of changes in size and other attributes of the glaciers.

(b) & (c) Government has come up with the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) which was launched on June 30, 2008 to deal with the climate change related issues. The NAPCC includes a National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system with a view, inter-alia, to strengthen the system for observing and monitoring the Himalayan glaciers. Besides, a research centre on Himalayan Glaciology has been established at Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun to undertake comprehensive glacier research in the country. 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. The activities envisaged in the Mission will be carried out during the 11th and the 12th Five Year Plan.

(d) & (e) The Government provided financial support in March 2005 to a project entitled 'Snow and Glacier Studies' of the Space Application Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The project was completed in 2010. Under the project, an inventory of the snow cover and glacier extent, using satellite based mapping across glaciated regions was conducted in Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins. Under this study, 2767 glaciers were monitored, of which 2184 are retreating, 435 are advancing, and 148 glaciers show no change. Further studies covering other areas of Himalayan glaciers are underway in second phase of the project.