

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:47
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2012
PROTEST OVER NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
Thamaraiselvan Shri R.

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of those nuclear power plants along with their location which are facing protest from local people and other organizations;
- (b) the reasons for such protest, plant-wise and the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether there were protests outside the Indian High Commission in London by the coalition of anti-nuclear and human rights groups recently and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the coalition of anti-nuclear and human rights groups have alleged that the Kudankulam project violated the International Atomic Energy Agency's safety guidelines as it was a tsunami and earthquake prone region;
- (e) if so, whether the said right's groups have also alleged that the project was in violation of the mandatory requirement for construction of fresh water reservoirs; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to convince the said rights groups?

Answer

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

- (a) There were protests at Kudankulam site by local people, led by organizations ideologically opposed to nuclear power.
- (b) The reasons for protests at Kudankulam were apprehensions about safety of nuclear power plants post Fukushima incident, heightened by misinformation spread by groups ideologically opposed to nuclear power. The Central Government constituted an Expert Group of eminent persons who interacted with the representatives of the local people and comprehensively addressed all the apprehensions. The Central Government has also undertaken an enhanced public outreach programme using multi-pronged approach to allay the apprehensions of the people.
- (c)to(e) On 18 May 2012, 18 to 20 persons held demonstration in front of the High Commission of India, London from 1600 hrs to 1830 hrs. They belonged to South Asia Solidarity Group and protested over the issue of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant. They did not submit any memorandum after their demonstration. However, in their press release, they claimed that the plant violates the mandatory requirement for construction of fresh water reservoirs which are essential in case of a nuclear accident.
- (f) The allegations made by the anti-nuclear groups are not based on facts. The Kudankulam nuclear power plant meets International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safety requirements. Kudankulam reactors are Generation III+ reactors and have advanced safety features. The safety of the reactors has been reviewed by the Russian Regulatory authorities and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). Post Fukushima, safety review of the Kudankulam plant has been carried out by the Task Force of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and expert committee of the AERB, which have found that the plant is safe from extreme natural events. Kudankulam is located in the lowest seismic zone in India, and at a higher elevation. The site is safe from earthquakes and Tsunamis. Apart from being located at a higher elevation, an 8 m high shore protection wall is also provided. There are also adequate provisions in the plant for meeting the fresh water requirements. The facts in this regard have been explained to the representatives of the protesting people by the Expert Group constituted by the Central Government. The Expert Group has also put their reports in the public domain. Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and NPCIL have also got a dedicated wing to make public outreach efforts to allay such misplaced apprehensions.