

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:224
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2013
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF RIVERS
Shekhar Shri Neeraj;Singh Shri Yashvir

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of news-item that the devastation in the Garhwal Himalayas was pretty much on predicted lines;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether an environmental assessment of the Bhagirathi and Alaknanda rivers has been undertaken/likely to be undertaken;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government to avoid such disaster in future?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Government is aware of the devastation caused recently in the Garhwal Himalayas. Heavy rain fall caused series of landslides and large amount of debris flow from different sides in Kedarnath shrine area causing tremendous damage, destruction and loss to human lives, buildings, aquatic environment and animals etc. Besides, other regions also suffered tremendous damage, destruction and loss to human and animal lives, roads, buildings and habitat.

(c) & (d) Two studies on assessment of cumulative impacts of dams in Bhagirathi and Alaknanda Basins have been carried-out by Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee and Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. To review these reports along with other related issues of river Ganga, the Ministry constituted an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) under the Chairmanship of Shri. B. K. Chatruvedi, Member, Planning Commission. The IMG has suggested environmental flow requirements for various stretches of Bhagirathi, Alaknanda and other tributaries of river Ganga in the State of Uttarakhand. The IMG has submitted its report to the Ministry.

(e) In order to regulate development in the fragile Himalayan region, the Central Government has notified the entire watershed of about 100 kilometres stretch of the river Bhagirathi from Gaumukh to Uttarkashi covering an area of 4179.59 square kilometres as an Eco-sensitive Zone.