

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6106

ANSWERED ON:14.05.2012

MELTING OF GLACIERS

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

(a) whether the study of France's University reveals that Karakoram glaciers are expanding between 0.11 to 0.22 metres per year between 1999 and 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to undertake any study to find out the reasons that Karakoram glaciers are not following the global trend of glacial decline; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) University of Grenoble, France conducted a scientific study and published a report in the scientific journal 'Nature Geoscience' in April 2012, which indicates that the Karakoram glaciers have gained around 0.11 to 0.22 meters per year between 1999 and 2008. The study also revealed that in contrast to the central and eastern Himalaya where most glaciers were retreating, more than 50% of Karakoram glaciers were advancing or stable during this period.

(c) & (d) Shyok / Nubra valley glaciers were studied by Geological Survey of India in 1958 where in the advancing and retreating nature of the glacier was documented. A study conducted by Space Application Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) also indicates surging/advancing nature of glaciers in Shyok Basin. However, reasons for the same could not be ascertained.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (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.