

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
POWER
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1858
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2011
ATHIRAPPALLY HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT
Dhanaplan Shri K. P.

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the construction work at the Athirappally Hydro Electric Project in Kerala has been stopped;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to implement any alternate power project in the State; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL)

(a)&(b): Athirappally Hydro Electric Project located in Kerala is a State Sector Project of Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB). Techno-Economic Clearance for this project was accorded by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) on 31.03.2005 with an installed capacity of 163 MW. The forest and environment clearances to the project were accorded on 16.12.1999 and 20.01.1998 respectively by Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF). However, the environmental clearance of the project has been a subject matter of litigation at various fora including Hon'ble High Court of Kerala since last many years. A showcause notice was issued by MoEF to KSEB on 04.01.2010 with respect to revoking the environmental clearance due to issues relating to effect on Tribals and Bio-diversity. KSEB made presentation to Environment Appraisal Committee (EAC) on 20.03.2010. However, EAC reserved its decision till KSEB/Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (TRBGRI) substantiate their claim that there will be no change in Bio-diversity pattern from the published reports including recent study undertaken by Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI). Subsequently, replies furnished by KSEB and TBGRI were considered by newly constituted EAC in its meeting held on 17.07.2010 and it was decided to:-

- (i) To request KSEB to furnish the clarifications on the issues raised by various stakeholders to MoEF.
- (ii) To request Chairman, Central Water Commission to confirm that hydrological data has been approved by them.
- (iii) To request Director, KFRI to clarify the authenticity of study report prepared by them.

Meanwhile, MoEF has referred Athirappally project proposal to Western Ghats Ecological Expert Panel (WGEEP), constituted by MoEF in Feb., 2010. WGEEP visited proposed project area on 29.01.2011 and held technical discussions with various stakeholders including KSEB. WGEEP has submitted their Report to MoEF in August 2011. KSEB has requested MoEF and WGEEP to initiate suitable steps for implementation of project. The execution of the project is held up due to above reasons.

(c)&(d): Central Electricity Authority has not received any proposal from Government of Kerala to implement any alternate hydel power project in the State for concurrence.