

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:339

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2011

PROTEST OVER NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

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Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the local people and environmentalists are protesting against the setting up of various nuclear power plants in the country including Kudankulam and Jaitapur;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for such wide scale protest;
- (c) the present stage of implementation and total expenditure incurred so far on Kudankulam and Jaitapur nuclear power plants;
- (d) whether any study has been conducted about the environmental impact of these plants;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard;
- (f) the composition and terms of reference of the high level Committee set up by the Government to remove the apprehensions of the people against the setting up of nuclear power plants, particularly Kudankulam Plant;
- (g) the efforts made by the committee so far, in this regard; and
- (h) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure the safety of such nuclear plants?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) Some sections of local people and organisations are protesting against start up of nearly completed nuclear power plants at Kudankulam and setting up of new Nuclear Power Plants at Jaitapur.

(b) The opposition to nuclear power projects by certain section of the population is largely due to apprehensions about safety of nuclear power plants, effect on livelihood of the people living around and issues related to land acquisition. Anti-nuclear groups are spreading unfounded fears amongst local people.

(c) The work of 2 units each of 1000 Mwe at Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project

(KKNPP) is almost complete. Unit-1 is at advanced stage of commissioning with its 'hot run' having been completed. This is the final test following which nuclear fuel in the reactor can be loaded after obtaining clearance from the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). Construction of Unit-2 is also closely following the first unit and can be completed a few months from commissioning of Unit-1. The cumulative expenditure on Kudankulam (KKNPP Units-1&2) upto September 2011 has been Rs.14,122 crore.

For the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project (JNPP), land has been acquired, Environmental and Coastal Regulatory Zone clearances have been obtained and site infrastructure works taken up. The expenditure on JNPP upto September 2011 has been Rs.46 crore. Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) is working out the techno-economic details of the proposed European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) Units at Jaitapur.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies have been carried out in the case of nuclear power plants at Kudankulam and Jaitapur as a part of the project environment clearance process. The EIA reports have been considered by the Expert Appraisal Committees of Ministry of Environment and Forests in detail before according environmental clearance for these projects. The reports are available in public domain on NPCIL website. The stipulations laid down in the environmental clearances for the projects are scrupulously implemented.

(f) The Central Government has constituted an expert group of 15 specialists for interacting with nominees of the State Government of

Tamilnadu and spokespersons of the people in the neighbourhood of KKNPP to explain the factual position on various aspects of the project and to dispel apprehensions of a section of the local people. The expert group comprises renowned academicians, scientists, doctors and engineers specialising in areas like environmental science, radiation safety, nuclear reactor design, nuclear reactor safety, nuclear regulatory aspects, nuclear waste management, oncology, fisheries, thermal ecology, seismology etc. The expert group is reviewing the factual position on various aspects of the project and are explaining these to the spokespersons of the local people and state government officials.

(g) The expert group had its first meeting with the state government nominees and spokespersons of the local people on November 8, 2011. The second meeting was held on November 18.

(h) The safety aspects of the KKNPP were reviewed by the AERB. The nuclear power plants designed in the country as well as those to be set up with international cooperation will follow the directions provided in the AERB codes and guides on design, construction, commissioning and operation to ensure safety. The projects undergo regulatory review at each stage of design, construction, commissioning and operation by AERB. Safety of these plants are ensured through compliance of AERB stipulation. All reactors to be set up with international cooperation will need to be certified also by the Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority of the vendor country.