

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:481
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2013
MELTING OF GLACIERS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Himalayan glaciers are melting rapidly;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the calamity of Kedarnath occurred due to melting of glaciers;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has conducted any study in this regard; and
- (f) if so, the outcome thereof along with the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) As per the studies conducted by the Geological Survey of India, the glaciers in Himalayan region are receding at varying rates in different regions. As per these findings, recession of glaciers could be the result from natural cyclic processes and other factors including, inter-alia, global warming.

(c) & (d) The devastation in the Kedarnath area is not mainly due to the glacier melt. The combined effect of very heavy rainfall, heavy snowmelt and breaching of the Chaurabari lake in the upstream could have resulted in a gushing outflow with large amounts of debris which devastated the entire valley. The very heavy rainfall in the entire catchment further increased the magnitude of floods downstream.

(e) & (f) No such studies have been conducted. However, Government is implementing the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) to enhance the ecological sustainability and address climate change issues in the country. NAPCC comprises, inter alia, of eight National Missions including National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system which aims 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. Further, all states including Himalayan states are advised to prepare the State Action Plan on Climate Change to address specific climate change issues.